

Fullbrook Nursery and Little Explorers

COMPLAINTS POLICY AND PROCEDURES

Informal Complaints

Fullbrook Nursery School aims to deal quickly and effectively with any concerns about the service provided by the school. Where there is a concern about some aspect of the school's service a complaint should be taken in the first instance, to the adult concerned, where that adult is an employee of the school.

This concern should not be used for internal complaints for example, for issues covered by grievance and discipline procedures.

The majority of issues raised by parents/carers, pupils or the community are concerns rather than complaints. The school is committed to taking concerns seriously at the earliest stage in the hope of keeping the number of formal complaints to a minimum and without needing formal procedures. The prime aim of the school's policy is to resolve the complaint as fairly and speedily as possible.

The following details outline the stages that can be used to resolve complaints:
This complaints policy has three main stages;

- **Stage 1** – A concern is raised informally with staff member/Headteacher
- **Stage 2** – Formal complaint is heard by Chair of Governors
- **Stage 3** – Complaint is heard by Governing Body's Complaints Appeal panel

Stage 1 – Raising a concern

Concerns can be raised with the school at any time and will usually result in a speedy response which will resolve the concern. The school requests that the parents/carers make their first contact with the key worker, EYFS Lead Teacher or Headteacher. Sometimes the concerns raised will require investigation or discussion with others, in which case you will receive an initial response within a day or two and if required, a subsequent substantive response.

The vast majority of concerns will be satisfactorily dealt with in this way. However if you are not satisfied with the result at stage 1 and wish to make a formal complaint, please see Stage 2 of the complaints procedure for guidance.

Stage 2 – Formal Complaint

If you wish to make a formal complaint, please write to the Chair of Governors stating that you wish to make a formal complaint. Your letter should state details of the complaint and the outcome you are seeking. The Chair will acknowledge receipt of the complaint and will then investigate the complaint with the school. The investigation will be undertaken by the Chair or a person appointed by the Chair and acting on the Chair's behalf. The nature of the investigation will vary according to the complaint but may involve;

- Establishing **what** has happened so far, and **who** has been involved;
- clarifying the nature of the complaint and what remains unresolved;
- meeting with the complainant or contact them (if unsure or if further information is necessary);
- clarifying what the complainant feels would put things right;
- interviewing those involved in the matter and/or those complained of, allowing them to be accompanied if they wish;
- conducting the investigation with an open mind and be prepared to persist in the questioning;
- keeping notes of the interview

The Chair will write to the complainant following the investigation and will outline his/her findings. The response to a complaint may include one of the following:

- An apology

- An explanation
- An admission that the situation could have been handled differently or better (this should not be construed as an admission of negligence).

If you remain dissatisfied you will need to let the school know within 10 school working days of receiving the Chair's findings on the complaint. Your complaint will then be considered by a panel of Governors.

Stage 3 – Formal Complaint

The final stage will involve a panel of Governors. The Governors appeal hearing is the last school-based stage of the complaints process. The aim of the appeal panel hearing is to impartially resolve the complaint and to achieve reconciliation between the school and the complainant. The hearing will normally take place within 10 working days of the receipt of the written request. The panel will consider the Chair's investigation and report and will also consider the representations of the complainant. All parties will be notified of the panel's decision in writing within three working days after the date of the hearing. The Governors appeal hearing is the last school-based stage of the complaints process. If you believe that the Governing Body has acted unreasonably or has failed to carry out its statutory duties you may take your complaint to the Secretary of State for Education. The Secretary of State must be satisfied that a decision is unreasonable in the sense that no reasonable authority acting with due regard to its statutory responsibilities, would have reached that decision.

A complaint under Stage 3 of this procedure should be made in writing to the Clerk of the Governing Body.

The Terms of reference for the Complaints/Appeal Panel will be:

- To hear and determine the individual complaints or appeals
- To make recommendations on school policy as a result of school complaints
- To review the operation of the School's Complaints Procedure

The Panel can:

- Dismiss the complaint in whole or in part
- Uphold the complaint in whole or in part
- Decide on appropriate action to resolve the complaint
- Recommend any changes needed to the school systems to avoid a recurrence of the complaint

The Clerk of Governors will write to the complainant to report the outcome of the complaint.

Reviewed May 2017

By Andrina Flinders Head Teacher

Next review date; May 2019