



School

Complaints Procedure

A Leaflet for Guidance

WINWICK C of E PRIMARY SCHOOL



Why have a complaints procedure?

To show parents that the school cares about what they think.

To contribute towards School Improvement. Underlying issues may emerge from a complaint so monitoring and reviewing complaints can be a useful tool in evaluating school performance, leading to change and improvement.

To inform good practice for responding to parents' concerns: complaints are managed in a structured way, preventing concerns developing into battles because they are handled badly.

To prevent bad feeling developing if a problem remains unresolved.

To prevent complaints becoming protracted where a complainant tries to reopen the same issue.

To protect **all sides** of a dispute by providing a fair hearing.

How you can complain

At school we make many decisions every day. We try hard to do our best for all our pupils. Your views help us plan for the future. We like to know when things are going well. We also want parents to tell us about their worries, concerns or complaints as soon as possible. It is much easier for us to sort out a recent problem than something that happened some time ago.

If you are unhappy with any of our actions or lack of action, please feel able to tell us your concern. If you do not tell us what is worrying you, we cannot explain our actions or put things right.

Our promise to you

- We will deal with your concern or complaint honestly, politely and in confidence.
- It will be looked into thoroughly, fairly and as quickly as possible.
- We will keep you up to date with what we are doing.
- We will apologise if we have made a mistake.
- We will tell you what we are going to do if things need to change.

What to do first

If you have a concern about anything we do you can tell us by telephone, in person or in writing. Most concerns or complaints will be sorted out quickly either by putting things right or by explaining the school's actions to you.

Try to go to the member of staff involved or your child's class teacher who will either deal with your issue or pass you on to someone who is more able to help.

Please remember the beginning or end of the school day can be a very busy time. If you talk to a teacher at these times, for practical reasons, it may not be possible to sort things out there and then. Be ready for the teacher to say she or he will see you or ring you as soon as possible. This is because we want to give your worries the attention they deserve. You should not be asked to wait more than a week and often she or he will discuss things with you much sooner. We hope this will be enough to put things right. Sometimes the teacher will send you a brief note after the phone call or meeting with details of what we are doing about your concern.

Making a complaint

If you have already told us about a concern but are not satisfied with how we have responded, you may wish to make a complaint.

We have a complaints procedure to make sure we respond to complaints in the best possible way. Our aim is to resolve complaints as quickly and as effectively as possible. The complaints procedure will tell you exactly what will happen and how long it should all take. If you want to look at it before speaking to us please contact Mrs Cameron at the front office, who will be happy to give you a copy or you can find this on the school website under Policies.

The procedure has three stages. We have time limits in our complaints procedure to make sure that complaints are dealt with as quickly as possible.

At Stage 1, We would like you to put your complaint first to the member of staff involved. If this is not possible, please go to a more senior member of staff: Mrs Duckett or Mrs Dymond. We will either meet you or, if you prefer, discuss your complaint on the phone. (If your concern involves the headteacher, you should put your complaint to the Chair of Governors, Mrs J Neal. All letters will be passed on to her.) Please try to do this not more than one day after getting a note explaining the teacher's response to your complaint. If we have not heard from you by then, we will assume that you do not want to take things further. If Mrs Dymond has already been involved you can complain formerly to the Chair of Governors, Mrs J Neal.

At Stage 2, Mrs Dymond will fully investigate if necessary and arrange to discuss your complaint with you, and then send a letter with an explanation or the actions the school will take to put things right.

Generally complaints are sorted out at Stage 1 or Stage 2, but occasionally parents still feel dissatisfied and if so have a right to explain their case to a panel of three school governors.

If you are not happy with the Headteacher's response to your complaint, please let us know not more than 10 school days after getting a letter from the Headteacher explaining the school's response to your complaint. If we have not heard from you by then, we will assume that you do not want to take things any further.

Stage 3. Occasionally parents still feel dissatisfied and if so, have a right to explain their case to a panel of three school Governors. A letter should be sent to Mrs J Neal, Chair of Governors and if appropriate you will be invited to the Governor's appeal hearing, which will be organised at a time which is suitable for you, Mrs Dymond and the Governors.

We hope very much that our complaints procedure will resolve all complaints in the school but a parent who is not satisfied may write to the local authority, **stage 4**, and the DfE **stage 5**.

Complaints will be treated with the utmost confidence. You and your child have a legal right to have a copy of your child's school records.

All complaints are reported to the school's governing body to enable the school to learn from them. Generally names will not be given.