### 

**Old Oak Primary School**

**Mellitus Street**

**London W12 0AS**

### Complaints Procedure

**Introduction**

Your views are welcomed. In the spirit of true partnership between home, school and the community, you are encouraged to say what you think should go on within the school. Schools aim for high standards but sometimes things can go wrong or expectations are not met.  The school’s policy is based on the local authority recommended procedure which is as follows:

**What is a Complaint?**

A complaint is an expression of dissatisfaction or disquiet which may be about an event that has happened, failed to happen or the way in which something was handled.

The vast majority of concerns can be resolved informally. It is in everyone’s best interests that complaints are resolved at the earliest possible stage. This can usually be achieved through discussion and good communication. However, if you are not satisfied with the outcome, a formal procedure (as outlined in this policy) would then need to be followed when attempts to resolve the issue are unsuccessful.

The procedure described does not include complaints covered by a separate statutory procedure, for example complaints about the National Curriculum, school admission decisions, special educational needs (SEN) statements and pupil exclusions decisions.

For complaints to be investigated fully you need to give full information and not make them anonymously.

**What Can You Expect?**

• There are set response times for each stage of the complaints procedure.

• A complaint register will be maintained for formal complaints (see below).

• Conversations and correspondence will be handled with discretion, but you need to be aware that some information may have to be shared with others involved in the complaint procedure.

• Raising a concern or making a complaint will not affect the relationship between the school, you or your child.

• When investigating your complaint the school will talk to your child, witnesses and others involved quickly.

• The school and the governors have a duty to act properly and investigate complaints impartially. Once investigations are complete the person making the complaint should receive a written response from the school within 20 school days.

**Advice**

• Many concerns can be resolved quickly with goodwill, often by making early contact with the class teacher.

• Remember the more information you have the better able you will be to discuss the matter. Fact find by asking the school for information. Obtain copies of relevant policies from the school e.g. policy against bullying and harassment, behaviour and discipline policy (this also relates to exclusion), home school agreement, homework policy, health and safety policy etc.

• Seek further information by visiting <https://www.gov.uk/complain-about-school>

• You can seek support from independent bodies such as Citizens Advice Bureaux, community relations centres and Advisory Centre for Education ([www.ace-ed.org.uk](http://www.ace-ed.org.uk/)) etc.

• Schools are very busy so please make an appointment for discussion through the school office. It helps to outline the purpose and how long you think you may need with the staff member/head teacher. Cover all the relevant points, but be as brief as you can. Avoid writing long letters or emails. Make it easy to read by using bullet points or headings. Include dates, times, names etc and explain clearly what your complaint is, what effect the issue is having on your child or you and what you would like to see happen. Keep it factual and avoid making judgements or hearsay. If more information is needed from you the person investigating your complaint will contact you.

• Sometimes it helps to take a friend with you. You may forget something if you are doing all the talking, they can do the listening for you and record main points and agreed action.

• Try to keep calm. Avoid confrontation – it will cloud the issue.

• Remember to ask “what happens next?”.

**Complaint Against a Member of Staff**

• The complaint procedure is distinct from any formal disciplinary proceedings for staff. If a complaint did result in a disciplinary procedure, then the complaint would be put on hold and you will be advised of the delay and updated every three weeks.

• If a complaint is made against a member of staff or governor they will be informed and have the opportunity to respond.

**The governing body will form a complaints panel as described below:**

• Parents, carers, pupils who wish to pursue a complaint regarding a school issue can refer the complaint to a review committee of governors, known as a complaints panel. This will be formed from at least three people who have had no prior involvement with the complaint.

• The committee must be governors, at least one member must be a parent of a pupil at the school,

• Staff will not be a member of the panel.

• Governors will be mindful of equality issues when looking at the composition of a complaints panel.

• The governors review hearing is the last school based stage of the complaints process.

**Complaint Procedure**

**Stage 1. Informal**

Your expression of concern should be made to the school at the earliest opportunity.

First talk to the teacher most closely concerned to clarify the facts and resolve through discussion. A request for discussion with the headteacher or senior staff member may also be desirable before making a formal complaint.

If the complaint is about the head teacher, the matter should be referred to the Chair of Governors of the school.

**Stage 2: Complaint**

If you are not satisfied with the outcome at Stage 1 you may wish to make a formal complaint. This should be done in writing to the head teacher. Your complaint should be acknowledged within three school days.

The investigation should be carried out and the outcome communicated to you within 20 school days. The written response should include a full explanation of the decision and the reasons for it (if additional time is required to formulate a response this will be explained to you). Where appropriate the response should include what action the school will take to resolve it.

The head teacher may delegate the task of collating the information to another member of staff but not the decision on the action to be taken.

Once a decision has been reached, the head teacher should ensure that you are clear about the action taken and what to do if you remain dissatisfied (see below).

**Stage 3: Chair of Governors**

If you feel that the issue has not been resolved during the previous two stages then you should be advised to take up the matter with the chair of governors. The outcomes at this stage could be:

* No further action with reasons given
* Action within the headteacher’s powers
* Referral to the appropriate committee of the governing body for consideration

 If the chair of governors undertakes an investigation at stage 3, then they are exempt from the complaints panel at stage 4.

If you are not satisfied with the response of the chair, then you should write to the clerk to governors with you complaint requesting a complaints committee appeal hearing.

**Stage 4: Governing Body**

Complaints rarely reach this formal level but should you need to, you should make a formal complaint to the governing body within 10 school days of the decision from the school.

Your letter to the clerk of the governing body needs to set out why you remain dissatisfied and what outcomes you are seeking.

A governing body complaints panel will normally consist of three people, none of whom will have been previously involved in your complaint. A date will be agreed with you in advance and you will be given at least seven school days formal notice of the meeting. The complaints panel will make their decision in private and write to you with their findings and any recommendations within seven school days.

**Stage 5: Final Complaint Stage**

The letter from the chair of the committee will make you aware of the final stage of appeal to the Secretary of State for Education. Please note, the Department for Education (DfE) will not  re-investigate the substance of your complaint. This remains the responsibility of the school. The DfE will check if any legal or policy breaches have taken place. If they have, the DfE will report them to the school and you. Where necessary, require remedial action to be taken.

For more information, please visit: [www.education.gov.uk](http://www.education.gov.uk/)

You may write to:

The School Complaints Unit

Department of Education

Second Floor, Piccadilly Gate

Manchester

M1 2WD

**Complaints Form**

Please return to the headteacher who will acknowledge receipt and explain what course of action will be taken.

|  |
| --- |
| Your name:  Pupil’s name:  Relationship to the pupil: |
| Address, including postcode:  Mobile telephone number:  Home telephone number: |
| Please give details of your complaint: |
| What if any action have you taken to resolve your complaint?  (Who did you speak to and what was their response?) |
| What actions do you think might resolve the problem at this stage? |
| Are you attaching any paperwork? If so, please give details  Signature………………………………………………………………………………………..  Date……………………………………………………………… |
| For official use:  Date acknowledgement sent:  By who:  Complaint referred to:  Date: |