

Feltham Hill Infant & Nursery School

Complaints Policy

The Complaints Policy is used when usual procedures for raising concerns have been unsuccessful.

September 2019

Prepared by: DH Sept 2019

Discussed with: HT & SLT (Sept 2019)

Shared with staff - briefing

Shared with governors through governors shared space

To be Reviewed and Updated: Sept 2021

Introduction

- The school is committed to providing a good service to pupils and parents/carers, to communicate effectively with families and to engage constructively with the local community.
- On occasion however, concerns may arise about actions, or omissions, by the school or by staff.
- Where such concerns do arise the school will aim to resolve matters quickly and fairly through informal discussion and action.
- However, in some cases this may not be possible and the concern may instead result in a formal complaint.
- The school's complaints procedure sets out how such complaints may be made and how they will be handled.
- This procedure fulfils the requirements of The Education Act 2002 (Section 29) which requires all governing bodies to have a procedure to deal with complaints relating to aspects of the school, and any community services that the school provides.

Exceptions

- This procedure does not apply to (and should not be used for) statutory appeals in relation to:
 - Admissions
 - Exclusions
 - Statements for children with special educational and disability needs (SEND)
- Similarly, it should not be used for dealing with complaints relating to:
 - Child protection & Safeguarding
 - Staff discipline, Capability or Grievance
- These are the subject of specific separate policies:
Whistleblowing,
Staff Code of Conduct, Discipline & Grievance procedures,
Child Protection & Safeguarding
Pay Policy including Performance Management.

Who can raise a concern or make a complaint?

- Anyone who has dealings with the school can use this procedure, whether a pupil, a parent/carer, a visitor, local resident or a provider of a service to the school.

How will my concern or complaint be handled?

The procedure has three stages:

1. Responding to concerns
2. Investigating complaints
3. An Appeal to the governing body

- At any point in the handling of your complaint, there is the possibility of a 'resolution' meeting.
- The Headteacher will try to deal with your complaint as quickly as possible.

1. Responding to concerns

- If your concern is about something that a person has or has not done, for example the Headteacher, member of staff, a governor, or a volunteer, you should make an arrangement through the school office to speak to a Senior Leader.
- If your concern is about an aspect of school practice or policy, you should contact the Headteacher.
- The school wants to respond to your concern as quickly as possible, but it may not be possible to arrange an immediate meeting: an appointment within a few days may be necessary.
- Most concerns are usually resolved at this stage.

2. Investigating complaints

- If you remain dissatisfied by the schools' response to your concern, then you should make a complaint to the Headteacher.
- The Headteacher will arrange for the complaint to be investigated and respond to you within a reasonable time.
- If your complaint is about the Headteacher, you should contact the Chair of Governors via the school office, who will arrange for it to be investigated by a nominated member of the governing body.
- If your complaint is about the Chair, you should contact the Headteacher.
- In all cases you should:
 - state that you are making a complaint
 - give specific details
 - say what you want the school to do to put things right
- You should set out your complaint in writing.
- To facilitate this, the school has prepared a form for this purpose (Appendix A) copies of which are available from the school office or can be downloaded from the website.
- Please be aware that if your complaint alleges misconduct by a member of staff, any investigation by the school and any subsequent formal action is protected by confidentiality.
- You will not necessarily know the outcome and the right of appeal may not apply.

3. An appeal to the governing body

- If you remain dissatisfied with the outcome of the investigation into your complaint, you may appeal to the governing body within 5 days.
- The Chair of governors or another governor will arrange for a panel of governors to consider your appeal and respond to you within a set timescale.

- For complaints about staff (except the Headteacher) or volunteers who work in school, this is the final stage of the complaints procedure and the panel's decision is final.
- If you are complaining about either the Headteacher or a member of the governing body, and are dissatisfied with the nominated governor's response, you have a further right to appeal to a panel of governors (not including the nominated governor who first investigated your complaint).
- The letter giving the school's decision following the investigation will tell you how to make an appeal; by writing to the Chair of governors.
- The governing body will arrange for a panel of three governors, who have not previously been involved in handling your complaint.
- The panel may either hear your appeal in person or review your complaint on the basis of any documentary evidence.
- After this the panel will notify you of their decision within 7 days.
- This will include informing you that the school's procedure has been exhausted and that the matter is now closed.
- Please note that there is no further right of appeal to the school against the decision.
- However, you may contact the local authority if you feel that there are still serious allegations of gross misconduct (contact details Appendix B).

Unreasonably persistent, abusive or harassing complainants and vexatious complaints

The school expects anyone who wishes to raise concerns with the school to:

- treat all staff with courtesy and respect;
- respect the needs of pupils and staff within the school;
- recognise the time constraints under which members of staff in schools work and allow the school a reasonable time to respond to the concern;
- Whilst the school recognises that some concerns may relate to serious and distressing incidents, there will be no acceptance of threatening or harassing behaviour, and Leaders/Governors will take steps supported by legal action as appropriate to ensure that the school can continue its work safely and securely.

Appendix A

School Complaint
Name:
Staff/Governor involved:
Details of Concerns/Issues:
Leader/Governor spoken to and initial outcomes:

Further outcomes needed from the school:

Appendix B

Contact Details

Name	Contact Details
Headteacher Angela White	Email office@fhi.hounslow.sch.uk
Chair of Governors Sarah Pearce	Phone 0208 890 3814
London Borough of Hounslow Complaint about a school	Website www.hounslow.gov.uk Governing Bodies Section Children's, Health and Adults' Services Hounslow House 7 Bath Road Hounslow TW3 3EB