



Wycliffe Church of England Primary School

Parent/Carer Complaints Policy

Approved by the governing body: Agreed by the IEB on 24th July 2017

To be reviewed on:

In accordance with Section 29 of the Education Act 2002, all local authority (LA) maintained schools must have and make available a procedure to deal with all complaints relating to their school and to any community facilities or services that the school provides. At Wycliffe C of E Primary School, we believe that this procedure should only be used as a 'last resort' and hope that our 'listening' approach to resolving issues will enable a positive outcome to be reached for all concerned, without the need for formal complaints.

Positive Communication

At Wycliffe, we value the input of all members of our school community, including children, parents and carers and staff. We believe everyone should have a voice and that everyone deserves to be listened to. At school we make countless decisions every day, some of which may have far-reaching consequences. It is inevitable that some of these decisions will be questioned by members of our school community and we welcome their input and comments.

Our Priorities

- To keep our children safe at all times while they are in our care.
- To create and maintain a learning environment which enables all children, regardless of background or ability, to thrive and prosper.
- To support the rights of every individual and protect them from unreasonable treatment by others.

In pursuit of these aims it is inevitable that, from time to time, decisions will be made which parents/carers do not feel support the best interests of their child/children. In these circumstances it is more important than ever that we maintain an honest, open and respectful communication to enable the situation to be resolved as quickly as possible.

Our Promise to You:

- We will deal with your concern or complaint honestly and politely.
- The concern/complaint will be looked into thoroughly, fairly and as quickly as possible.
- We will keep you up-to-date with our response to your concern/complaint.
- We will apologise if we have made a mistake.
- We will tell you what we are going to do to put things right.

The '3 Cs': Clarification, Concern or Complaint?

In many situations, information can be key to positive relationships and ensuring that this is provided in a relevant and timely manner is a constant challenge for all schools. At Wycliffe, we take parents/carers' opinions very seriously and recognise the following steps in the process:

'Clarification', defined as:

'a non-judgemental request for further information or an explanation of how and/or why a decision has been made'.

A 'concern', defined as:

'an expression of worry or doubt over an issue considered to be important for which reassurances are sought'.

A 'complaint', defined as:

'an expression of dissatisfaction however made, about actions taken or a lack of action'.

This Policy:

This policy is intended to set out our procedures/systems with regard to addressing parents/carers' concerns and responding to complaints. The following concerns/complaints are NOT however covered by this policy as separate procedures apply:

- Child Protection
- Collective Worship
- Freedom of Information Access
- National Curriculum
- Pupil Exclusions
- School Admissions
- Services provided by other organisations on the school site
- Sex Education
- Staff Grievance
- Special Educational Needs assessment/statementing procedure
- Whistleblowing by an employee

Serious complaints or allegations relating to the abuse of children, assault, criminal or financial matters are also subject to separate procedures.

Guidelines for Registering a Concern/Making a Complaint:

When registering a concern/making a complaint please try to:

- Tell us honestly and carefully about the issues, sticking wherever possible to the facts as you understand them;
- Avoid involving the views of others not directly concerned with the issue;
- Be clear about what your complaint is about, and, if relevant, who it is being levelled against.

If your concern is about the headteacher or a governor you will need to contact the Chair of Governors.

If the complaint concerns the Chair of Governors or the actions of the Governing Body in general you will need to contact the clerk to governors (via the school office).

Positive Steps to a Resolution

*Please note that allegations referring to criminal activity which may require the involvement of the police, financial/accounting irregularities or abuse of children will be fast-tracked and will not necessarily follow the procedures or timescales outlined below.

1. Early Identification – Class Teacher

We urge you to contact us as soon as possible after the issue about which you are concerned has occurred. It is much easier for us to deal with incidents if they are reported to us quickly rather than if several days/weeks have passed. For most issues, the first point of contact will be the class teacher who, as the member of staff who knows your child best, will be well-placed to deal with your queries/concerns. In many cases the class teacher will be able to offer a solution straight away, but in some circumstances he/she may wish to refer the query/concern to other school staff and/or arrange a meeting to discuss it in more detail. In this circumstance, a clear timeframe for a final response will be given.

