



Complaints Procedure

Latest Review: June 2018

Agreed by Governors:.....Chair of Governors

Agreed by Head teacher:.....Head teacher

This policy should be used in conjunction with the DCSF Guidance which can be found below:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/school-complaints-procedures>

Introduction

The majority of issues raised by parents, the community or pupils, are concerns rather than complaints. As a school we are committed to taking concerns seriously, at the earliest stage, in the hope of keeping the number of formal complaints to a minimum and without needing formal procedures. However, depending on the nature of the complaint, parents/guardians may wish or be asked to follow the school's formal complaints procedure. For the school to be able to investigate a complaint, it needs to be made within one year of the incident occurring. If a complaint is older than a year it will not be investigated.

The prime aim of Withington School's policy is to resolve the complaint as fairly and speedily as possible. Formal complaints will be dealt with in a sensitive, impartial and confidential manner. Malicious complaints may incur appropriate action by the school.

The following details outline the stages that can be used to resolve complaints.

The Withington School Policy has four main stages.

In summary they are as follows: -

- **Stage 1** – A concern is raised informally with a staff member or governor.
- **Stage 2** – Formal complaint is heard by the Head teacher.
- **Stage 3** – Complaint is investigated by the Head teacher.
- **Stage 4** – Complaint is heard by Governing Body's Complaints Appeal Panel.

Stage 1 – Raising a concern

Concerns can be raised with the school at any time and will often generate an immediate response, which will resolve the concern. The school requests that parents make their first contact to their child's class teacher. On some occasions the concern raised may require investigation, or discussion with others, in which case the parent will receive an informal but informed response within 2 working days. The vast

majority of concerns will be satisfactorily dealt with in this way. However, if the parent is not satisfied with the result at stage 1, they must write to the Head Teacher within 10 school working days and state what they would like the school to do. The school will then look at the complaint at the next stage.

Stage 2 – Complaint heard by the Head Teacher

Formal complaints shall be put in writing and addressed to the head teacher. The complaint will be logged, including the date it was received. The school will normally acknowledge receipt of the complaint within 2 school working days of receiving it. In many cases this response will also report on the action the school has taken to resolve the issue. Alternatively, a meeting may be convened to discuss the matter further. This meeting will normally take place within 10 school working days. The aim will be to resolve the matter as speedily as possible. However, if the parent is not satisfied with the result at stage 2 they must write to the school within 10 school working days of getting our response. The parent will need to tell the school why they are still not satisfied and what they would like the school to do.

Stage 3 – Complaint is investigated by the Head Teacher

If the matter has not been resolved at Stage 2, the head teacher will arrange for a further investigation. Following the investigation, the Head Teacher will normally give a written response within 10 school working days. If the parent is still dissatisfied with the result at stage 3, they will need to let the school know in writing within 10 school working days of getting the response.

Stage 4 – Complaint heard by the Governing Body's Complaints Appeal Panel

If the matter has still not been resolved at Stage 3, then you will need to write to the Chair of Governors giving details of the complaint. The Chair or a nominated Governor will convene a complaints panel. The hearing will normally take place within 10 school working days of the receipt of the written request for Stage 4 investigation.

The aim of the Appeal panel hearing is to impartially resolve the complaint and to achieve reconciliation between the school and the complainant. All parties will be notified of the Panel's decision in writing within three school working days after the date of the hearing. The letter will also contain what needs to be done if they wish to take the matter further.

- **N.B.** In cases where the matter concerns the conduct of the Head teacher the Chair of Governors will be informed of the complaint. The Chair of Governors will arrange for the matter to be investigated. In cases where the matter concerns the conduct of a member of the Governing Body the member will be informed of the complaint.

The Governors' appeal hearing is the last school-based stage of the complaints process.

For further advice and guidance about the school's Complaints Procedure please contact Gloucestershire County Council Customer Services on 01452 427614

The school's Governors have the legal responsibility for dealing with complaints about the school.

The County Council records and monitors complaints about schools if parents notify them of their concerns; to do this, send a copy of your letter to the Governors to the Customer Feedback Officer, Children and Young People's Directory.