



ST JAMES HATCHAM
CHURCH OF ENGLAND PRIMARY SCHOOL

Policy for General Complaints Procedure

St James Hatcham CE School follows the SDBE Complaints Procedures

Aims of this policy

- To encourage strong home-school links.
- To reaffirm the partnership between governors, staff and parents as we work together for the good of the pupils in the school.
- To show the school's willingness to listen to criticism and challenge and to respond quickly and positively in order to bring about improvement.
- To insure that it is easy for parents to inform staff and governors of any concerns they may have.

Coverage of this policy

This policy covers all matters relating to the actions of staff and school procedures where they affect individual pupils.

Matters relating to the curriculum, exclusion, admissions, SEN, child protection and charging for school activities are subject to separate procedures and are not dealt with here.

In General

- We discourage anonymous complaints and they will not be investigated under this procedure unless there are exceptional circumstances.
- To allow for proper investigation, complaints should be brought to the attention of the school as soon as possible. Any matters raised more than three months after the event being complained of will not be considered save in exceptional circumstances.
- As a guide, investigation of any complaint or review request will begin within five school days, save in exceptional circumstances (INSET days, school holidays etc.) The investigation will be completed as soon as reasonably practicable.
- Confidentiality should be stressed at all times. The proceedings surrounding a complaint, as well as oral and written information should be handled in confidence.
- All persons involved in a complaint have equal rights.
- The school's attitude towards a pupil will never be affected by a parental complaint.
- The school will not seek to directly involve pupils in a complaints procedure.

Stages in the Complaints Procedure

Stage 1 – Informal

- Discussion of concerns with class teacher – by letter, telephone or in person by appointment. We hope and expect that most concerns can be resolved at this stage.
- If unsatisfied, parents may ask to discuss concerns with the headteacher. They will be given the leaflet, “Expressing a concern; Notes for Parents.” (Appendix A)
- If still unsatisfied parents may make a formal complaint in writing to the headteacher. A brief form may be made available to those parents who may wish to use it when making a complaint. (Appendix B)

Stage 2 – Formal

- On receipt of a formal complaint the headteacher or designated member of staff investigates.
- The complaint should include details that might assist the investigation, such as names of witnesses, dates and times of events etc.
- The headteacher should try to give an indication of what action, if any, will be taken, the timescale within which it will take place and how they will be notified of any outcome.
- The headteacher will collect other evidence as they deem necessary.
- The member of staff involved should be notified that a complaint has been received, provided with a copy of the complaint and be informed that an investigation will be carried out.
- If a member of staff – who is the subject of the complaint – is interviewed, a friend or representative may accompany them if they wish.

- The headteacher tells the parents the matter has been fully investigated and that appropriate procedures are being followed, which are strictly confidential (e.g. where staff disciplinary procedures are being followed).

The headteacher may also tell parents that if they are not satisfied, they may send a written complaint to the Chair of Governors.

Any review request that is based solely on dissatisfaction with the outcome, rather than any identified failure to deal with a complaint according to procedure, should not be accepted.

- Chair of Governing body or designated governor, investigates.
- Chair sends a written summary of findings to parents together with their decision.
- If the parents are not happy with the chair’s decision they may ask for the matter to be referred to the governing body’s Complaints Committee.
- Following a referral by the Chair of Governors, the Complaints Committee considers the complaint and reaches a decision; the parents are informed of the decision.

Complaints about the Headteacher

Complaints about the headteacher should be made or sent to the Chair of the Governing Body, who will follow a similar procedure as above to investigate the matter.

Monitoring Complaints

Ensuring confidentiality at all times, the school will monitor the handling and outcomes of any formal complaints;

- The number of complaints and categories
- Whether the complaints were dealt with within the agreed time limits
- The stages at which complaints were ended satisfactorily
- The effectiveness of the school's overall policy.

Policy Review.

This policy will be reviewed every 2 years.

Ms S E McFarlane
January 2015

Expressing a Concern – Notes for parents

If you have a concern:

We would like you to tell us about it so that we can talk with you and see how best to remove your concern. We welcome suggestions for improving our work in the school.

Whatever your concern, please know that we shall treat it as being strictly confidential.

Be assured that no matter what you want to share with us, our support and respect for you and your child in the school will not be affected in any way.

Please do not delay telling us of your concern. It is difficult for us to investigate properly an incident or problem, which is more than a day or two old.

After hearing your concern we shall act as quickly as we can. Please allow time for an action we may take to be effective.

What to do first:

Contact your child's class teacher and arrange a time when you can discuss your concern.

It may be possible for you to see the teacher straight away, but usually it is better to make an appointment so that you can sit and talk things through.

What to do next:

If you are still unhappy, ask for an appointment with the headteacher. Here, you may be given a copy of our Complaints Policy.

We hope that problems will mostly be resolved at this stage.

However, you may still be unsatisfied and at this point you may wish to put your complaint in writing. A Complain Form is attached to the Complaints Policy, should you wish to use that.

After this, you may have to wait a short time while investigations are carried out. Every effort will be made to resolve the situation as quickly as possible and the headteacher will send you a written response.

If you are still unhappy – asking for a review:

If you are still not satisfied you may wish to write to the Chair of the Governing Body.

If your review request is based solely on dissatisfaction with the outcome, rather than in the way it was dealt with, it will be denied.

If appropriate, the Chair of the Governing Body will probably discuss the matter with the headteacher and may arrange for further investigation. They will then write to you to say what further action may or may not be taken in response to your complaint.

Further action:

The Chair of the Governing Body, or you, may ask for your complaint to be heard by the Complaints Committee of the Governing Body.

The Complaints Committee would listen to you, to the headteacher and others involved in reaching a decision.

Contact details:

Chair of Governors
Mr Malcolm Edwards
80 Waller Road
New Cross
London SE14 5LY



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COMPLAINT FORM

Please complete this form and return it to the headteacher who will acknowledge its receipt and inform you of the next stage in the procedure.

Your name: _____	
Relationship with school (e.g. parent of pupil in school) _____	
Pupil's name (if relevant to your complaint) _____	
Your Address:	
Daytime telephone number:	
Evening telephone number:	
Please give as much detail as you can of your complaint (try to include dates, times, any witnesses etc.) to allow the matter to be fully investigated. (You may use another sheet of paper if necessary).	
What action, if any, have you already taken to resolve your complaint? (who have you spoken with or written to and what was the outcome?)	
What actions do you feel might resolve the problem at this stage?	
Signed:	Date:
School Use	
Date received:	By:
Date acknowledgement sent:	By:

