

Dewhurst St Mary CE Primary School

Complaints Policy

January 2016

School Vision

Dewhurst St Mary CofE is committed to nurturing learners who think creatively and achieve their potential reflecting our core values of independence, confidence and respect.

Dream Believe Achieve

Introduction

We strive to provide a good education for all our children. The Headteacher and staff work very hard to build positive relationships with all parents/carers. However, the school is obliged to have procedures in place in case there are complaints by parents/carers. The following policy sets out the procedures that the school follows in such cases.

If any parents/carers are unhappy with the education that their child is receiving, or have any concerns relating to the school, we encourage them to talk to the child's class teacher immediately.

We deal with all complaints in accordance with procedures laid down by the Herts for Learning (HfL). If the school itself cannot resolve a complaint, those concerned can refer the matter to the HfL.

All parents/carers have the right, as a last resort, to appeal to the Secretary of State for Education, if they still feel that their complaint has not been properly addressed.

Aims

Our school aims to be fair, open and honest when dealing with any complaint. We give careful consideration to all complaints, and deal with them as swiftly as possible. We aim to resolve any complaint through dialogue and mutual understanding. In all cases we put the interests of the child above all else. We provide sufficient opportunity for any complaint to be fully discussed, and then resolved.

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The complaints process

If parents/carers are 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. In our experience most matters of concern can be resolved positively in this way. All teachers work very hard to ensure that each child is happy at school, and is making good progress. They naturally want to know if there is a problem, so that they can take action before it seriously affects the child's progress.

Where parents/carers feel that a situation has not been resolved through contact with the class teacher, or that their concern is of a sufficiently serious nature, they should make an appointment to discuss it with the Headteacher. The Headteacher considers any such complaint very seriously, and investigates each case thoroughly. Most complaints are normally resolved by this stage.

Should any parents/carers have a complaint about the Headteacher, they should first make an informal approach to the Chair of the Governing Body, who is obliged to investigate it. S/He will do all s/he can to resolve the issue through a dialogue with the school, but if parents/carers are unhappy with the outcome, they can make a formal complaint, as outlined below.

Only if an informal complaint fails to resolve the matter should a formal complaint be made to the Governing Body. This complaint must be made in writing, stating the nature of the complaint, and how the school has handled it so far. The parents/carers should send this written complaint to the Chair of Governors, c/o the school office, or by e-mail to governors@dewhurst.herts.sch.uk .

The Complaints Panel of the Governing Body must consider all written complaints within three weeks of receipt. It will arrange a meeting to discuss the complaint, and will invite the person making it to attend the meeting, so that s/he can explain the complaint in more detail. The school gives the complainant at least three days' notice of the meeting.

After hearing all the evidence, the governors will consider their decision and inform the parents/carers about it in writing. The governors do all

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they can at this stage to resolve the complaint to the parents/carers satisfaction.

If the complaint is not resolved, parents/carers may make representation to the LEA. Further information about this process is available from the school or from the LEA. A further meeting is chaired by an independent person, who considers all the evidence and makes a further judgement in an attempt to resolve the complaint.

If any parents/carers are still not content that the complaint has been dealt with properly, then s/he is entitled to appeal to the Secretary of State for Education.

Monitoring and review

The governors monitor the complaints procedure, in order to ensure that all complaints are handled properly. The Headteacher logs all complaints received by the school, and records how they were resolved. Governors examine this log on an annual basis.

Governors take into account any local or national decisions that affect the complaints process, and make any modifications necessary to this policy. This policy is made available to all parents/carers, so that they can be properly informed about the complaints process.

This policy is reviewed every two years, or before if necessary.

Drafted by: Chris Robinson
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