

## Curriculum Complaints Policy

### Purpose

The aims of the school emphasise that the curriculum should meet the needs of each student. Where parents/guardians consider that this is not the case they have the right to make complaint to the Headteacher or the Governing Body. The Governors will consult with the Headteacher on how to resolve the complaint.

In order for this policy to be effective it adheres to the following principles, as defined by the DFE Best Practice Guidance for School Complaints Procedures, July 2016 and Complaints Procedure Toolkit, August 2014.

- Early resolution of problems by informal means wherever possible.
- The procedure to be accessible and publicised.
- The procedure should be simple to understand.
- The procedure should be impartial and non-adversarial.
- Investigation led by an independent person if possible.
- Swift handling with established time limits.
- Confidentiality to be respected.
- Effective response and appropriate address.

### Relationship to other policies

This policy should be read in conjunction with other policies relating to the school curriculum and PHSE provision, assessment and recording and reporting, as well as the general complaints policy and procedures.

### Roles and responsibilities of Headteacher, other staff and governors

The Headteacher will:

- Take all complaints seriously and deal with them sensitively.
- Request that the complaint is put in writing so that it can be investigated.
- Respond to the complaint personally or delegate it to an experienced member of the Senior Leadership Team (SLT).
- Involve other members of staff as appropriate.
- Where necessary, explain the legal position with regard to the National Curriculum, and the scope available to the school to make changes.
- Advise the complainant of their right to pursue the matter with the Governing Body.
- Ensure the Governing Body is advised of any complaint and provided with guidance to assist the decision-making process.

The Governing Body will ensure that a complaints committee of three Governors is established; one of the Governors will act as Chair of the committee. The meeting will additionally have the Clerk to the Governing Body in attendance. The committee is delegated with the responsibility to hear complaints, advise the Headteacher on the action/decision required, and to write to the

complainant within 10 school days, explaining the decision made and/or action taken. If the complaint is not upheld, it will inform the complainant of their right to appeal to the LA.

### **Matters covered by the complaints committee**

Our complaints procedure is for use by parents if they believe that the school is failing to:

- Provide a curriculum that meets the needs of their child.
- Comply with the law on charging for school activities.
- Provide religious education or regular collective worship.
- Teaching subjects of which the parents disapprove on religious grounds.
- Provide statutory information.
- Carry out a statutory duty.
- Act reasonably.

Complaints about staff are not covered by this procedure. These will be dealt with by the Headteacher, or his appointed representative, and, where appropriate, the procedure outlined in the disciplinary policy will be implemented.

### **Procedures for parents and carers**

Where parents/carers have concerns that relate to any of the aforementioned matters, they should follow the procedure outlined below:

- Make contact with their child's subject teacher or Form Tutor.
- If not resolved:
  - Make contact with or an appointment to express the concern to the Head of Year.
- If not satisfied:
  - Refer the matter in writing to the Headteacher.
- If not satisfied:
  - Refer the matter to the Governing Body via the Clerk.
- If still not satisfied:
  - Refer the matter to the local authority (LA), which will hear the complaint within 15 working days.

### **The hearing procedure of the Governing Body**

Where the complainant chooses to attend in person, the usual order of proceedings shall be as follows:

- The Chair of the committee will welcome the complainant, any representative and introduce those present.
- The complainant may, if he or she chooses, restate the nature of the complaint.
- The complainant may be asked questions by the committee and by the Headteacher.
- The Headteacher may be asked to make a statement to the committee regarding the matter of the complaint and then may be asked questions of by the committee or by the complainant.
- The complainant may, if he or she chooses, summarise the complaint.
- The Headteacher, complainant and any friend/representative they have brought with them will be asked to leave the room.
- The committee shall consider at this meeting the complaint and any relevant information or factors. They shall only reach a decision after the Headteacher and, where relevant, the complainant and any friend/representative have withdrawn. The committee must decide:
  - To reject the complaint.
  - To uphold the complaint.
 or
  - To investigate the complaint further.
- The Clerk shall inform the complainant and the Headteacher in writing within five school days of:
  - The decision reached by the committee and the reasons for the decision. If the committee decides that the complaint falls outside the scope of a curriculum complaint, the clerk will inform the complainant of any further recourse he or she may have.
  - Any action taken or proposed if the complaint was upheld, including details of any request to those complained against to take particular actions to resolve the complaint.
  - The right of the complainant to appeal to the LA.

Where the complainant is dissatisfied with the decision made or the action taken or proposed to remedy the complaint, he or she may wish to pursue the matter. Further recourse can be taken by making a complaint to the LA and then to the Education Secretary under section 29 of the Education Act 2002. However, the Education Secretary's powers do not extend to reviewing decisions of complaints committees. The Education Secretary only has the power to decide whether the Governing Body concerned has acted unreasonably, or is in default of its statutory duties and to insist that this state of affairs does not continue.

### **Arrangements for monitoring and evaluation**

The Governing Body will receive a report as appropriate from the committee that has heard any complaints, indicating the number and nature of complaints, the recommended action or decisions taken and the outcomes of those decisions.

Approved by the Governors' Ethos Committee on 11<sup>th</sup> October 2017

Next Review: Autumn 2019

