



Concerns and Complaints - Advice for Parents December 2015 (Review date: Dec 2018)

## **Introduction**

If you have a complaint, it is the responsibility of the school, and not the Local Authority, to investigate most complaints.

Communication, written or spoken, is valued as part of the partnership between home and school. Co-operation between parents, staff and governors leads to a shared sense of purpose and a good atmosphere in the school. This leaflet will explain the procedure that you should follow if you have a concern or a complaint.

## **Dealing with concerns/complaints informally**

If you have a concern or complaint you should make contact with the appropriate member of staff. This may be the class teacher in the first instant.

They can then carry out a reasonable investigation relative to the complaint and give you a response, making clear any action or monitoring of a situation that may be necessary. At this stage, misunderstandings can usually be cleared up. Everyone benefits from the speedy resolution of difficulties and suggestions for improvement are welcome.

If no satisfactory solution to the complaint has been agreed you should be informed of your option to take the matter further.

## **What do I do next?**

If you do not feel the matter is resolved you should make contact with a senior leader in school, the Assistant Headteacher, Deputy Headteacher or Headteacher. They can then undertake a further investigation relative to the complaint and give you a response, making clear any action or monitoring of a situation that may be necessary.

If you want to take the matter further, you should put your complaint, in writing, to the Headteacher. If your complaint is about the Headteacher, you should put your complaint, in writing, to the Chair of Governors.

Your complaint should be dealt with in an agreed timescale as part of the school's Complaints Procedure. You should ask for a copy of the school's Complaints Procedure

which should tell you how the *Governing Body* will investigate the complaint. An investigation into your complaint should be carried out by the appropriate person (the Headteacher or the *Chair of Governors*).

Depending on the reason for the complaint, statements from witnesses may be required.

When all the relevant facts have been established, you should receive a written response.

## **If I am unhappy with the response, what do I do?**

You should be advised that if you wish to take the matter further you should notify the Chair of the *Governing Body*, in writing, to this effect.

A further investigation of your complaint should be carried out:

- by the Chair of Governors if s/he has not had any previous involvement; or
- by the *Governing Body's Complaints Panel*.

If the matter is dealt with at this stage by the *Chair of Governors*, and you are unhappy with the outcome, you should be advised of your right to take the matter further to the *Governing Body's Complaints Panel*.

## **Procedure if you need to make a complaint**

The *Complaints Panel* should carry out an investigation relative to the complaint.

**It is very important that you do not discuss the complaint with any other governor as this might prejudice the outcome of the investigation.**

A meeting should be arranged, and everyone involved should receive copies of all available documentation about the complaint. You should be invited to attend the *Panel meeting* to put your case (you may bring a friend or someone to represent you). The *Headteacher* should also be invited to put the case for the school (the *Headteacher* will be able to bring a friend or professional representative). You and the *Headteacher* will be invited to speak to the *Panel* (which will have three governors on it) and to ask and answer questions. The *Panel* normally allows witnesses to attend part of the meeting.

A governing body may decide not to consider a complaint about something that occurred more than two months previously.

## **What happens next?**

You should be informed in writing of the *Panel's* decision. There is usually no appeal mechanism to the *Governing Body*. If you are not happy with this decision you can ask the *Director of Children's Services* whether your complaint is one which can be heard by them. The *Local Authority* cannot investigate a complaint, it can only investigate the process followed by the governing body.

If you are still unhappy, the final resort is the *Secretary of State for Education and Skills*.

Russell Hall Primary School wants to work in partnership with parents and will work hard to resolve parental complaints to the best of its ability.

Headteacher \_\_\_\_\_  
Date \_\_\_\_\_

Chair of Governors \_\_\_\_\_  
Date \_\_\_\_\_