

Complaints Policy	
Policy Number	FSA-004
Responsible Post	Head Teacher
Responsible Committee	Resources
Review Schedule	Every 3 years
Review Date	April 2016
Changed	No



The Governing Body's key roles are:

- To Provide a strategic view
- To Support and challenge the Head Teacher and the School
- To ensure accountability.

This policy covers the underlying principles of good procedure, a staged approach to managing general complaints and advice on handling difficult complaints. It will cover specific complaints about national curriculum matters, staffing issues and the provision of collective worship and religious education within Manor Church of England Infant School.

Specific Local Authority procedures are covered for the following complaints:

- Local Authority decisions on Special Educational Needs assessment and school places
- School admission and transfers
- Exclusions
- Staff disciplinary issues
- Financial impropriety or other criminal activity
- Alleged child abuse

At Manor Church of England Infant School we value positive home school relationships and we try to sort out problems quickly using Local Authority guidance and the agreed school complaints procedure. The staff and governing body promote confidentiality and discretion and will, if necessary, seek advice from other sources such as the Citizens Advice Bureau, parent partnership services, the Advisory Centre for education and the local authority complaints adviser.

In dealing with complaints and making provision for complaints procedures, the governing body will ensure that the person complaining is given fair treatment and in particular, a chance to state their case. Timescales will be set for completing actions so that complaints do not take too long.

Aims

At Manor Church of England Infant School we aim to strengthen parent and carers' confidence and relationships between home, school and the community by:

- Resolving concerns through informal discussions at the earliest stage
- Being speedy, with well-defined timescales and named contacts
- Focusing on satisfactory resolution for all parties at the earliest opportunity and service rather than blame
- Promoting confidentiality and discretion
- Including fair and transparent investigative processes for staff as well as complainants
- Recognising that things can go wrong and that the school is committed to resolving concerns as quickly and effectively as possible.
- Being forthright in dealing with vexatious, abusive, malicious and anonymous complaints

Complaints Procedure

Stage One - Initially, anyone with a complaint should be encouraged to speak informally with the relevant member of staff as soon as they have a concern.

If the complaint has not been resolved complainants are encouraged to write to the head teacher giving details of the concern and enclosing appropriate paperwork, or contact the head teacher who will investigate the complaint and organise a meeting with them, as soon as possible (within five working days).

If the complaint requires an in-depth investigation the head teacher will let the complainant know that a full response will take longer than usual (within 20 days).

Stage Two - If the head teacher cannot sort out the complaint, or is the subject of the complaint, the chair of governors may receive the complaint in writing and an explanation of the reason for pursuing it beyond the head teacher's response.

Timescales for acknowledging the complaint and making a response would be similar to those outlined in Stage One.

In the rare circumstances that a complainant is still unhappy with the outcome, the chair of governors may offer a right of appeal to the governing body's complaints panel.

Stage Three - There will be a Complaints Panel convened as and when required, consisting of three governors who have no prior involvement in the current complaint.

The chair of this panel will be decided before the meeting.

Complainants should provide details of their complaint in writing to the clerk to the governors.

The chair of the complaints panel will inform the complainant in writing, within five working days, of the panel's decision.

The letter will contain a summary of the issue, an outline of the main points of the discussion, the reasons for the decision and the outcomes / actions proposed by the panel.

Stage Four - The Local Authority offers a further right to appeal.

If a parent still wishes to pursue a complaint they can contact the Secretary of State (if he or she believes that a governing body is acting 'unreasonably' or is failing to carry out its statutory duties properly).

If the Secretary of State agrees that the complaint is justified, the governing body can be directed to act appropriately. If this direction is not kept it may be legally enforced.

This policy is linked with:

Admissions Policy
Child Protection Policy
Intercultural Policy
SEN Policy

Anti Bullying Policy
Confidentiality Policy
Learning policy

Behaviour Policy
Equal opportunities Policy
Race Equality Policy

The school will take guidance and advice from Hampshire Local Authority and refer to practices laid down in the Hampshire Educational Personnel Services Manual.