

# Complaints Policy



## Tannery Drift

### First School

ROYSTON • HERTFORDSHIRE

Last Review Date: March 2018

Next Review Date: March 2020

Enjoyment – Achievement – Respect

# Complaints Policy

## 1 We care about what you think

Each day this school makes many decisions and tries hard to do the best for all the children. Your comments - either positive or negative - are helpful for future planning.

You may want to talk to us about a particular aspect of this school, though not actually make a complaint - you just want to get something 'off your chest'. If you are dissatisfied about the way your child is being treated, or any actions or lack of action by us, please feel free to contact us using the details on our website. Our aims:

- Your complaint will be dealt with honestly, politely and in confidence.
- Your complaint will be looked into thoroughly and fairly.
- If your complaint is urgent we will deal with it more quickly.
- We will keep you up to date with progress at each stage.
- You will get an apology if we have made a mistake.
- You will be told what we are going to do to put things right.
- You will get a full and clear written reply to formal complaints within 28 school days (5½ weeks).

## 2 How to make a complaint

### 2.1 In the first instance – informal stage

If you have a concern about anything we do, or if you wish to make a complaint, you can do this by telephone, in person or in writing (by letter or email). We hope that most complaints can be settled quickly and informally, either by putting matters right or by giving you an explanation.

If there is something you are not happy about, or you don't understand why we are doing something in a particular way, please come in and discuss it with the class teacher or another appropriate member of staff. If your child has a Statement of Special Educational Needs (SEN) or an Education, Health and Care Plan (EHCP) you might find it helpful to talk to our Special Educational Needs Co-ordinator (SENCo) or your child's named Special Needs Officer at the Local Authority. The SEND Information Advice and Support Service (SENDIASS – formerly Parent Partnership) may also be able to help you.

We know that it can feel uncomfortable to question or challenge something, but if you don't tell us what is worrying you we cannot explain what we are doing or try to put it right. If the member of staff you speak to in the first instance is unable to attempt to resolve the matter, you should make an appointment with the Headteacher. You should be able to sort out your worries but sometimes this is not possible. In this case there is a next step.

## 2.2 First formal stage

Request **a meeting with the Headteacher** who will investigate your complaint and aim to inform you of the outcome within **10 school days (2 weeks)**.

However, if your complaint is about the Headteacher, you should **write to the Chair of Governors**, who will investigate your complaint and aim to inform you of their conclusions within **10 school days (2 weeks)**.

Other than in these circumstances, **a Governor should not be made aware of a potential complaint** as they may be required to sit on a Panel in the event of a formal hearing (Second Formal Stage) and should be impartial. If your first contact is with individual Governors, they will advise you to take up your concerns with the appropriate member of staff, Headteacher or Chair of Governors.

## 2.3 Second formal stage

If you remain dissatisfied following Stage 1 and wish to take your complaint further, you will be asked to write a letter addressed to the Chair of Governors.

In the letter you should:

- Make it clear why you are complaining.
- Say who you have spoken to already.
- Explain what you want to happen as a result of your complaint.

The Chair of Governors will arrange for your complaint to be considered and investigated by a Panel of Governors, at a hearing that you will be invited to attend. If the Chair of Governors has been involved in discussions to help settle the disagreement in the First Formal Stage, they will arrange for another Governor to take charge of the investigation. The Governor in charge of investigating the complaint may ask to meet you to discuss your concerns. In this case they will not be part of the panel as all of the Governors on the panel will need to remain impartial.

You should make sure that the Governors' Complaint Panel is provided with any written information or evidence you intend to use in a formal hearing. You may bring a friend, representative or interpreter to any meeting if you wish. The Chair of the Panel may invite any person who may help establish the facts of the complaint, and any member of staff named in the complaint may choose to attend the meeting, even if not required to do so by Governors. In both these cases, they will also have the opportunity to be accompanied or represented as they wish. The Chair will tell you who will be attending the meeting in advance.

When the Panel has fully investigated your complaint, the Chair of the Panel or the Governor in charge of the investigation will write to you to tell you the findings. These findings will be reported to the Governing Body. The Chair of Governors will then write to you confirming the outcome of your complaint and any agreed actions to be taken. Our Governing Body will aim to deal with your complaint **within 28 school days (5 ½ weeks)**.

## 2 Further recourse

Most complaints are resolved by this process. Should your complaint not be resolved, your further options are as follows:

You can complain to the Secretary of State at the Department for Education:

The Secretary of State  
Department for Education  
Sanctuary Buildings  
Great Smith Street  
London  
SW1P 3BT  
Website: [www.education.gov.uk](http://www.education.gov.uk)  
Telephone: 0370 000 2288

In the case of complaints about **Special Educational Needs provision**, you may complain further to the Local Authority. This should be done by writing to the Children's Services Complaints Manager.

It should be noted however that if you wish to pursue this route, you must do so within **20 working days (4 weeks)** of receiving the written outcome of the hearing into your complaint. After **20 working days (4 weeks)**, neither the school nor the Local Authority is under any obligation to investigate or progress your complaint any further.

## 3 Useful contacts

### Advisory Centre for Education

Education Advice & Training  
72 Durnsford Road  
London  
N11 2EJ  
Website: [www.ace-ed.org.uk](http://www.ace-ed.org.uk)  
Telephone: 0300 0115 142

### POhWER

Hertlands House  
Primett Road  
Stevenage  
SG1 3EE  
Website: [www.pohwer.net](http://www.pohwer.net)  
Telephone: 0300 456 2370

### Children's Legal Centre

Riverside Office Centre  
Century House North  
North Station Road  
Colchester  
Essex  
CO1 1RE  
Website: [www.childrenslegalcentre.com](http://www.childrenslegalcentre.com)  
Telephone: 0345 345 4345

### National Youth Advocacy Service (NYAS)

Egerton House  
Tower Road  
Birkenhead  
Wirral  
CH41 1FN  
Website: [www.nyas.net](http://www.nyas.net)  
Telephone: 0345 345 4345

### SENDIASS (Special Educational Needs & Disability Information Advice Support Service)

Website: [www.hertsdirect.org/sendiaass](http://www.hertsdirect.org/sendiaass)  
Email: [sendiaass@hertfordshire.gov.uk](mailto:sendiaass@hertfordshire.gov.uk)  
Telephone: 01992 555847