



Little Sutton Primary School Complaints Procedure

Guide for anyone with a concern or a complaint

Our school wants to deal with any issues, concerns and complaints that you have as promptly and effectively as we can, and if you have any concerns we encourage you in the first instance, to go directly to the person who is most appropriate – this will usually be the class teacher or member of staff, or the Head Teacher.

If you are **not a parent or a guardian of a child attending the school** you should contact the Head Teacher.

The school is required by law to have a complaints procedure that aims to ensure that concerns and complaints are handled in a full, fair and non-adversarial manner. The procedure is intended to deal with complaints relating to the actions of staff and the application of school procedures where they affect individual pupils. The Senior Leadership Team may use the information gained during the investigation to review school policy or improve the service provided.

Matters relating to -

- curriculum
- a particular exclusion,
- a particular child protection issue
- a special needs statementing issue
- an admission issue

are dealt with under separate procedures. Details of these procedures are available at school.

The school encourages any complainant to make every effort to resolve any concerns informally – please help us to resolve any concerns or complaints that you may have by following these steps.

Please note:

- any concern or complaint should be brought to the attention of the school at the earliest opportunity; any matter raised more than 3 months after the event will only be considered in exceptional circumstances.
- an anonymous complaint will not be dealt with unless there are exceptional circumstances
- Any complaint about the Head Teacher should be made directly to the Chair of Governors (Step 3).
- Any complaint about a governor should be made in writing to the Clerk to the Governors at the school.

Step One – Raising your concern.

It is expected that in most cases the class teacher or member of staff concerned will be able to resolve your concerns without the need to go any further. You can help them to resolve your concerns by arranging to meet him or her at a convenient time, discussing your concerns in a positive atmosphere and allowing them any time that they require in order to investigate the matter further themselves.

Please note that an unreasonable refusal to allow your concern or complaint to be addressed informally **may** result in the school being unwilling to take the issue any further.

If, having raised your concern with the class teacher or member of staff concerned, you are still dissatisfied, or if the class teacher or member of staff concerned is the subject of your complaint, then you should move on to step two, contacting the Head Teacher.

Step Two – Involving the Head Teacher

The Head Teacher may ask you to put your concerns in writing, but will usually be able to deal with your concerns face-to-face. The Head Teacher will attempt to resolve your concerns using any reasonable means that she feels are appropriate: this may involve meeting with you to discuss the matter further, or delegating another senior member of staff to investigate.

The Head Teacher should be allowed reasonable time to investigate the concern or complaint and gather any information that she requires. On this basis you should expect to receive feedback no later than 10 school days after giving the details to the Head Teacher.

If you are dissatisfied with the feedback from the Head Teacher, or if the Head Teacher is the subject of your concern or complaint, then you should move on to step three, contacting the Chair of Governors.

Step Three - Hearing by the Chair of Governors

The Governing Body has responsibility for ensuring that any complaints formally notified to them are addressed. At this stage in the process you should write to the Chair of Governors requesting that your complaint be considered further. If you have not already raised your concern or complaint with the Head Teacher, the Chair may advise you to do so. If you have not already put the details in writing, the Chair will ask you to do so.

Step Four - Hearing by a Governing Body Complaints Appeal Panel

If you feel that your complaints has still not been addressed by the Chair of Governors you have the right to have it heard by a panel of governors not including the Chair (or in his absence whichever governor dealt with the complaint at Stage 3).

The designated governors, usually a panel of between 3 and 5, will hear your complaint on an impartial basis via a **panel hearing** that will be held in private, and will aim to resolve the complaint and reconcile any differences between you and the school.

You will be given the opportunity to have a friend or representative, and / or a translator present at the hearing if you wish.

The panel will:

- Dismiss the complaint in whole or in part, or
- Uphold the complaint in whole or in part, or
- Where appropriate decide action to be taken, or
- Recommend changes to the school systems or procedures to seek to ensure that problems of a similar nature do not recur.

However, it is recognised that you might not be satisfied with the outcome if the hearing does not find in your favour, and therefore it may only be possible for the hearing to establish the facts and make recommendations.

Following the investigation you will receive written feedback from the clerk including any decisions, recommendations and the reasons for them and, if appropriate, the next steps. This should be issued within ten working school days after the investigation has concluded.

Please note: if the outcome might lead to action under another procedure or is an internal management issue for the school and therefore the responsibility of the Head Teacher, you may only be told that appropriate action will be taken.

This is the final step of the process for the school (except for carrying-out agreed actions) and there is no more that the school can do – trying to raise the issue further through the school may force us to treat your complaint as **vexatious**.

If, despite all stages of the procedure having been followed, you remain dissatisfied, you may take your complaint to the Schools Complaints Unit, Department for Education, Picadilly Gate, Manchester. There is no onus on them to re-open an investigation, etc. if they are satisfied that the school has dealt with the complaint appropriately.

Revised in the light of the DFE School Complaints Toolkit 2014 and adopted by the Governing Body on 22nd March 2016