

Abbotsford School Complaints Policy

1 Introduction

- 1.1** We believe that our school provides a good education for all our children, and that the headteacher and other staff work very hard to build positive relationships with all parents/guardians. However, the school is obliged to have procedures in place in case there are complaints by parents/guardians. The following policy sets out the procedure that the school follows in such cases.
- 1.2** If any parent/guardian is unhappy with the education that their child is receiving, or has any concern relating to the school, we encourage that person to talk to the child's class teacher immediately.
- 1.3** We deal with all complaints in accordance with procedures set out by the Council of Management. If the school cannot resolve any complaint itself, those concerned can ask the Council of Management to intervene.

2 Aims and Objectives

- 2.1** 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. Our aim is to resolve any complaint through dialogue and mutual understanding and, in all cases, we put the interests of the child above all other issues. We provide sufficient opportunity for any complaint to be fully discussed, and then resolved.

3 The Complaints Process

- 3.1** If a parent/guardian 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. Most matters of concern can be dealt with in this way. All teachers work very hard to ensure that each child is happy at school, and is making good progress; they always want to know if there is a problem, so that they can take action before the problem seriously affects the child's progress.
- 3.2** Where a parent/guardian feels that a situation has not been resolved through discussions with the class teacher, or that their concern is of a sufficiently serious nature, they should refer the matter to the Headteacher. In most cases the Headteacher will contact the parents/guardians directly within three days after receiving the complaint to discuss the matter and if possible resolve it at this stage.
- 3.3** In the event that further investigations are required, the Headteacher will undertake these as required. A meeting will be arranged between the Headteacher and the parent(s)/guardian(s) as part of this process and following this, a decision and the reasons for it will be provided to the parent/(sguardian(s). If the parents/guardians are dissatisfied with the outcome, they may proceed to the next stage of this procedure.

4 Panel Hearing

- 4.1** Should the matter not be resolved through discussions with the Headteacher, the parent(s)/guardian(s) may put their complaint in writing to the Chair of the Council of Management. A meeting will be arranged as soon as possible between the parent(s)/guardian(s), the Chair of the Council of Management and the Headteacher to discuss and seek a resolution for the complaint.
- 4.2** Should the above meeting still fail to resolve the complaint, the Chair of the Council of Management will convene a formal Complaints Panel.
- 4.3** The panel will consist of three persons not directly involved with the matters detailed in the complaint, one of which shall be independent of the management and running of the school. Each of the panel members shall be appointed by the Council of Management and shall schedule a hearing to take place as soon as practicable, normally within two weeks.
- 4.4** If the Panel deems it necessary, it may require that further particulars of the complaint or any related matter be supplied in advance of the hearing. Copies of such particulars shall be supplied to all parties not later than 2 days before the hearing.
- 4.5** One other person may accompany the parents/guardians at the hearing as an observer. If possible the Panel will resolve the parents'/guardians' concerns immediately without the need for further investigations.
- 4.6** Where further investigations are required, the Panel will decide how to carry out the investigation. After due consideration of all facts they consider relevant, the Panel will form a decision and make recommendations which it shall complete within 10 days of the hearing. **The decision of the Panel will be final.** The Panel's findings and recommendations (if any) will be sent in writing to the parents/guardians, Headteacher, Chair of the Council of Management and where relevant, the person complained of.

5 Monitoring and Review

- 5.1** The Council of Management monitors 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. The Personnel Committee examines this Log on a regular basis.
- 5.2** This policy is made available to all parents/guardians on request, so that they can be properly informed about the complaint process. Parents/guardians can be assured that all concerns and complaints will be treated seriously and confidentially.

Ratified by the Council of Management on 2.3.2010