



South Bank Community Primary School Complaints Policy

We believe that our school provides a good education for all our children, and that the Headteacher and other staff work very hard to build positive relationships with all parents. However, there may be times when the school receives a complaint from a parent or other party. This policy sets out the procedure that the staff follow on receipt of a complaint.

1 Principles

- i. Informal concerns relating to the school or the provision of facilities or services will be treated seriously at the earliest stage.
- ii. Concerns will be handled by the appropriate person – member of the Support Staff, Class Teacher, Team Leader or member of the Leadership Group.
- iii. Most concerns will be addressed immediately by telephone or meeting. A record of the complaint and the outcome of the contact will be kept.
- iv. If a concern needs further investigation, collection of information or referral to another member of staff, a record of the concern and action taken, so far, will be passed to that member of staff. Full details of the investigation, including any contact made with the complainant, must be kept and filed once the matter has been resolved.
- v. The Headteacher must be kept informed at all stages.

2 Investigating Complaints

- i. Our school aims to be fair, open and honest when dealing with any complaint. In all cases, we put the interests of the child above all other issues.
- ii. It is suggested that at each stage, the person investigating the complaint ensures that they:
 - establish what has happened so far, and who has been involved
 - clarify the nature of the complaint and what remains unresolved
 - contact/meet with the complainant (if unsure/further information is necessary)
 - clarify what the complainant thinks would resolve the issue
 - interview those involved in the matter allowing them to be accompanied if they wish
 - conduct the interview with an open mind and be persistent in questioning if necessary
 - keep notes of interviews.

3 Resolving Complaints

- i. If a parent is concerned about anything to do with the education that we are providing at our school, they should, in the first instance, discuss the matter with their child's class teacher. All teachers work very hard to ensure that each child is happy at school, and is making good progress; they always want to know if there is a problem, so that they can take action before the problem seriously affects the child's progress.
- ii. At each stage, the person dealing with the complaint should consider ways in which the issue can be resolved. It might be sufficient to acknowledge that the complaint is valid in whole or in part. It might also be appropriate to offer one/more of the following:
 - apology
 - explanation
 - admission that the situation could have been handled differently/better
 - assurance that the event instigating the complaint will not recur
- iii. It would be useful if complainants were encouraged to state what actions they think might resolve the problem at any/each stage. An admission that the school could have handled the situation differently/better is not the same as an admission of negligence.

- iv. An effective procedure will identify areas of agreement between the parties. It is of equal importance to clarify any misunderstandings as this can create a positive atmosphere in which to discuss any outstanding issues.
- v. If the concern is not resolved, it should be referred to a senior member of staff.

4 Complaints

- i. When a concern is unresolved, a complaint must be made formally. This should be in writing, using a Complaints Form and the complaint dealt with by the appropriate Team Leader or member of the Leadership Team initially and referred to the Headteacher, if necessary.
- ii. Complaints against a member of staff will be referred to the Headteacher who may decide to conduct an investigation under the Disciplinary Procedure.
- iii. Complaints about the Headteacher, another individual or the school may be made to a Governor (in the first instance) or the Education Department. These will be referred to the Headteacher and a response made after consulting with the appropriate member of staff. Where the complaint refers to the Headteacher, another member of the Leadership Team or a representative of the LA may be involved.
- iv. The Headteacher will inform the Chair of Governors if the complaint cannot be resolved following an investigation and the recommended action followed. Details of the investigation and a report of action will be kept in writing.
- v. Where a complaint is not resolved by the school, the LA will take up the matter under their Complaints Procedure.