

# **William Gilpin C.E. V.A. Primary School**

## **School Complaints Procedure.**

We encourage regular dialogue between parents, staff and pupils. This procedure is not a substitute for day-to-day communication on minor problems or issues, which arise.

**This procedure outlines the process to be followed where a complaint exists.**

### **Stage 1: Complaint Heard by Staff Member.**

Normally, a complaint should be raised with the class teacher or another member of staff. If either the member of staff or the parent feels that it would be inappropriate for that member of staff to deal with the complaint, the issue can be referred to the Headteacher or Chair of Governors. If the matter is resolved, it can be recorded in writing if the parents or member of staff wish. A complaints form exists for this purpose. If the issue is not resolved, proceed to Stage 2.

### **Stage 2: Complaint Heard by Headteacher.**

If the Headteacher has not already been involved, they will become so at this stage. They will gather evidence and decide what action is to be taken. If the issue is not resolved proceed to Stage 3.

### **Stage 3: Complaint Heard by Chair of Governors.**

The complainant needs to write to the Chair of Governors. They will review the case and the actions taken up to this point. Discuss the situation with the Head Teacher and if necessary meet with the Headteacher and complainant to discuss ways to resolve the complaint. Write to the complainant giving reasons for conclusions reached. If the issue is not resolved proceed to Stage 4.

### **Stage 4: Complaint Heard by Governing Body Complaints Appeal Panel.**

The complaint will be passed to the Chair of the Complaint Appeal Committee. A complaints panel will then be convened. This is the last school-based stage of the Complaints Process.

The Panel can:

- Dismiss the complaint in whole or in part;
- Uphold the complaint in whole or in part;
- Decide on the appropriate action to be taken to resolve the complaint;
- Recommend changes to the school's systems or procedures to ensure that problems of a similar nature do not recur.

The complainant will be notified of the panel's decision in writing.

The school deals with all complaints in accordance with procedures set out by the Local Authority (LA). If in the very rare circumstance, a parent remains dissatisfied with the outcomes and wishes to pursue the complaint, those concerned can ask the LA to intervene.

All parents have the right, as a last resort, to appeal to the Secretary of State for Education, if they still feel that their complaint has not been properly addressed.

**This policy will be reviewed in the Spring Term 2011.**

**Signed:**

**Date:**

**Appendices**

### **The Governing Body's Complaint Panel.**

If the complainant wishes the Governing Body's complaints panel to hear the case, the request should be made in writing to the Clerk to the Governing Body, via the school address and should include information about the:

- Nature of the original complaint;
- Steps taken by the Headteacher or designated member of staff to deal with the matter and the Headteacher's response;
- Chair of governors' response;
- Reasons for pursuing the complaint beyond the Chair of Governors.

The school will notify the LA of a parent's request and copy the relevant information to the Assistant County Education Officer (Standards and Improvement Branch).

### **The Complaints Panel Meeting.**

The clerk will arrange a meeting within 20 days of the request and inform parents about the process and agenda. The complaints panel will consist of three governors with no previous involvement in the matter. For complaints specifically about the National Curriculum, Religious Education and related matters, members will, where possible, be drawn from the Governors' Curriculum Committee.

Parents will be given the opportunity to submit additional supporting information prior to the meeting. The panel will then meet with all parties to consider both written and oral submissions.

### **An example of a typical agenda would be:**

1. Introductions.
2. Oral submissions by the complainant.
3. Questions from the school.
4. Oral response by the Headteacher and Chair of Governors.
5. Questions by the complainant.
6. Brief summary by the complainant, with no new information.
7. Brief summary by the school, with no new information.

Parents will then be notified of the panel's decision in writing within a stated timescale.

### **The LA Procedure.**

If a parent is not satisfied with the decision of the Governors' complaints panel they may appeal to the LA. The letter of complaint should include copies of information submitted to the Governors' complaints panel and the panel's decision letter and should explain the reason for appealing to the LA.

### **This should be sent to:**

Assistant County Education Officer Standards and Improvement Branch County Education Office  
The Castle, Winchester  
S023 BUG

The LA will acknowledge the request within five days and arrange for a panel of elected Members of the Schools' Monitoring Panel to consider written submissions within 20 days of the date of request. Members of the panel will have had no recent involvement or connection with the school.

The LA panel may request relevant information from the Education Department. Parents will also have the opportunity to submit additional information in support of their complaint. The LEA will inform parents of its decision in writing within 7 days of the panel meeting.

**Complaints related to Religious Education:**

If the complaint is about religious education and worship in a voluntary aided school or worship in a voluntary controlled school, the appropriate Diocesan Board of Education/Schools Department will arrange a panel of three persons who have had no involvement or connection with the school.

The panel will consider written submissions on the complaint within 20 days of the request. Parents will also have the opportunity to submit additional information in support of their complaint.

The Diocesan Board of Education/Schools Department will inform the parents of its decision in writing within 7 days of the meeting.

**William Gilpin C.E. (Voluntary Aided) Primary School**

**Complaint Form**

Please complete and return to.....(Headteacher in the first instance) who will acknowledge receipt and explain what action will be taken.

**Your name:**

**Pupil's name:**

**Your relationship to the pupil:**

**Address:**

**Postcode:**

**Day time telephone number:**

**Evening telephone number:**

**Mobile:**

**Please give details of your complaint.**

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

**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 Acknowledgement sent:**

**By Whom:**

**Complaint referred to:**

**Date:**