

Randwick C of E Primary School



'Aim High Like the Skylark'

School Policy Document

# Complaints

Updated Autumn 2015



# Randwick C of E Primary School Complaints Policy

## School Aims Statement

*Our aim is to provide a happy, caring and stimulating learning environment underpinned by Christian principles, in which we encourage and value individuals' contributions and respect for others.*

*We believe the environment created will enable the children in our care to learn and achieve their best, socially and academically. Purposeful and relevant activities take place which will help foster each child's spiritual, intellectual, social, moral and physical development. All children are valued for the contribution they can make at the life of the school and are encouraged to develop attitudes to life based on Christian principles.*

## **1 Introduction**

- a. We strive to provide a good education for all our children. The Governing Body, Headteacher and staff work very hard to build positive relationships with all parents. However, the school is obliged to have procedures in place in case there are complaints by parents or guardians. The following policy sets out the procedures that the school follows in such cases.
- b. If any parents are unhappy with the education that their child is receiving, or have any concerns relating to the school, we encourage them to talk to the child's class teacher immediately and then, if necessary, the Headteacher.
- c. We deal with all complaints in accordance with procedures laid down by the LA. If the school itself cannot resolve a complaint, those concerned can refer the matter to the LA.
- d. 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.

## **2 Aims**

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. We aim to resolve any complaint through dialogue and mutual understanding. In all cases we put the interests of the child above all else. We provide sufficient opportunity for any complaint to be fully discussed, and then resolved.

*All safeguarding policies to be used in partnership with our child protection policy*

### **3. School Complaints Procedure**

#### **General Principles:**

1. These procedures are intended to allow parents to raise a concern or complaint relating to the school, or the services that it provides
2. An anonymous concern or complaint will not be investigated under this procedure, unless there are exceptional circumstances
3. To allow for a proper investigation, concerns or complaints should be brought to the attention of the school as soon as possible. In general, the school will not consider any complaint that was raised more than 3 months after the event

#### **4. Raising a concern or complaint**

##### **Informal Stage**

1. It is normally appropriate to communicate directly with the member of staff concerned. This may be by letter, by telephone or in person by appointment. Many concerns can be resolved by simple clarification or the provision of information and it is anticipated that most complaints will be resolved by this informal stage.
2. In the case of serious concerns, it may be appropriate to address them directly to the Head Teacher (or to the Chair of the Governing Body, if the complaint is about the Head Teacher).
3. If you are uncertain about whom to contact, please seek advice from the school office or the Clerk to the Governing Body.

##### **Formal Stage**

1. If your concern is not resolved at the informal stage you must put the complaint in writing and pass it to the Head Teacher, (or to the Clerk to the Governing Body, for the attention of the Chair, if the complaint is about the Head Teacher) who will be responsible for ensuring that it is investigated appropriately. A Complaint Form is provided to help you.
2. You should include details that might help the investigation, such as names of potential witnesses, dates and times of events, and copies of relevant documents.
3. It is very important that you include a clear statement about what you hope might reasonably contribute to a resolution of the problem at this stage. Without this, it is much more difficult to proceed.
4. Please pass the completed form, in a sealed envelope to the Head teacher or to the Clerk to the Governing Body, as appropriate.
5. The Head Teacher (or Chair) may invite you to a meeting to discuss your complaint and to seek a resolution. If you accept that invitation, a friend may accompany you if you wish to help you in explaining the nature of your complaint.

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6. It is possible that your complaint will be resolved through a meeting with the Head Teacher (or Chair). If not arrangements will be made for the matter to be referred to the Chair of Governors. In any case, you should learn in writing, usually within 5 days of the school receiving your formal complaint, of how the school intends to proceed. This notification should include an indication of the anticipated timescale.
7. The Chair of Governors may invite you to a further meeting to discuss your complaint and to seek a resolution. Again, if you accept that invitation, a friend may accompany you to help you explain the nature of your complaint. In any case, you should learn in writing, usually within 5 working days of the Chair of Governors receiving your formal complaint, of the outcome.
8. If you are not satisfied with the way in which the process has been followed, you can request that the governing body reviews the process followed by the school in handling the complaint. You must make this request in writing to the clerk to the governing body, within 10 school days of receiving notice of the outcome, and include a statement specifying any perceived failures to follow the procedure. The procedure described below will be followed. A Review Request form is provided for your convenience.

## **5.Review Process**

1. A panel of two members of the governing body will conduct any review of the process followed by the school. This will usually take place within 10 school days of receipt of your request.
2. The governors on the review panel will normally consider written submissions, but will sympathetically consider any reasonable requests to make oral representations.
3. The panel will first receive written evidence from the complainant of perceived failures to follow the procedure.
4. The panel will then invite representatives of the school (Usually the Head Teacher or the Chair of the Governing Body panel that has considered the matter), as appropriate, to make a response to the complaint.
5. The panel may also have access to the records kept of the process followed.
6. Parents and the school representatives, will be informed in writing of the outcome, usually within 5 school days of the panel meeting.
7. The matter will then be closed as far as the school is concerned.
8. If you believe that the Governing Body has acted illegally or arbitrarily in handling the complaint, then you may make representations to the Secretary of State for Education.

