



Complaints Policy

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1. Introduction

Kineton Primary School endeavours to provide the best education possible for all its pupils in an open and transparent environment. We welcome any feedback that we receive from parents, pupils and third parties, and we accept that not all of this will be positive. Where concerns are raised the school intends for these to be dealt with fairly, openly, promptly and without prejudice.

The Governing Body has approved this complaints procedure which explains what you should do if you have any concerns about the school. All members of staff will be familiar with the procedure and will be able to assist you.

2. Dealing with concerns at the earliest opportunity

- 2.1. If you have a concern about any aspect of the school or your child's education or wellbeing, please raise this with your child's class teacher in the first instance. Ideally, they will be able to address your concerns on the spot, or can arrange a meeting with you to discuss the issue.
- 2.2. We expect that the majority of concerns will be resolved in this way. However, if you feel that the situation has not been resolved through contact with the class teacher, please discuss your concerns with the relevant Key Stage Leader.
- 2.3. If, after speaking to the Key Stage Leader, you feel the situation has still not been resolved, you should make an appointment with the Headteacher. She will take your concerns seriously and will investigate thoroughly, including encouraging you to say what actions you feel may resolve the problem.
- 2.4. Only if you are unhappy with the Headteacher's response should you make a formal complaint to the Governing Body.

3. Making a complaint to the Governing Body

- 3.1. If you are not satisfied with the action that the Headteacher has taken to resolve your concern, you should write to the Chair of Governors or Clerk to the Governing Body at the school address. The envelope should be marked 'FOR IMMEDIATE ACTION, PRIVATE AND CONFIDENTIAL' and staff in the school office must ensure that the letter is forwarded without delay. You may find it easiest to use the school's Complaint Form (see Appendix 1) for this.
- 3.2. **Within 5 working days** of receipt of your complaint, the Chair of Governors or Clerk will contact you. They may ask you to complete a Complaint Form if you have not already done so, to help them to clarify the nature of your complaint, what remains unresolved, and what you feel would put things right. The Chair of Governors (or another governor) may arrange to meet you to discuss your concerns if it seems appropriate.
- 3.3. At this point (and following any initial meeting with you), the Chair of Governors will decide whether mediation should be offered to help you and the Headteacher to explore possible resolution.
- 3.4. If you and the Headteacher agree to mediation, the Chair of Governors will try to set up the meeting **within 10 working days**. If that timescale is not possible you will be told the reason. In most cases, the Chair of Governors or another governor will act as the mediator.
- 3.5. If mediation is not deemed appropriate or if it is not successful, the Chair of Governors or Clerk will set up a panel of governors to meet **within 15 working days** of receipt of your Complaint Form to consider your complaint.

Governor Complaints Panel

The Complaints Panel will consist of three governors who (as far as possible) have no prior knowledge of the events being complained of. The Clerk will provide you with details of the hearing

and will request any further information that you wish to provide, which must be submitted seven days before the hearing. **Five working days** before the hearing the clerk will send to you, the Headteacher and the three panel members, copies of all papers submitted by both sides so that there is sufficient time to read the evidence before the hearing.

The Panel will hear your complaint impartially and will make their decision based on the facts and the evidence they have been provided with. Their aim will be to resolve your complaint and achieve reconciliation between you and the school. The Chair of the Panel will do his or her best to ensure that the proceedings are as welcoming as possible.

Remit of the Panel

The Complaints Panel can:

- dismiss the complaint in whole or in part;
- uphold the complaint in whole or in part;
- decide on the appropriate action to be taken to resolve the complaint;
- recommend changes to the school's systems or procedures to ensure problems of a similar nature do not recur.

It may:

- consider and, if appropriate, criticise the way in which an operational decision was communicated – **but cannot overturn the decision itself**
- consider the thoroughness with which the Headteacher investigated a complaint about a member of staff – **but cannot expect the Headteacher to provide details about confidential discussions with that staff member**
- consider the manner in which a complaint about any decision was addressed and ask for the decision to be reviewed – **but cannot expect the Headteacher to have changed the decision**
- consider and if appropriate identify limitations in a policy or procedures – **but cannot make changes to the policy** (It can, however, recommend that the policy be reviewed by the governing body to ensure that problems of a similar nature do not recur, and individual panel members can subsequently play their part in improving the policy)
- consider whether it should recommend that the governing body offer appropriate redress.

Format of a Panel Hearing

1. Complainant and Headteacher enter the room where the hearing is taking place together.
2. The Chair will introduce the panel members and the clerk and outline the process.
3. The complainant is invited to explain the complaint.
4. The Headteacher may question the complainant.
5. The panel will question the complainant.
6. The Headteacher is then invited to explain the school's actions.
7. The complainant may question the Headteacher.
8. The panel will question the Headteacher.
9. The complainant is then invited to sum up their complaint.
10. The Headteacher is then invited to sum up the school's action and response to the complaint.
11. The Chair explains that both parties will hear from the panel in writing **within five working days**.
12. Both parties leave together while the panel decides on the issues.
13. The clerk will remain with the panel to clarify any issues.

There may be exceptional circumstances in which a complaint is against the Chair of Governors e.g. for refusing to deal with a complaint. In these circumstances the procedure above would be adapted and every reference to 'Headteacher' would be read as 'Chair of Governors'.

The Decision

The Clerk will ensure that the letter setting out the Panel's decision reaches you and the Headteacher within five working days.

If you are not satisfied with the decision, you cannot take your complaint to the local authority. The local authority cannot investigate school matters on a parent's behalf nor can it review how the school has dealt with your complaint. However, if you feel that the school has acted unreasonably or not followed the correct procedures, you can write to the Secretary of State for Education <http://www.education.gov.uk/help/contactus/dfe>.

4. Monitoring Complaints

As well as addressing an individual's complaint, the Governing Body recognises that the process of listening to and resolving complaints can contribute to school improvements. It therefore monitors and reviews complaints received by the school and Governing Body on a termly basis (without identifying individuals).

Appendix 1:

Kineton C of E (VA) Primary School

Complaint Form

Please complete and return to the Chair of Governors or the Clerk to the Governing Body, either via the school office or by email at kpsgovernors@welearn365.com. They will acknowledge receipt and explain what action will be taken.

Name.....

Address.....

.....

Telephone number.....

Email address.....

Name of pupil, year group and your relationship to them (where applicable)

.....

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 action do you feel might resolve the problem at this stage?

Signature:

Date:.....

Official use:

Date received:

Signed: