



# **Complaints Policy**

## **Policy statement**

This policy is intended to ensure there are consistent systems in place for parents/carers to raise concerns and make complaints at Porters Grange Primary School. Where a concern is brought to our attention it can almost always be resolved through discussions with staff. However, sometimes issues are more complex and take time to resolve.

There needs to be clarity as to the difference between a concern and a complaint. There are many occasions where concerns are resolved straight away through discussions with office staff, support staff, class teachers or senior staff. Parents are able to raise concerns with members of staff without formality, either in person, over the telephone or in writing, and every effort is made to resolve the issue. On occasions it may be appropriate for someone to act on behalf of a parent and this is taken into consideration.

### **Stage 1: Making a Complaint**

Where no satisfactory solution has been found, parents will be advised that if they wish their concern to be considered further they should make an appointment with either of the Heads of School. The Head of School will meet with the complainant at the earliest available opportunity in order to discuss the complaint and decide whether further investigation is necessary. In some cases the Head of School may already have been involved in looking at the matter and it may be appropriate to delegate any investigation to another member of senior staff. If the complaint is against either of the Heads of School this process should be carried out by the Executive Headteacher. If the complaint is against the Executive Headteacher then it should be carried out by the Chair of Governors.

Every attempt will be made to resolve the complaint quickly, following any investigation. If necessary, the Heads of School will interview witnesses and take statements from those involved. The Heads of School will keep records of meetings and will respond to the complainant. Where appropriate, this will include what action the school will take to resolve the complaint. The complainant will be advised that should they wish to take the complaint further they should notify the Chair of Governors within 10 working days.

### **Stage 2: Formal Complaints to the Local Governing Body**

If a parent is still not satisfied they should write formally to the Chair of the Local Governing Body via the Clerk to the Governors. Enclosed with the letter should be details of the complaint and an indication of which matters remain unresolved. The governing body must consider all written complaints within three weeks of receipt. It arranges a meeting to discuss the complaint, and invites the person making it to attend the meeting, so that he/she can explain the complaint in more detail. After hearing all the evidence, the governors consider their decision and inform the parent about it in writing. The governors do all they can at this stage to resolve the complaint to the parent's satisfaction.

### **Stage 3: Complaints to Portico Trust**

If following the complaint to the Local Governing Body Parents feel that their complaint has not been satisfactorily resolved and provided they have followed the school complaints procedure, they should write to:

Chair of the Portico Trustees  
C/O West Leigh Junior School  
Ronald Hill Grove  
Leigh-on-Sea  
SS9 2JB

Included in the letter should be details of the complaint and an indication of which matters require a resolution. The Trustees will do all they can to resolve the complaint to the parent's satisfaction.

#### **Stage 4: Complaints to the Secretary of State for Education**

Southend Borough Council will no longer consider complaints about schools unless they relate to SEN provision and parents have already completed the school complaints procedure. If any parent is still not content that the complaint has been dealt with properly at this stage, then he/she is entitled to appeal to the Secretary of State for Education. For the Secretary of State to intervene in a maintained school following a complaint, she needs to be sure either that:

- The school has acted or is proposing to act unreasonably in the exercise or performance of its functions under certain legislation; or
- The school has failed to discharge a duty at all under certain legislation.

#### **Monitoring and review**

The governors monitor the complaints procedure, in order to ensure that all complaints are handled properly.

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, so that they can be properly informed about the complaints process.