As you are all aware, class teachers are extremely busy people and their priority at the beginning and end of the day must be to ensure the safe entry and exit from school of all the children in their care. If you find it difficult to discuss an issue with the teacher at these times you can contact the class teacher in the following ways:

- By requesting a telephone call – this can be done by leaving a message (in person or by phone) at the office;
- By requesting an appointment – via the office;
- By leaving a note in your child's planner;
- By sending an email to wyc.office@wycliffe.bradford.sch.uk which will be forwarded by the admin. staff.

2. Registering Your Concern:

If your issue concerns the class teacher directly, or he/she is unable to resolve the issues satisfactorily within a reasonable timeframe the next step is to register your concern and/or ask for clarification officially. This communication will be recorded and will be dealt with by a member of the school leadership team.

There are several ways to register your initial concern or ask for clarification:

- in person at the school office;
- in writing using our 'Concerns' form (See Appendix A);
- by E mail at wyc.office@wycliffe.bradford.sch.uk;
- by phone on 01274 584779;
- via our website (follow links from home page).

If you have difficulty in accessing any of these methods please ask for help at the office or ask a friend to register the issue on your behalf.

3. Making a Complaint:

If you have already followed the first two steps and are not satisfied with how we have responded, you may wish to make a complaint. The purpose of this complaints procedure is to ensure that we respond to all complaints in the best possible way, fairly, efficiently and without undue delay. The complaints procedure below outlines exactly what will happen and how long it should all take. If further information is required that cannot be compiled within the given timeframes you will be notified of the amended timescale without delay.

There are three stages to the procedure.

Stage	What you need to do:	Response:
Informal	Put your complaint to the Class Teacher first if possible. Make it clear that this is no longer a concern but a complaint. If this is not possible, put your complaint to a member of the School Leadership Team. If your issue concerns the Headteacher please address your complaint to the Head of Governors (the office can pass this on). Your complaint should be recorded on our official form (the office can assist with this if needed).	Initial Response from school within 48 hours – Please note, this may not be a solution but we will let you know how we intend to proceed and, if appropriate discuss the issue with you in person or by phone. This stage will be fully completed within 20 days of receipt of the complaint form.
We very much hope that your complaint will be resolved at this informal stage but if you are still not satisfied please move on to the formal stage.		
Formal	This stage can only be instigated once you have followed the informal stage. Please update your complaint form and submit it in the usual way. At this point, your complaint will be dealt with by the Headteacher, or, if she has already been involved, by the Chair of Governors.	Parent/carer to update complaint form within 20 days of the schools' initial response.
	At this formal stage, the Headteacher/Chair of Governors will fully investigate your complaint and send you a letter outlining the actions the school intend to take.	Headteacher/Chair of Governors to respond within 7 days of receiving the official complaint. If a full response is not possible, a progress report and time-frame for the final response will be given. This would normally be within 20 days.
In the vast majority of cases, complaints are resolved at the informal or formal stages however occasionally parents/carers may wish to take matters further.		
Appeal	At this point parents/carers have the right to appeal to the Complaints Appeals Committee of	You must let us know within 20 days of receiving the headteacher's response to the

	the Governing Body.	formal stage that you wish to take matters further. We will then notify the clerk to governors who will make the necessary arrangements for a meeting of the Complaints Appeals Committee. This would normally take no more than 20 days.
	If you are still not satisfied with the response of the Appeals Committee you have the right to put a complaint to Ofsted or to the Secretary of State for Education and Skills. In most cases these organisations will not re-examine the original complaint but will ensure that correct and reasonable procedures have been followed by the school with regard to its attempts to resolve the issue.	

We keep correspondence about concerns and complaints but these are treated with the utmost confidence. We also report anonymised complaints to the governing body on a regular basis so that school's systems and procedures can be reviewed and issues learned from.

Further Information:

Related Policies for further information:

- Behaviour Policy
- Home School Agreement
- Home School Communication Policy
- Parent and Carer Code of Conduct
- Anti-Bullying Policy

Other Relevant Statutory Guidance:

'How to Complain About a School'

<https://www.gov.uk/government/organisations/department-for-education/about/complaints-procedure>