

TMPF

Complaints Policy

2019

Policy Review: January 2019

Signature: (Chair of Trustees)

Date of next review: October 2022

1. Introduction

We endeavour to ensure that all of our schools provide the very best education for all our children. However, we acknowledge that parents and/or carers may have grievances over specific matters which may result in a complaint. The following policy sets out the procedure that we follow in such cases.

2. Aims and objectives

All of our schools aim to be fair, open and adhere to The Moorlands Primary Federation (TMPF) values (* and Christian foundations) when dealing with any complaint. We give careful consideration to all complaints and deal with them as swiftly as possible. We aim to resolve any complaint through dialogue and mutual understanding and, in all cases, we put the interests of the child above all other issues. We provide sufficient opportunity for any complaint to be fully discussed, and then resolved.

The values of TMPF:

Trust
Mindful
Peace
Friendship

3. The complaints process

How to share a concern.

If a parent is concerned about anything to do with the education that we are providing at any of our schools, they should, in the first instance, discuss the matter with their child's class teacher. Most matters of concern can be dealt with in this way. All teachers work very hard to ensure that each child is happy at school, and is making good progress; they always want to know if there is a problem, so that they can take action before the problem seriously affects the child's learning.

What to do if the matter is not resolved through informal discussion.

Where a parent or carer feels that a situation has not been resolved through contact with the class teacher, or that their concern is of a sufficiently serious nature, they should make an appointment to discuss it with either the Assistant School Leader or School Leader. These Senior Leaders will consider any such complaint seriously and investigate each case. We hope that most complaints escalated to this level will be resolved at this stage.

If a parent or carer feels the matter has not been resolved at this stage, they may request a meeting with the Trust's Principal or Executive Principal. These meetings will need to be arranged at a mutually convenient time, as these leaders are not onsite in each school every day.

*denotes our Anglican schools of Bishop Rawle C. E. (A) Primary School, Dilhome Endowed C. E. (A) Primary School and St. Werburgh's C. E. (A) Primary School.

Sharing a concern about the Assistant School Leader, School Leader, Principal or Executive Principal.

Should a parent have a complaint about a member of the Senior Leadership Team (listed above), they should arrange a meeting with either the Trust Principal or Executive Principal. Should the complaint be about the Principal, they should contact the Executive Principal. Should the complaint be about the Executive Principal, the complainant should contact one of the members of the Trust Board, who will investigate it. The Trustee will do all s/he can to resolve the issue through a dialogue with the school, but if a parent or carer is unhappy with the outcome, s/he can make a formal complaint, as outlined below. A list of Trustees is available from each school office, or on our website www.tmpf.staffs.sch.uk

How to take the matter further.

Only if an informal complaint fails to resolve the matter should a formal complaint be made to the Trust Board. This complaint must be made in writing, stating the nature of the complaint and how the school has handled it so far. The parent should send this written complaint to the Chair of the Trust Board.

The Trust Board must consider all written complaints within three weeks of receipt (potential delays may exist during periods of school holiday). The complaint will be acknowledged in writing by, or on behalf of, the Chair of the Trust Board. The acknowledgement should include an explanation of what will happen next, time scales involved and the name of the person from whom they will next hear in relation to the progress of their investigation. Details of a complaint should be confidential except in so far as they need to be shared with people who might contribute to the resolution. The Chair of the Trust Board will need to consider whether the investigation can be completed by the Principal or Executive Principal (who will already have been involved); the Chair him/herself; or whether to refer the complaint to the Appeals and Discipline Committee of the Trust Board. If the latter course of action is followed, the Chair shall present a full report to the Committee and if necessary, external advice may be sought from the Local Authority or Diocese.

The Appeals and Discipline Committee is comprised of three Trustees. Membership will not include the Principal or Executive Principal and according to the matter complained about, it may not be appropriate for certain categories of Trustee to be included.

The Committee will arrange a meeting to discuss the complaint, and invite the complainant, and any witnesses, to attend the meeting, so that s/he can explain the complaint in more detail. The school gives the complainant at least three days' notice of the meeting.

After hearing all of the submissions, the Trustees consider their decision and inform the parent or carer about it in writing within 48 hours of the meeting. The Trustees will do all they can at this stage to resolve the complaint.

Outcomes

In all cases where a complaint has been investigated, the complainant will be given a written response covering:

- the complaint;
- the scope of the investigation;
- the conclusion of the investigation;
- any action which has resulted.

The Committee may wish to offer the complainant the opportunity to discuss the response.

If the investigation upholds the complaint, redress should be appropriate to the complaint and may include one or more of the following:

- An appropriate expression of regret;
- Possibly providing the solution desired by the complaint;
- Changing the procedures to avoid future problems.

Where a complaint is not upheld the complainant must be given a response and informed of any further action that might be appropriate in their situation.

Who to appeal to next.

Parents and carers do not have a general right of appeal should they disagree with the Trustees' decision. They may, however, raise the matter with the Local Authority, Lichfield Diocesan Board of Education, or the Secretary of State, if they consider the complaint wasn't investigated properly and fairly. However, if the Trustees have considered the complaint reasonably, neither the Local Authority, Lichfield Diocese nor the Secretary of State can reverse their decision.

Appendix 1

Complaints and Compliments

Please complete this form and return it to the school who will then forward it to the Chair of the Trust Board. Please continue on a separate sheet if necessary.

1. Complainant/s name: _____

2. Address: _____

3. Telephone number: _____(mobile)
_____(home)
_____(work)

4. Name of child: _____

5. Date of birth: _____

6. Details of the Complaint (please include the date or period of time to which your complaint relates and confirm whether you have already expressed your concerns informally, and to whom and when).

7. Do you have a suggestion for change?

Please attach to this form any copies of further information you have to back-up your complaint, such as letters or reports.

Signed: _____ Date: _____