

WOULDHAM ALL SAINTS CHURCH OF ENGLAND PRIMARY SCHOOL

COMPLAINTS PROCEDURE

At Wouldham All Saints Church of England Primary School we are open and happy to discuss any concerns, allegations and complaints and will always aim for a quick and mutually satisfactory resolution. We aim to deal with concerns face to face. We encourage parents to raise and discuss concerns directly with the class teacher who will resolve the concern in the first instance.

Allegations against members of staff or volunteers fall under the scope of Safeguarding procedures and therefore the Safeguarding policy would be followed.

If there is cause for formal complaint then this should be made to the headteacher. A complaint will be defined when a person uses the term 'complaint' in person or in writing relating to a perceived injustice. Complaints will be recorded in the 'Behaviour and Complaints' book kept by the headteacher. Records will outline the nature of the complaint and details of any resolution or explanation offered.

In the case of a complaint being made we will aim to make a response within 7 days and we would aim to organise a meeting with the complainant to discuss the issues raised. Should the final outcome not be satisfactory, an appeal can be made in writing to the Governing Body through the Clerk to the Governors, available through the school office. Individual governors should not discuss the complaint with anybody as this would eliminate them from any complaint panel required in the future.

A response from the Chair of Governors will aim to be made within ten school days. This response will outline a summary of the complaint, and what the school will be doing to follow it up. It may be that an opportunity to discuss the matter with an individual member of the governing body is offered at this stage but this option will not prejudice any further stages of the complaints procedure.

The governing body will adopt the following procedure to investigate any complaint not resolved during the above process:

- 3 governors independent of the complainant and any staff member involved will be appointed as the 'complaint panel'.
- The nature of the complaint will be investigated with information obtained from all relevant parties. This information to be recorded and stated as fact or opinion.
- Relevant school policies will be examined in relation to the complaint and information obtained.
- A decision will be made on each point of the complaint and recorded to show the rationale of the decision based on the evidence from the above process.
- Any solution or action to be provided will be detailed with reference to details of how, when and by whom any such action will be taken.
- Issues relating to confidentiality will be considered.
- Feedback will be made to the complainant in writing and this will include details on how to take the complaint to the next stage if still not satisfied with the outcome.

Should a parent wish to lodge a complaint against the Headteacher, then this should be addressed to the Chair of Governors at the school office.

In certain circumstances people may need to be directed to other bodies or organisations to make complaints about areas that fall out of the scope of this procedure. The sort of issues this would apply to are : Admissions, Financial Awards such as Free School Meals, School Finance, Home to School Transport, Personnel Matters, School lunches.

From September 2011 the government removed independent review bodies for complaints and if parents believe the governing body is acting 'unreasonably' they can write to the Secretary of State for Education via The School Complaints Unit (SCU) at: Department for Education, 2nd Floor, Piccadilly Gate, Manchester, M1 2WD. If a complaint has exhausted the local procedures, SCU will examine if the complaints policy and any other relevant policies were followed in accordance with the provisions set out. SCU also examines policies to determine if they adhere to education legislation. However, the department will not re-investigate the substance of the complaint. This remains the responsibility of schools.

If legislative or policy breaches are found, SCU will report them to the school and the complainant and, where necessary, require remedial action to be taken. Failure to carry out remedial actions could ultimately result in a formal Direction being issued by the Secretary of State.