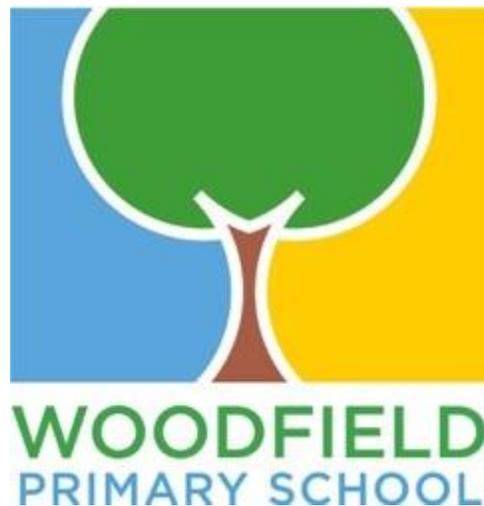


# Woodfield Primary School



## Compliments and Complaints Policy

Reviewed January 2016  
Next Review Due January 2018



## **Woodfield Primary School** **Compliments and Complaints Policy**

At WPS we want your child to do well and be happy. We recognise that you as a parent or carer play an important part in making this happen. Therefore we will aim to provide as many opportunities to keep you informed and involved in your child's progress as we can. This means that questions and concerns we deal with quickly and helpfully.

However we recognise that there are times when things go wrong, when concerns and differences of opinion can develop. These can usually be resolved by speaking to the right person.

This policy statement sets out our approach to dealing with concerns and complaints. A flow chart (appendix c) outlines the procedure.

1. We value good home/school relations and will, therefore, do everything we can to establish and maintain them. This includes seeking to resolve any concerns or complaints promptly, and to the satisfaction of all concerned.
2. We welcome feedback on what parents feel we do well (see appendix D), or not so well, as a school. We will consider carefully all feedback, whether positive or negative, and will review our policies and practices accordingly.
3. We will treat all concerns and complaints seriously and courteously and will advise parents and others of the school's procedures for dealing with their concerns. In return, we expect parents and other complainants to behave respectfully towards all members of the school community. In particular, any disagreement with the school should not be expressed inappropriately or in front of pupils.
4. All school staff and members of the governing body will receive a copy of this policy statement and will be familiar with the school's procedures for dealing with parental concerns and complaints, to which they will have access as required. The policy is available on request to parents.
5. The school's procedures will be reviewed regularly and updated as necessary.
6. Staff and governors will receive training in handling parental concerns and complaints as appropriate. This may be on an individual basis, or as a group activity for all staff, or for specific groups, such as the office staff or members of the governing body.
7. Whilst we will seek to resolve concerns and complaints to the satisfaction of all parties, it may not be possible to achieve this in every case. We will, therefore, use our option to close a complaint before all the stages of the school's procedures have been exhausted, if this appears to be appropriate.

### **Complaints Procedure**

The approach to dealing with concerns and complaints is explained below:

#### **Informal stage – your initial contact with school**

1. Once your concern is made known to us we will see you or contact you by telephone as soon as possible.
2. Any actions or monitoring of the situation that has been agreed, will be communicated clearly.
3. If necessary we will contact appropriate people who may be able to assist us with our enquiries into your concern.
4. We will normally update you on the progress of our enquiries within 10 working days.
5. If you are still dissatisfied following this informal approach, your concern will become a formal complaint and we will deal with it at the next stage.

## Stage 1 – Formal consideration of your complaint

This stage in our procedures deals with written complaints, it applies where you are not happy with the informal approach to dealing with your concern, as outlines above.

1. Normally, your written complaint should be addressed to the Head Teacher. If, however, your complaint concerns the Head Teacher personally, it should be sent to the school marked "For the attention of the Chair of Governors"
2. We will acknowledge your complaint in writing as soon as possible after receiving it. This will be within three working days.
3. We will enclose a copy of these procedures with the acknowledgement.
4. Normally we would expect to respond in full within 15 working days but if this is not possible we will write to explain the reason for the delay and let you know when we hope to be able to provide a full response.
5. As part of our consideration of your complaint, we may invite you to a meeting to discuss the complaint and fill in any details required. If you wish, you can ask someone to accompany you to help you explain the reasons for your complaint.
6. The Head Teacher, or chair of governors may also be accompanied by a suitable person if they wish.
7. Following the meeting, the Head Teacher, investigating officer or Chair of Governors will, where necessary, talk to witnesses and take statements from others involved if appropriate.
8. If the complaint is against a member of staff, it will be dealt with under the school's internal confidential procedures, as required by law.
9. The Head Teacher or chair of governors will keep written/typed, signed and dated records of all meetings and telephone conversations, and other related documentation.
10. Once we have established all the relevant facts, we will send you a written response to your complaint. This will give an explanation of the Head Teacher's or Chair of Governors' decision and the reasons for it. If follow-up action is needed, we will indicate what we are proposing to do. We may invite you to a meeting to discuss the outcome as part of our commitment to building and maintaining good relations with you.
11. The person investigating your complaint may decide that we have done all we can to resolve the complaint, in which case we may use our discretion to close the complaint at this point.
12. If you are unhappy with the way in which we reached our conclusions, you may wish to proceed to stage 2, as described below.

