

S	Successful
H	Happy
A	Aspiring
P	Purposeful
E	Exciting
D	Diverse



MARSHFIELDS SCHOOL
COMPLAINTS POLICY
March 2017

Dealing with Concerns and Complaints

Introduction

Since 1st September 2003 Governing Bodies of all maintained schools have been required, under Section 29 of the Education Act 2002, to have in place a procedure to deal with all complaints relating to their school and to any community facilities or services that the school provides. This does not limit complainants to parents or carers of pupils registered at a school. A complainant could be a member of the wider community or representing an ex-pupil.

It is everyone's interest that complaints about Marshfields School are resolved at the earliest possible stage. The experience of the first contact between the complainant and the school can be crucial in determining whether the complaint will escalate.

Legally the Local Authority has no grounds to engage in issues that are school related, but they do all want to have 'satisfied customers'.

Taking informal **concerns** seriously at the earliest stage will reduce the numbers that develop into formal **complaints**. However, depending on the nature of the complaint, you may wish or be asked to follow the school's formal complaints procedure.

The prime aim of Marshfields School's policy is to resolve the complaint as fairly and speedily as possible. Formal complaints will be dealt with in a sensitive, impartial and confidential manner.

The following details outline the stages that can be used to resolve complaints.

Marshfields School Policy has four main stages:

- Stage 1 (informal): concern heard by an appropriate staff member
- Stage 2 (formal): Complaint heard by Headteacher
- Stage 3 (formal): complaint heard by Chair of Governors
- Stage 4 (formal): complaint heard by Governing Body complaints appeal panel.

Stage 1 – concern heard by staff member

Concerns can be raised with the school at any time and will often generate an immediate response, which will resolve concern. The school requests that parents make their first contact with their child's class teacher. On some occasions the concern raised may require investigation, or discussion with others, in which case you will receive an informal but informed response within a day or two. However, if you are not satisfied with the result at

stage 1, please write or call the school within 10 school working days. The school will then look at your complaint at the next stage.

Stage 2 – Complaint heard by Headteacher

The Headteacher may delegate the task of collating the information to another staff member but not the decision on the action to be taken. The Headteacher will arrange for the complaint to be acknowledged within 5 school working days of receiving it and a meeting may be convened to discuss the matter further. Following the investigation, the Headteacher will aim to provide a written response within 10 school working days of sending the acknowledgement. However, if a complaint is more complex to review this can be extended to a maximum of 20 school working days. The school will provide you details of the new deadline and an explanation on the delay. If you are not satisfied with the results at stage 2 please write to or call the school within 10 working days of getting our response. The school will then look at your complaint at the next stage.

Stage 3 – complaint heard by Chair of Governors

If the matter has not been resolved at Stage 2 or the complaint is about the Headteacher, then you will need to write to the Chair of Governors c/o the school. The Chair of Governors will arrange for the complaint to be acknowledged within 5 school working days of receiving it and a meeting may be convened to discuss the matter further. Following an investigation, the Chair of Governors will aim to provide a written response within 10 school working days of sending out the acknowledgement. However, if a complaint is more complex to review this can be extended to 20 school working days. The school will provide you details of the new deadline and an explanation on the delay. If you are dissatisfied with the result at stage 3, you will need to let the school know within 10 school working days of getting the response. The school will then look at your complaint at the next stage.

Stage 4 – complaint heard by Governing Bodies Complaints Appeal Panel.

If the matter has still not been resolved at stage 3, then you will need to write to the Clerk to Governors giving details of the complaint and asking that it is put before the appeal panel. Should the Chair have been involved at any previous stage in the process a nominated Governor, impartial to the complaint, will convene a complaints panel. The complaint will be acknowledged within 5 school working days of receiving it. The hearing will normally take place within 20 school working days of sending the acknowledgement.

The aim of the Appeal panel hearing is to impartially resolve the complaint and to achieve reconciliation between the school and the complainant. All parties will be notified of the Panel's decision in writing within 5 school working days after the date of the hearing. The letter will also contain what you need to do if you wish to take the matter further.

The Governors appeal hearing is the last school-based stage of the complaints process.

From 1st August 2012 complaints about maintained schools not resolved by the school should be addressed to the School Complaints Unit (SCU), department of Education, 2nd Floor, Piccadilly Gate, Manchester, M1 2WD

Presented to the Governors for approval: Human Resources Committee March 16th 2017

Approved by Governors: Human Resources Committee

Date: March 16th 2017

Review Date March 2018

Appendix 1 Complaint Form

Notes

The form overleaf must be used by any person making a complaint about the operation of the school which is not covered by an alternative specific procedure. Complaints will most often come from parents or carers but may also come from pupils/students or members of the public, e.g. school neighbours.

Anyone receiving this form should be advised verbally that help in completing it is available from the school. A member of school staff who is familiar with the process should be nominated to give help.



Marshfield School Complaint Form

Please complete and return

S	Successful
H	Happy
A	Aspiring
P	Purposeful
E	Exciting
D	Diverse

to.....

who will acknowledge receipt and explain what action will be taken.

Your name:

.....

Address:.....

.....

Postcode:

Daytime telephone number:

Evening telephone number:

If applicable, name of child(ren) at school:

Please give details of your complaint: (you may attach further sheets if necessary)

What action, if any, have you already taken to try and resolve your complaint? (Who did you speak to and what was the response?)

Your relationship to the school, e.g. parent, carer, neighbour, member of public:

What actions do you feel might resolve the problem at this stage?

Are you attaching any paperwork? If so, please give details.

Signature:

Date:

Official Use:

Date of acknowledgement sent:

By Whom:

Complaint referred to:Date.....

Complaints process from start to finish

