



Abbey Primary School  
Glastonbury Crescent  
Mossley Estate  
Bloxwich  
Walsall  
WS3 2RP  
Tel: 01922 710753  
Fax: 01922 404365  
Email: [postbox@abbey.walsall.sch.uk](mailto:postbox@abbey.walsall.sch.uk)  
[www.abbey.walsall.sch.uk](http://www.abbey.walsall.sch.uk)

HEADTEACHER - Mr. M Gilbert  
BA (QTS), NPQH

**MISSION STATEMENT**  
**Believe and Achieve**

We are committed to the protection and safety of our pupils and safeguarding is a priority

## Abbey Primary School Complaints Policy

### Introduction/Aims

We hope that you and your children are happy with our school. However, over time, problems or issues may arise. The aim of this document is to explain the procedures in the event of a complaint.

### General complaints

Walsall schools aim to provide good quality education to the children of Walsall, but we realise that sometimes things go wrong. When this happens, we want to know about it. The Council has defined a complaint as "an expression of dissatisfaction with the Council, its services or the actions of its staff". We want to learn from our mistakes, to get it right next time, and, if we have got things wrong we want to provide redress, where possible by putting things right. You can be assured that whatever the nature of your concern, the school's support for your child will not change in any way. All concerns will be properly considered.

### Procedures

Abbey Primary School should be informed about a concern as soon as possible, so that it can be investigated. Many concerns can be quickly resolved with goodwill, often by making early contact with the class teacher.

While you cannot always expect the school to agree with your point of view, your concerns will be properly considered and if there are lessons to be learned which will prevent a problem arising again, then the school will take action.

Your role as a parent or carer, and your views, are important. Walsall Children's Services and Abbey Primary school are committed to listening to, and working with, parents and carers.

#### **1. Informal stage - Stage One**

Any formal procedure can take time so it is important an informal approach is made first before you make a complaint in writing. This informal approach will give the school a chance to respond to your complaint quickly and a formal complaint may not be necessary.

If you have a concern, it is likely that you will have already raised this with a member of school staff. If you have not already done so, then you should contact the named person who will deal with your complaint. Depending on the nature of the complaint this would probably be the Deputy Head teacher, Head teacher or another person named as the school contact. If you are unsure then you should phone the school in the first instance.

Depending on the seriousness of your complaint, the following information would be helpful:

- A note of the time and dates of any incidents
- The names of any witnesses

Once sufficient information is to hand, your complaint will be investigated informally. You will receive a response, which at this stage may be verbal, or may be in writing. You may be invited to a meeting to further discuss your concerns, and to see if a quick resolution is possible. Most complaints will be dealt with in this way.

If your complaint is about the conduct of the Head teacher and cannot be resolved informally then you should contact the Chair of School Governors - Malcolm Hinks via the school office

## **2. Formal stage - Stage Two**

If you think your complaint cannot be resolved informally, or if you are not satisfied with the school's attempt to resolve the matter informally, you should contact the Head Teacher in writing. If necessary, your complaint will be passed to the Chair of School Governors and you may, at this point, be asked for further information.

You should receive an acknowledgement within 10 working days and a full written reply within 20 working days. If the complaint is a complex one you will be told of any delay. These time limits relate to school working days not including the school holidays.

If your complaint concerns the Head Teacher personally, you should write directly to the Chair of the Governing Body care of the school. The Headteacher/Chair of Governors shall consider the complaint and decide whether to:

- reject the complaint;
- uphold the complaint;
- investigate the complaint further. The complainant will be notified of the decision of the Headteacher/Governing Body/Committee in writing within 5 school days.

The school governing body has a duty to consider all aspects of a complaint and to decide what action, if any, needs to be taken. You will receive a response to your complaint from the school.

## **3. Formal stage - Stage Three**

If you are not satisfied with the response from the school or Governing Body you may ask for it to be reconsidered. This will be carried out by a different group/ person who will not have been involved in the first investigation. You may be invited to attend a meeting and speak to the panel and any documentation should be shared beforehand. The meeting will normally be within 20 school days of receiving the complaint and the outcome will be confirmed to you in writing within 10 school days of the meeting taking place. The Headteacher/Governing Body or committee shall consider the complaint and decide whether to:

- reject the complaint;
- uphold the complaint;
- Investigate the complaint further.

The complainant will be notified of the decision of the Headteacher/Governing Body/Committee in writing within 5 school days.

## **4. What if I am still concerned?**

If you are not satisfied with the school's response you should write to Walsall Children's Services who may investigate the matter and respond to you in writing. Where appropriate the Chief Education Services Officer will submit a report to the Governing Body of the school concerned.

