

St. Mary's Hare Park Primary School and Nursery

Complaints Policy

1 Introduction

- 1.1 *We believe that our school provides a good education for all our children, and that the Headteacher and other staff work very hard to build positive relationships with all parents. However, the school is obliged to have procedures in place in case there are complaints by parents. The following policy sets out the procedure that the school follows in such cases.*
- 1.2 *If any parent is unhappy with the education that their child is receiving, or has any concern relating to the school, we encourage that person to talk to the child's class teacher immediately or, if appropriate, the Headteacher.*
- 1.3 *We deal with all complaints in accordance with procedures set out by the school and the Board of Trustees. If the school cannot resolve any complaint itself, those concerned can ask the Board of Trustees to intervene.*
- 1.4 *All parents have the right, as a last resort, to appeal to the Secretary of State for Education, if they feel that their complaint has not been properly addressed.*

2 Aims and objectives

- 2.1 *Our school aims 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.*

3 The complaints process

If a parent is concerned about anything to do with the education that we are providing at our school, they should, in the first instance, discuss the matter with their child's class teacher. Most matters of concern can be dealt with in this way. All teachers work very hard to ensure that each child is happy at school, and is making good progress; they always want to know if there is a problem, so that they can take action before the problem seriously affects the child's progress.

- 3.2 *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, they should make an appointment to discuss it with the Headteacher. The Headteacher considers any such complaint very seriously and investigates each case thoroughly. Most complaints are normally resolved at this stage.*

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- 3.3 *Where parents are not satisfied with the response a written complaint should be made to the Board of Trustees. This complaint must state the nature of the complaint and how the school and nominated Trustee have dealt with the matter so far. The parent should send this written complaint to the Chair of the Board of Trustees, Mr Keith Petty. The members of the Board will have had no dealings with the case up to this point.*
- 3.4 *The Board of Trustees must consider all written complaints within three weeks of receipt. It arranges a meeting to discuss the complaint, and invites the person making it to attend the meeting, so that s/he can explain her complaint in more detail. The school gives the complainant at least three days' notice of the meeting and advises that they may be accompanied by a friend/adviser if they so wish. At any such meeting an independent professional, Mrs Roz Ellenby (Headteacher of Goodrington Independent School), who has no connection with the running or management of the school, will be present.*
- 3.5 *After hearing all the evidence, the Board of Trustees, and the independent member, consider their decision and inform the parent about it in writing. The Trustees do all they can at this stage to resolve the complaint to the parent's satisfaction. All parties involved, and where relevant the person being complained about, are given a copy of any findings and recommendations. A written record is kept of all complaints and of whether they have been resolved at the preliminary stage or proceeded to a panel hearing. All correspondence, statements and records relating to individual complaints are kept strictly confidential except where procedures, as outlined in 3.6, are followed.*
- 3.6 *If any parent is still not content that the complaint has been dealt with properly, then s/he is entitled to appeal to the Secretary of State for Education.*

4 Monitoring and review

- 4.1 *The Board of Trustees monitor the complaints procedure, in order to ensure that all complaints are handled properly. The Headteacher logs all complaints received by the school and records how they were resolved. Trustees examine this log on an annual basis. Trustees take into account any local or national decisions that affect the complaints process, and make any modifications necessary to this policy. This policy is made available to all parents, so that they can be properly informed about the complaints process.*

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Step 1

If a parent is concerned about anything to do with the education provided at the school they should:

Discuss their concerns with the Class Teacher.

Where a situation has not been resolved, or the concern is of a sufficiently serious nature, the matter escalates to:

Step 2

An appointment with the Headteacher.

Where parents are not satisfied with the response the matter escalates to:

Step 3

A written complaint should be made to the Board of Trustees, addressed to the Chair of the Board of Trustees, Mr. Keith Petty. The complaint must state the nature of the grievance and how the school and nominated Trustee have dealt with the matter so far. Members of the Board will have had no dealings with the case up to this point.

The Board of Trustees must consider all written complaints within three weeks of receipt. A meeting will be arranged to discuss the complaint (with at least 3 days' notice) and the complainant may be accompanied by a friend/adviser. At any such meeting an independent professional, Mrs. Roz Ellenby (Headteacher of Goodrington Independent School), who has no connection with the running or management of the school, will be present. After hearing all the evidence, the parent is informed of the Board of Trustees' decision in writing.

If any parent is still not content that the complaint has been dealt with properly, then he/she is entitled to escalate to:

Step 4

Appeal to the Secretary of State for Education.