## Stage 2 – Consideration by a governors appeal panel

If the complaint has already been through Stage 1 and you are not happy with the outcome as a result of the way in which the complaint has been handled you can take it further to a governors appeal panel.

The purpose of this arrangement is to give you the chance to present your arguments in front of a panel of governors who have no prior knowledge of the details of the case and who can therefore consider it without prejudice.

However, the aim of the panel is not to re-hear the complaint, it is there to review how the complaint has been investigated and to determine whether this has been conducted fairly.

To go through this process, you will need to write to the Chair of Governors, stating that you wish to make a formal complaint. This can be sent via the school or alternatively you can send your letter to the Governors' Support Section, Children and Young People's Service, Civic Office, Waterdale, Doncaster, Dn1 3BU. The letter will be forwarded to the Chair of Governors.

The governors appeal panel operates according to the following formal procedures:

1. The governing body will convene a panel of three governors and will aim to arrange for the panel meeting to take place within **20 working days**.
2. You will be asked whether you wish to provide any further written documentation in support of your appeal.
3. The Head Teacher or complaint investigator will be asked to prepare a written report for the panel. The panel can request additional information from other sources if necessary.
4. You will be informed, at least **five working days** in advance, of the date, time and place of the meeting. We hope you will feel comfortable with the meeting taking place in the school but we will do what we can to make alternative arrangements if you prefer.
5. With the letter, you will receive any relevant correspondence or reports regarding stage 1 and you will be asked whether you wish to submit further written evidence to the panel.
6. The letter will explain what will happen at the panel meeting and that you are entitled to be accompanied to the meeting. The choice of person to accompany you is your own, but it is usually best to involve someone in whom you have confidence but who is not directly connected with the school. They are there to give you support but also to witness the proceedings and to speak on your behalf if you wish.
7. If it is necessary in the interests of the ratifying the investigative process, the complaint investigator may, with the agreement of the chair of the panel, invite relevant witnesses directly involved in matters raised by you to attend the meeting.
8. The chair of the panel will bear in mind that the formal nature of the meeting can be intimidating for you and will do his or her best to put you at your ease.
9. As a general rule, no evidence or witnesses previously undisclosed should be introduced into the meeting by any of the participants. If either party wishes to do so, the meeting will be adjourned so that the other party has a fair opportunity to consider and respond to the new evidence.
10. The chair of the panel will ensure that the meeting is properly minuted. Please understand that any decision to share the minutes with you, the complainant, is a matter for the panel's discretion and you do not have an automatic right to see or receive a copy as the minutes are the property of the governing body. Since such minutes usually name individuals, they are understandably of a sensitive and, therefore, confidential nature.
11. Normally, the written outcome of the panel meeting, which will be sent to you, should give you all the information you require. If, however, you feel that you would like to have a copy of the minutes it would be helpful if you could indicate this in advance. If the panel is happy for the minutes to be copied to you, the clerk can then be asked maintain confidentiality in the minutes.
12. During the meeting, you can expect there to be opportunities for:
  - The panel to hear you explain your case and your argument for why it should be heard at stage 2;
  - The panel to hear the complaint investigator's case in response;
  - you to raise questions via the chair;
  - you to be questioned by the complaint investigator through the chair;
  - the panel members to be able to question you and the complaint investigator;
  - you and the Head Teacher to make a final statement.
13. In closing the meeting, the chair will explain that the panel will now consider its decision and that written notice of the decision will be sent to you and the Head Teacher **within three school days**. All participants other than the panel and the clerk will then leave.
14. The panel will then consider the complaint and all the evidence presented in order to:
  - reach a unanimous, or at least a majority, decision on the case;
  - decide on the appropriate action to be taken, if necessary;
  - recommend, where appropriate, to the governing body changes to the school's systems or procedures to ensure that similar problems do not happen again.
15. The clerk will send you and the Head Teacher a letter outlining the decision of the panel.

16. We will keep a copy of all correspondence and notes on file in the school's records but separate from pupils' personal records.

### Closure of Complaints

Very occasionally, a school will feel it needs, regretfully, to close a complaint where the complainant is still dissatisfied.

If after receiving a response from the Governing Body, you may wish to write to the Department for Education, Sanctuary Buildings, Great Smith Street, London, SW1P 3BT within 10 days of receipt of the Governing Body's response.

**Woodfield Primary School**

**Compliments Feedback Form**

Personal Details

Name .....

Address .....

.....

.....

Postcode .....

Home Telephone .....

Mobile Telephone .....

If applicable, name of child (ren) and year/class in school:-

.....

Your relationship to the school e.g parent, carer, neighbour, member of the public:

.....

Please give details of your compliment:-

**Woodfield Primary School**

**Complaints Feedback Form**

**Please return directly to the Head Teacher.**

Personal Details

Name .....

Address .....

.....

.....

Postcode .....

Home Telephone .....

Mobile Telephone .....

If applicable, name of child (ren) and year/class in school:-

.....

Your relationship to the school e.g parent, carer, neighbour, member of the public:

.....

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, when and what was the response?

What actions do you feel might resolve the problem at this stage?

Signature: .....

Date: .....

**Official use:**

Date of acknowledgement: .....

**Summary of  
Dealing with Complaints**

