



Ben Rhydding Primary School Complaints Procedure

December 2015

Chair of Governors _____ date _____

Executive Headteacher _____ date _____

This procedure was agreed in December 2015 and will be reviewed in December 2018

BEN RHYDDING PRIMARY SCHOOL

Complaints Procedure

This procedure governs the process by which complaints may be made and dealt with at Ben Rhydding Primary School.

It is obviously important that any complaints are made as soon as possible after an incident, whilst recollections are still fresh. Other than in exceptional cases, any complaints should be made no later than 3 months after the incident or action which prompted the complaint.

Complaints may be broadly divided into three categories, as follows:

1. Most day-to-day concerns or issues for parents, or those with parental responsibility, may be addressed through class teachers and resolved directly. In most circumstances, it is appropriate to raise concerns with the class teacher who has most direct contact with a child. In some instances, the class teacher may wish to refer the issue to a key stage or subject co-ordinator, who may assist in resolving the problem as soon as possible.
2. In some instances, it may be necessary to refer the matter to the Headteacher or Deputy Headteacher. In those cases, they will seek to resolve the issue as soon as possible, either explaining the position to those involved in person or writing to them, as appropriate.
3. Complaints of a more serious nature should be referred to the Headteacher or Deputy as soon as possible, or be made to them directly. In these cases, the following procedure will apply:
 - a) The Headteacher or Deputy will conduct an investigation into the complaint, meeting all those involved, considering the facts and drafting a written conclusion. This will be dealt with within 14 school days of the complaint being made. At the conclusion of the investigation, the Headteacher or Deputy will write to the complainant, giving a full explanation of any decision made and, where appropriate, outlining any proposed action.
 - b) In the event that a complainant is not satisfied with the response of the Headteacher or Deputy, they may refer the matter to the Chair of the Governing Body. This should be done as soon as possible after the decision has been communicated and within 14 school days. The Chair will refer the matter for investigation by the Complaints Committee of the Governing Body. The Complaints Committee will set a time-table, dependent on the circumstances of the case and will communicate this to the complainant. They will then conduct an investigation into the complaint, meeting all those involved, considering the facts and drafting a written conclusion. At the conclusion of the investigation, the Complaints Committee will write to the complainant, giving a full explanation of any decision made and, where appropriate, outlining any proposed action. The Complaints Committee will report to the Chair of the Governing Body, who will in turn report to the full governing body.
 - c) In cases where the matter concerns the conduct of the head teacher, a written complaint should be sent 'For the Attention of the Chair of Governors' to the school and marked 'Private & Confidential'. The Chair will refer the matter directly to a Governing Body Complaints Panel to be investigated. If the governing body decides that the complaint should be dealt with by the governing body the procedure set out at 3 (b) above will be adopted.
 - d) In cases where the matter concerns the conduct of a member of the Governing Body the member will be informed of the complaint. The governing body will decide whether the complaint is such as should be dealt with by the governing body or within the school. If the governing body decides that the complaint should be dealt with within the school, the governing body will refer the complaint to the Headteacher and the

procedure set out at 3 (a) above will apply but with the timescales starting on the date of the referral. If the governing body decides that the complaint should be dealt with by the governing body the procedure set out at 3 (b) above will be adopted.

- e) In some circumstances, the nature of the complaint may require the instruction of an independent person, with a particular expertise, to carry out the investigation on behalf of the governing body. The Complaints Committee will set out the parameters of that instruction, with the approval of the Chair of the Governors or the full governing body. The same procedure will then be adopted, as set out at 3(b) above.
- f) In the event that the complainant is not satisfied with the response of the Complaints Committee, they may refer the matter to the Secretary of State for Education. Complainants should be advised to write to:

The School Complaints Unit (SCU)
Department for Education
2nd Floor
Piccadilly Gate
Manchester
M1 2WD

What will the Department for Education do?

If a complaint has exhausted the local procedures, School Complaints Unit (SCU) will examine if the school's 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.

ANONYMOUS COMPLAINTS PROCEDURE

The Governing Body is required to establish procedures to handle complaints relating to School. This procedure is separate to the normal Complaints process and should only be applied in exceptional circumstances when a complainant wishes to remain anonymous or the identity of the complainant is unknown.

The Stages:

1. When an anonymous complaint is received it will be forwarded to the Chair of Governing Body (or the vice chair in the absence of the chair).
2. The Chair will then consider the complaint and pursue an investigation at his/her discretion. This will be informed by the following considerations:
 - The likelihood of obtaining the necessary information to resolve the complaint
 - The seriousness of the issues raised
 - The specific nature of the complaint
3. The Chair will discuss the matter with the Head Teacher and inform the Complaints Committee who will consider the complaint. The outcome will be reported to the Governing Body.

NB. These arrangements should not be applied in situations where the complaint received contains allegations that a child is being harmed or abused or is at risk of harm or abuse. In these circumstances the locally agreed Child Protection procedures will apply.

Complaints Procedure



