

# School Complaints Procedure



## 1. Introduction

We strive to provide a good education for all our children. The Headteacher and 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 or guardians. The following policy sets out the procedures that the school follows in such cases.

If any parents are unhappy with the education that their child is receiving, or have any concerns relating to the school, we encourage them to talk to the child's class teacher immediately.

We deal with all complaints in accordance with procedures laid down by the Department for Education. If the school itself cannot resolve a complaint, those concerned can refer the matter to the Secretary of State for Education.

## 2. Aims

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. In all cases we put the interests of the child above all else. We provide sufficient opportunity for any complaint to be fully discussed, and then resolved.

## 3. The complaints process

**3.1** 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. In our experience, most matters of concern can be resolved positively in this way. All teachers work very hard to ensure that each child is happy at school, and is making good progress; they naturally want to know if there is a problem, so that they can take action before it seriously affects the child's progress.

**3.2** Where parents feel 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 by this stage.

**3.3** Should any parents still not be satisfied with how the Headteacher dealt with the complaint, they should first make an informal approach to one of the members of the governing body, who is obliged to investigate it. The governor in question will do all s/he can to resolve the issue through a dialogue with the school, but if parents are unhappy with the outcome, they can make a formal complaint, as outlined below.

**3.4** Only if the matter remains unresolved after an informal complaint should a **formal complaint** be made to the governing body. This complaint must be made in writing, stating the nature of the complaint, and how the school has handled it so far. The parent should send this written complaint to the Chair of Governors. (*attached Formal Complaint form should be used*)

**3.5** The Chair of Governors must consider all written complaints within three weeks of receipt. The clerk to the Governors will arrange a meeting with a panel of three governors, not previously involved with the complaint. The person making the complaint will be invited to attend the meeting, so that s/he can explain the complaint in more detail. The school gives the complainant at least three days' notice of the meeting.

**3.6** After hearing all the evidence, the governors will consider their decision and inform the complainant, Headteacher and full Governing Body of the outcome, in writing. The governors do all they can at this stage to resolve the complaint to the parent's satisfaction.

**3.7** If any parent is still not content that the complaint has been dealt with satisfactorily, then s/he is entitled to appeal to the Secretary of State for Education.

#### **4. Monitoring and review**

The governors 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.

Governors 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.

#### **5. Complaints not in the scope of this procedure**

In general, internal school matters are the responsibility of the school governing body. However, you may have a complaint which relates to something which is the Local Authority's responsibility. The Local Authority (LA) and the Local Government Ombudsman (LGO) will accept complaints directly from young people and their parents or carers about:

- school transport services
- special educational needs
- school admissions
- permanent exclusions from a school
- school re-organisation proposals
- children who are out of school

#### Complaints against school staff

If your complaint amounts to or includes an allegation against a member of staff, this would invoke the school's internal grievance procedures, rather than the complaint procedure.

#### **Contact details**

Contact can be made with members of staff, the leadership team or governors via the school office:

Telephone: 020 8946 0454 e-mail: [office@hollymount.merton.sch.uk](mailto:office@hollymount.merton.sch.uk)

Headteacher: Mrs Philippa Jackson

Chair of governors: Mr Robert Hatley

Clerk to the Governors: Mrs Jane Dowek

References: *Best Practice Advice for maintained schools and local authorities, DFE January 2016*  
*NAHT guidance document for School Complaint Procedures, November 2012*

**Policy updated: January 2017**

**Agreed by PPC Committee: 24<sup>th</sup> January 2017**

## Hollymount School Formal Complaint Form



*Please complete this form and return it, via the school office, to the Headteacher (or Clerk to the Governing Body), who will acknowledge its receipt and inform you of the next stage in the procedure.*

Your name:

Relationship with the school (e.g. parent of pupil on roll):

Pupil's name (if relevant to your complaint):

Yours address:

Telephone numbers

Daytime:

Evening:

e-mail address:

Please give concise details of your complaint, including all relevant dates, names and facts, to enable the matter to be fully investigated.

*You may continue on separate paper, or attach additional documents, if you wish.*

What action, if any, have you already taken to try and resolve your complaint?  
*(i.e. 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 form received:

Received by:

Date acknowledgement sent:

Acknowledgement sent by:

Complaint referred:

Date: