Wingrove Primary School

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Formal Complaints Procedure

Background

The Education Act 2002, Section 29 requires that all maintained schools in England have in place a procedure for dealing with formal complaints relating any services or facilities that the school provides.

Introduction

Complaints may be either informal or formal and may be made by parents, carers or other service users.

Informal Complaints

These are in the nature of concerns which may be resolved by seeking clarification or further information directly from a member of the teaching, support or administrative staff or from the Head Teacher. If you have any such concerns you may:

- Speak directly to a member of staff at the beginning or end of the school day. This is for short discussions only or to arrange another appointment time
- Arrange an appointment with a member of staff. This is more suitable for longer or more confidential discussions;
- Telephone the school and ask to speak with a member of staff. Please remember that teaching staff may not take calls during teaching time;
- Write a short note, addressed to a member of staff, and ask that member of staff to contact you

Formal Complaints

This document deals with the formal procedures which must be followed in the event of a complaint which has not been resolved by any of the routes described above.

Formal Procedures

Stage One – Complaint heard by a Member of Staff

On receiving a complaint, a member of staff will confirm that all informal procedures have been attempted and that it has not been able to resolve the issue. Having received this confirmation, the member of staff will issue the complainant with a *Complaint Form* a copy of which is appended to this document. The form should be returned, with all sections completed, to the School Office where a member of the Administrative Team will acknowledge its receipt and explain what action will be taken next. If the complaint refers to a member of the Administrative Team, then the form should be returned directly to the Head Teacher.

The complaint form will be passed to a member of staff deemed appropriate to deal with the particular complaint. If the complaint refers to the Head Teacher, then the form will be passed directly to the Chair of Governors.

The member of staff will gather all information relevant to the complaint described on the form and will arrange to meet with the complainant to discuss the complaint. Notes of the discussion will be taken at the meeting, and the member of staff will ask the complainant to agree their accuracy at the end of the meeting. A report of the meeting will be compiled from the notes and a copy sent to the complainant.

If the complaint has been resolved, this will be recorded in the report sent to the complainant. A copy of the report will be kept in a central file.

If the complaint has not been resolved, then it will pass to the next stage.

Stage Two – Complaint heard by the Head Teacher

The Head Teacher will review all the documentation so far received and compiled. The Head Teacher may seek further information from staff members and / or from the complainant. Following this, the Head Teacher will arrange to meet with the complainant and explain what further action she has taken, or proposes to take.

Notes of the discussion will be taken at the meeting, and the Head Teacher will ask the complainant to agree their accuracy at the end of the meeting. A report of the meeting will be compiled from the notes and a copy sent to the complainant.

If the complaint has been resolved, this will be recorded in the report sent to the complainant. A copy of the report will be kept in a central file.

If the complaint has not been resolved, then it will pass to the next stage.

Stage Three – Complaint heard by Governing Body Complaints Appeal Panel

In the event that there has been no resolution at Stages One or Two, the complainant must write to the Chair of Governors giving full details of the complaint. Upon receipt, the Chair of Governors will convene a meeting of the Governing Body's Complaints Appeals Panel. The Panel will comprise a minimum of three Governors who are not, in any way, connected with the complainant or the complaint being brought. The Panel will nominate a Chair from amongst their number. The Chair will arrange for the meeting to be clerked by either a member of the Administrative Team who is impartial, or, where the complaint relates to any member of staff, the Clerk to the Governing Body who is independent.

The meeting will be held in private. Both the complainant and the school's representative, usually the Head Teacher (for complaints relating to policies, systems or procedures) or the person who is the focus of the complaint (for complaints relating to individual members of staff) are given the opportunity to speak and to ask questions of and answer questions from the Panel. The protocol of addressing all comments through the Chair is observed and all parties must treat each other with respect and courtesy. Any written material produced by either party must be seen by all.

Having heard all representations, the Chair will thank both parties. At this point, the complainant and school's representative / member of staff leave the meeting. The Panel will then discuss and consider their decision.

The Panel can:

- Dismiss the complaint in whole or in part
- Uphold the complaint in whole or in part
- Decide upon 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

A full record of all the proceedings is made by the nominated clerk who will notify all parties, in writing, of the Panel's decision within seven days from the date of the meeting. The Panel's decision is final.

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Please refer to the full document, then complete and return this form to a member of the school's Administrative Team / Head Teacher who will acknowledge receipt and explain what action will be taken next.

Your name:

Pupil's name:

Your relationship to the pupil:

Address:

Postcode:
Day time telephone number:
Evening telephone number:

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 who:

Complaint referred to:

Date: