

**Hookstone Chase Primary School**  
**Concerns and Complaints about the School**  
**Guidance Notes for Parents**

**Introduction**

We strive to ensure that our school provides a good education for all our children, and all the staff work hard to build positive relationships and work in partnership with all parents. However, the school is obliged to have procedures in place in the event of complaints by parents. The following policy sets out the procedure that the school follows in such cases.

**Aims and objectives**

We aim 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 and, in all cases, we put the interests of the child above all other issues. We provide sufficient opportunity for any complaint to be fully discussed, and then resolved.

**The Complaints Process**

**If you have a suggestion or a concern**

We would like you to tell us about it. We welcome suggestions for improving our work in the school and want to know if you have any concerns. Be assured that no matter what you wish to tell us, our support and respect for you and your child will not be affected in any way. If you have a concern, please let us know as soon as possible. It is difficult for us to properly investigate an incident or problem that happened some time ago.

**What to do first**

Most concerns can be sorted out quickly by speaking with your child's class teacher and this is who should be contacted in the first instance. Where a parent feels that a situation has not been resolved through contact with the class teacher, or that their concern is of a sufficiently serious nature, then parents should contact the Headteacher. It is usually best to discuss the problem face to face so you may need to make an appointment by contacting the school office. You can take a friend or relative to the meeting if you wish. The Headteacher considers any such complaint very seriously and investigates each case thoroughly. Most complaints are normally resolved at this stage.

All staff will make every effort to resolve your problem informally. They will make sure that they understand what you feel went wrong, and they will explain their actions to you. They will ask what you would like the school to do to put things right. Of course, this does not mean that in every case it will be possible to achieve a satisfactory outcome but it will help both you and the school to understand both sides of the question. It may also help to prevent a similar problem arising again.

### **If you are still concerned**

We will do all that we can to resolve matters straight away but if you are not entirely satisfied with the teacher's response (or with the headteacher's initial reaction if she has already been involved) you can make a formal complaint to the headteacher or Chairman of Governors. This should be made in writing.

You may find it helpful at this stage to have a copy of the full statement of the governing body's complaints procedure as this explains in detail how complaints are dealt with. This is available from the school office.

The headteacher will contact you to discuss the problem. Usually you will be invited to a face to face meeting. Again you may take a friend or someone else with you if you wish. The headteacher will then conduct a full investigation of the complaint and may interview any members of staff or pupils involved. You will receive a written response to your complaint.

### **If you are still unhappy**

We very much hope and expect that we will have been able to resolve the problem by this stage. However, if you are still not satisfied you may wish to make a formal complaint to the governing body. You should write to the Chair of Governors, c/o the school. Initially your complaint may, depending on circumstances, be dealt with by the Chairman of Governors and he will try to see if there is a way forward. (At this stage the complaint will not be made known to other governors. This is so that if it is necessary for the governors to hold a formal hearing of your complaint they will be able to maintain impartiality.)

If the chair is unable to resolve the matter, your complaint will then be heard by a committee of three governors – the Complaints Review Committee. As explained above, they will have no prior knowledge of the case and will thus be able to make a fresh, unbiased assessment. You will be invited to attend the committee meeting, accompanied by a friend or representative if you wish, and to put your side of the matter. The Headteacher will also attend to give her account. The governing body's complaints procedure explains how these meetings are conducted. You will be informed in writing of the Committee's decision.

### **If your complaint is about an action of the headteacher personally**

If your complaint is about an action of the headteacher personally, then you should refer it to the Chairman of Governors. You can contact her by writing c/o the school. She will discuss the matter with you and attempt to resolve the problem. If you are not satisfied with the outcome of this process you will be asked to detail your complaint in writing and it will be considered by the Complaints Review Committee of the governing body – see above.

### **Further action**

Complaints about school problems are usually settled within the school but in exceptional cases it may be possible to refer the matter to an outside body such as the Local Authority or the Secretary of State for Education and Skills. If necessary, the Chair of the Complaints Review Committee will let you have further information.