If your complaint is of a general nature or is about matters for which Walsall Children's Services has responsibility such as Special Educational Needs, National Curriculum, Admissions, Exclusions or delivery of Disability Services please contact Walsall Children's services directly at Walsall Council, The Civic Centre, Darwall Street, Walsall, WS1 1DQ. Telephone 01922 650000, Fax 01922 614210

## **5. Who else can help?**

If, after the above process has been followed you still have concerns, then you may approach the Secretary of State at the Department for Education.

If genuinely fresh information to support your complaint comes to light, you should refer back to the informal stage.

### Curriculum Complaints

These complaints are concerned only with the actions of the Governing Body and Local Education Authority. They do not cover complaints about the actions of individual teachers or the Head Teacher. A record of complaints will be kept by the school.

### Areas covered by the procedure

The duties covered by the curriculum complaints procedure are as follows:

1. The provision of a curriculum which meets the general requirements of sections 356 and 357 of the Education Act 1996;
2. The implementation of the National Curriculum and compliance with Orders and Regulations made about its requirements and exceptions to its provision;
3. Provision of courses leading to external qualification, only if that qualification and the associated syllabus have been approved;
4. Provision of religious education and worship as required by sections 379 - 385 of the Education Act 1996, and other enactments;
5. The need to act reasonably in deciding whether to apply to the Secretary of State, either with or without the School Curriculum and Assessment Authority, for exemption from all or part of the National Curriculum in order to carry out developmental work;
6. Consideration of appeals by parents about the temporary withdrawal of pupils from part or all of the National Curriculum;
7. Operation of charging policies in relation to the curriculum;
8. Compliance with requirements relating to the provision of information;
9. Compliance with any other enactments relating to the curriculum.

### Stages in the complaints procedure

The various stages of the complaint procedure can be summarised as:

- Informal discussion with the teachers and/or the Head Teacher;
- Formal written complaint to the Head Teacher;
- Referral of the complaint by the Head Teacher to the Governing Body;
- Appeals to Walsall LA or to the Secretary of State.

Stage 1 - This is the essential preliminary to any complaint and should in the majority of circumstances be able to resolve any issue. However, if this is not possible then there is recourse to stage 2.

Stage 2 -

a) This involves making a formal complaint to the complaints officer designated by the Head Teacher, who may be the Head Teacher him/herself. The complaints officer will then inform the complainant of their decision, in writing, within 10 school days of receipt of the complaint. The decision letter informs the complainant of their right, if still dissatisfied, to refer the matter to the Head Teacher for reconciliation within 10 days of the receipt of the decision letter.

b) At this stage the complainant is entitled to meet the Head teacher. The decision of the Head teacher will then be conveyed to the complainant within 10 school days of the receipt of the complaint. The letter will

inform the complainant of their right to appeal to the *Governing Body* within 10 school days of the receipt of this decision letter.

Stage 3 - If the complainant wishes to appeal against the decision the *Head Teacher/Governing Body* should be informed within 10 school days and within 5 school days should inform the *Chair of the Governors*. The *Governors* will delegate the investigation to a committee of the *Governing Body* who will set a timetable for the investigation and give this to the complainant and the *Governing Body*. An oral hearing may be held to which all parties to the complaint are entitled to be represented. At the meeting the usual order of proceedings will be:

- The *Chair* will welcome the complainant and any representative and introduce those present.
- Complainants may, if they choose, restate the nature of the complaint.
- Complainants may be asked questions by the *Governing Body* or *Committee* and by the *Head Teacher*.
- The *Head Teacher* may be asked to make a statement to the *Governing Body* or *Committee*, regarding the complaint, and may be asked questions by the *Governing Body*, *Committee* or complainant.
- The complainant may summarise the complaint.
- The *Head Teacher* & complainant will be asked to leave.
- The *Governing Body* or committee shall consider the complaint and decide whether to:
  - reject the complaint;
  - uphold the complaint;
  - investigate the complaint further.

The *Clerk to the Governing Body* will inform the complainant of the decision of the *Governing Body/Committee* in writing within 5 school days.

Stage 4 - Should a complainant not be satisfied with the *Governors'* response they have recourse to:

- appealing to the *LEA*
- taking their complaint to the *Secretary of State*.
- *Withdrawing a complaint*

It should be noted that a complaint can be withdrawn at any stage of the procedure.

---

Policy written by *Mr M. Gilbert, Headteacher*

Agreed and ratified by governors - *December 2017*

Signed by school \_\_\_\_\_

Signed by governors \_\_\_\_\_

Date to be reviewed - *December 2018*