

ELM GROVE PRIMARY SCHOOL

COMPLAINTS PROCEDURE

GUIDANCE NOTES FOR PARENTS

If you have a concern or complaint

We would like you to tell us about it. We always welcome suggestions for improving our work in the school. Be assured that no matter what you want to tell us, our support and respect for you and your child in the school will not be affected in any way. Please tell us of your concern as soon as possible. It is difficult for us to investigate properly an incident or problem which has happened some time ago.

What to do first

Most concerns can be sorted out quickly by speaking with your child's class teacher. If you feel you cannot talk to him/her then you should discuss the matter with the deputy head teacher, who will investigate your complaint fully following your discussion. If you wish to, before talking to the school staff, there are Parent Governors, who will be able to give you impartial advice on your concern, which may answer your questions. It should be remembered however that they cannot represent you.

All staff will make every effort to resolve your problem informally. They will make sure that they understand what you feel went wrong, and they will explain their own actions to you. They will ask what you would like the school to do to put things right. Of course, this does not mean that in every case they will come round to your point of view but it will help both you and the school to understand both sides of the question. It may also help to prevent a similar problem arising again. This should be done within 15 school days

What to do next

If you feel you cannot talk to the Class teacher or are dissatisfied with the teacher's response (or with the Headteacher's initial reaction if he/she has already been involved) you can make a complaint to the Head teacher. This should be made in writing. Help with this is available from the School Secretary or one of the Parent Governors.

If your complaint is about an action of the Headteacher personally, then you should refer it to the Chair of Governors now. You can contact him/her via the School Secretary.

You may also find it helpful at this stage to have a copy of the full statement of the General Complaints Procedure as this explains in detail what procedures are followed. This is available from the school office.

The Head teacher will ask to meet you for a discussion of the problem. Again you may take a friend or someone else with you if you wish. He/she will conduct a full investigation of the complaint and may interview any members of staff or pupils involved. You will receive a written response to your complaint.

If you are still unhappy

The problem will normally be solved by this stage. However, if you are still not satisfied you may wish to contact the Chair of the Governing Body to ask for referral of your complaint to the Complaints Committee of the governing body. It will then be heard by a group of three governors who have no previous knowledge of the problem and so will be able to give it a fresh assessment. You will be invited to attend and speak to the committee at a meeting which the Headteacher will also attend. The General Complaints Procedure statement explains how these meetings operate.

Further action

Complaints about school problems are almost always settled within schools but in exceptional cases it may be possible to refer the problem to an outside body such as the Ombudsman (in rare circumstances but particularly in relations to admissions) or the Secretary of State for Education and Skills. Again there is more information on this in the General Complaints Procedure.