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## **6. Monitoring and review**

- 1 The Governors monitor 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. Governors examine this log on an annual basis.
- 2 Governors take into account any local or national decisions that affect the complaints process, and make any modifications necessary to this policy. This policy is made available to all parents, so that they can be properly informed about the complaints process.

**This policy is monitored by the school & its governing body and will be reviewed as part of this established cycle of school review or following changes to statutory legislation.**

**Policy Leader: Headteacher**

**Dated: Autumn 2015**

**Approval Date & Signed by Governors:**

**Policy Update Required:  
Review by Staff**

## Randwick C of E Primary School Complaint Form

Please complete this form and return it to Head Teacher who will acknowledge its receipt and inform you of the next stage in the procedure.



Your name:	
Your Address:	
Daytime telephone number:	
Evening telephone number:	

Relationship with school eg parent of a child on the school's roll	
Child's name (if relevant to your complaint ):	

Please give concise details of your complaint, (including dates, names of witnesses etc), to allow the matter to be fully investigated:  
You may continue on separate paper, or attach additional documents, if you wish.

Number of additional pages attached	
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What action, if any, have you already taken to try to resolve your complaint? (ie whom have you spoken with or written to and what was the outcome?)

What do you hope might reasonably contribute to a resolution of the problem at this stage?

Signature:

Date:

**School use:**

Received by:		Date	
Acknowledgement sent by:		Date	
Complaint referred to:			
Name		Date	
Name		Date	
Name		Date	



What do you hope might reasonably contribute to a resolution of the problem at this stage?

Signature:

Date:

<b>School use:</b>			
Received by:		Date	
Acknowledgement sent by:		Date	
Complaint referred to:			
Name		Date	
Name		Date	
Name		Date	



# Making a Difference- Information for Parents

## 6e. Engaging with parents & opportunities to raise concerns

### How will the teachers share information about my child with me?

Teachers dismiss children at the end of the day and so are able to pass on information when necessary. Sometimes teachers may need to inform parents of a fall in the playground, a particular achievement or an incident involving unacceptable behaviour.

### How can I raise any concerns with the teachers about my child?

Parents are encouraged to speak to the class teachers if they have a specific concern about their child.

Parents are asked to pop into school at the end of the day or to make an appointment to discuss matters at a mutually convenient time – often at the end of the teaching day.

Parents can also make a comment for the teacher in each child's homework or reading diary.

### How will the teachers or the school let me know about a problem or concern?

Similarly, teachers will consult parents if they have any concerns about a child. It is always helpful, when there is a concern or query, to meet with the class teacher as soon as possible. We are committed to solving problems quickly and this can prevent minor issues or misunderstandings becoming major problems.

On some occasions a letter from the head teacher may be written to inform parents about a specific incident or to invite them into school for a meeting.

### What do I do if I need more information or wish to raise an issue/complaint?

When a parent has a particular whole school matter or if they require further information or reassurance, the teacher may ask them to speak with the head teacher. Parents may wish to write down their concerns and send these to the head teacher, however, the quickest way to address these concerns is by organising a meeting face to face with parents.

The head teacher will liaise with parents to arrange a convenient meeting to clarify the issue or concern and then work together to resolve the matter. Parents may approach a parent governor regarding the matter and they will advise them to contact the head teacher in the first instance.

If parents feel that a problem has not been resolved, then the next step is to write to the Chair of Governors, c/o the school detailing the issue or concern. A copy of the school complaints policy further clarifies this procedure for parents.

### Is there a code of conduct for adults?

We always listen to concerns and do our best to answer queries or investigate incidents as thoroughly as possible. Staff are courteous and committed to working with parents in the best interests of the children. We ask parents to show the same courtesy in raising concerns and enjoy a relationship with staff based on this mutual understanding and respect

***All safeguarding policies to be used in partnership with our child protection policy***

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# Flowchart - Summary of complaints procedures

Concern raised and heard by staff member

Issue not resolved

Issue resolved

End of process

Informal Processes

Formal Processes

**Complaint heard by head teacher**

- Complainant invited to the meeting by letter
- Complainant informed of outcome of investigation in writing

Issue resolved

End of process

Issue not resolved

**Complaint heard by Chair of Governors**

- Complainant invited to the meeting by letter
- Complainant informed of outcome of investigation in writing

Issue resolved

End of process

Complaint about processes followed

**Review by Governor's Complaint Panel**

- Complainant sent written acknowledgement of complaint
- Complainant sent letter confirming panel decision

Issue resolved

End of process

Issue not resolved

Complainant given details how to refer complaint to DfE or Ofsted

School based complaints officer informed of the outcome

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