

Holmfirth J I & N School

Complaints Policy – 2019/2020

Introduction

At Holmfirth Junior, Infant & Nursery School, children and their learning come first and the school will always do its utmost to deliver a first class education and caring environment. At times, however, parents/guardians, and rarely, external parties, may have a concern or issue about some aspect of the school. The school has an “open door” policy and is at all times open to discuss such matters.

This complaints procedure is built on the basis of ongoing communication until there is a resolution to the issue being raised.

For the purposes of this procedure a complaint is defined as:

“An expression of dissatisfaction or disquiet in relation to any aspect of the school”.

Please do not approach individual school governors with details, as they cannot become involved at this stage, though they will be happy to clarify the procedure to you.

Pupils, parents or carers can make a complaint to the school about most aspects of its function

The Local Authority retains responsibility for:

- The National Curriculum
- Collective worship in schools

Complaints about these matters should be referred to the relevant officer in Children and Young People Service through the senior primary inspector Alison O’Sullivan. Her contact details are:

- Telephone: 01484 225242
- E-mail: alison.o'sullivan@kirklees.gov.uk
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The school will refer complaints to the local authority or other service when it falls outside its responsibility.

Members of the public may make complaints to the school if the school is directly responsible for the issue being complained about for example:

- Disturbance to neighbours during school hours
- Health and safety issues of premises
- Behaviour of pupils on school managed activities

Schools are not responsible for the actions or behaviour of pupils outside school hours. However, as part of the school’s role as a valuable member of the community the schools will offer support to help resolve issues arising from behaviour of pupils on the journey to and from school.

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The Complaints Procedure

There are five possible stages to the complaints procedure. These are explained below.

If you are a parent / guardian of a child at the school, this is the place to start:

Stage 1

The relevant class teacher is the first point of contact, and in most cases is the most applicable person to deal with the complaint. Arrange a time to talk to them. The start of the school day is rarely a 'good' time and you may want to speak somewhere more private than the classroom - arrange a time and place with the teacher to suit you both.

If the class teacher is unable to address the concern satisfactorily, or the matter is more serious or whole school related, then:

Stage 2

Arrange to speak to a member of the leadership team or the Headteacher. They will always welcome communication on anything that relates to the smooth running of the school and the wellbeing of the children. You may wish to see them in school, or may find a telephone conversation more convenient.

You may bring a friend, family member or advocate to the meeting and interpreting services will be made available where necessary. The Headteacher may also have another member of staff present to observe and record the meeting.

If having met with the Headteacher, you feel that you have not had a satisfactory response, then:

Stage 3

Write to the school asking for further investigation, using the address below:

The Headteacher
Holmfirth Junior, Infant and Nursery School
Cartworth Road
Holmfirth
West Yorkshire HD9 2RG

The school will then make further enquiries. A written acknowledgment will be provided within 3 school days. Once all the relevant facts have been established the Headteacher will provide a written response to you. This will include a full description of decisions taken and the reasons for them. Where appropriate it will include details of actions the school will take to resolve the complaint. The school's target date for providing a full written response is 15 school days. If this date cannot be met a written update will be provided giving a reason for the delay and a revised target date.

If this does not resolve your problem:

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Stage 4

Write to the Chair of Governors detailing your complaint and giving reasons why you feel that the Headteacher's response was not satisfactory. The Chair of Governors can be contacted as follows:

The Chair of Governors
Holmfirth Junior, Infant and Nursery School
Cartworth Road
Holmfirth
West Yorkshire HD9 2RG

Stage 5

The Chair of Governors will send a written acknowledgment you within 3 school days. The Chair of Governors will discuss the issue with the Headteacher unless the complaint has legal implications for the Headteacher in which case the allegations against staff policy procedure is initiated.

Stage 6

The Complaints Committee is made up of governors who have no prior knowledge of the complaint, other than having had sight of all written evidence which both you and the school will have been asked to provide to the Chair of Governors in advance.

You may bring a friend, family member or advocate to the meeting and interpreting services will be made available where necessary.

Once all the relevant facts have been established the Chair of Governors will provide a written response to you. This will include a full description of decisions taken and the reasons for them. Where appropriate it will include details of actions the school will take to resolve the complaint.

If you are not a parent / guardian of a child at the school, but have an issue that you wish to raise then please contact the Headteacher at the following address (as per Stage 2 in the above process):

The Headteacher
Holmfirth Junior, Infant and Nursery School
Cartworth Road
Holmfirth
West Yorkshire HD9 2RG

Withdrawing a Complaint

Complaints may be withdrawn in writing at any time. The Headteacher and chair of governors will review the issue of concern and consider whether further investigation is required through other internal management systems.

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Right of Appeal

You will be notified of the right of appeal to the Secretary of State for Education of the Local Government Ombudsman if you are unhappy with the way in which procedures have been carried out.

Vexatious Complaints

If all the stages of the complaints procedure have been followed and the complainant tries to re-open the same issue again the chair of governors can write to say that the procedure has been exhausted and the matter is now closed.

Reporting of Complaints to the Governing Body

The governing body will receive a yearly written report on complaints that have reached Stage 3 or above (i.e. written complaints). The report will enable the school governors to understand the number and range of complaints that are being brought and to support the Leadership Team and Headteacher in their implementation of actions resulting from complaints.

The report will contain the following:

- Date
- Nature of the complaint
- Stage the complaint reached
- How the complaint was resolved
- Actions taken / changes made as a result of the complaint

Over time the report may be able to demonstrate trends.

Due to the time consuming nature of doing so, the governing body do not require a written report on concerns (defined for this purpose as issues raised verbally i.e. at Stage 1 and Stage 2 of the Complaints Procedure). However, concerns that arise about specific issues on a repeated basis (three or more separate concerns brought about the same issue) should be brought to the attention of the governing body.

Reviewed by the Governing Body by 18.6.19

This Policy will be reviewed every 2 years. The next policy review date will be June 2021