

Monken Hadley CE Primary School

Seek what is good, treasure what is true, do what is right.

COMPLAINTS PROCEDURE STATEMENT

| | |
|------------------------|--|
| Ratified by | Senior Leadership Team |
| Date | 27 th January 2016 <i>(updated 04 01 18 with new name of Clerk – no other changes)</i> |
| Date for Review | Spring Term 2019 |

Monken Hadley CE School provides a safe, caring, Christian environment where self-esteem, mutual respect and spiritual values are positively encouraged. We hope your child will be happy here. Occasionally problems, concerns and differences of opinion will arise but these can usually be resolved quickly and simply through early communication and open honest discussion in person, by telephone etc. We welcome suggestions for improving our work in the school and we undertake to do our best to deal with your complaints courteously, seriously, efficiently and fairly. Whatever your concern, please know that we shall treat it as being strictly confidential.

Informal Stage

If you, as parents/carers, are worried about anything or have a complaint about any aspect of your child's education at Monken Hadley, please contact the relevant member of staff in the first instance who will discuss your concern with you. You can do this by writing, emailing, phoning or arranging a face-to-face appointment.

Our aim will be to resolve the issue promptly and satisfactorily through: investigating; explaining the reasons for our actions and the steps that have been taken to ensure that it will not happen again and apologising if necessary.

If you feel the situation is still not resolved as a result of this meeting, ask for an appointment with the Headteacher. Every effort will be made to resolve the situation as soon as possible but after your discussion with the Headteacher you may have to wait a short time while investigations are carried out. The Headteacher will then contact you again either in writing or by talking with you.

If your concern is very urgent and requires immediate action, please telephone the School Office and you will be put in contact with the Headteacher or in her absence, the Deputy Head. First arrange to see your child's class teacher (or other appropriate member of staff) – sometimes this can be done informally and quickly but if you wish for more time ask to make an appointment.

Formal Stage

The Governing Body has adopted the complaints procedure recommended by The London Diocesan Board for Schools.

The problem will normally be resolved at this stage. However, if it is not, or the complaint is about the Headteacher, you may wish to write to the Chair of the Governing Body, Mrs Rosemary Gwilliam. This can be done by writing a letter and marking the sealed envelope 'Strictly Confidential' and handing it in to the School Office at the address below. The Chair of Governors will ensure that the matter is investigated appropriately.

STRICTLY CONFIDENTIAL

Mrs Rosemary Gwilliam
c/o Monken Hadley CE School
Camlet Way
Barnet
Herts
EN4 0NJ

A complaint form (Annex A) is provided to assist you. On this form you should include:

- Details which might assist the investigation, such as names of potential witnesses, dates and times of events and copies of relevant documents;
- Clear statement of the actions that you would like the school to take to resolve your concern.

The Headteacher (if the complaint is not about the Headteacher) or Chair may invite you to a meeting to clarify your concerns and to seek an informal resolution. If you accept this invitation, you may be accompanied by someone else to assist you in explaining the nature of your concern.

Hopefully your complaint will be resolved through this meeting, if it is not; arrangements will be made for the matter to be fully investigated using the appropriate procedure.

Whatever the case, you should learn in writing, usually within 5 days of the school receive your formal complaint, of how the school intends to proceed. This notification should include an indication of the anticipated timescale.

Any investigation will begin as soon as possible and when it has been concluded, you will be informed in writing of its conclusion.

If you are not satisfied with the manner in which the process has been followed, you may request that the Governing Body reviews the process followed by the school in handling the complaint.

Any such request must be made in writing to the Clerk to the Governing Body, Ms Jean Campbell at the address above (marked Strictly Confidential) within 10 school days of receiving notice of the outcome and include a statement specifying any perceived failures to follow procedure. The procedure described below will be followed (see Annex B for more details):

After completing the investigation, the Chair of the Governing Body will write to you with a summary of her findings. Should you be unhappy with this response you should write to the Clerk to the Governing Body at the school address, requesting that the complaint be considered by the Complaints Panel of the Governing Body.

Review Process

1. Any review of the process followed by the school will be conducted by a panel of 3 members of the Governing Body.
2. This will usually take place within 10 school days of receipt of your request.
3. The review will normally be conducted through a consideration of written submissions, but reasonable requests to make oral representations should be considered sympathetically.
4. The panel will first receive written evidence from the complainant.
5. The panel will then invite representatives of the school (usually the Headteacher or Chair of the Governing Body who has considered the matter) as appropriate, to make a response to the complaint.
6. The panel may also have access to the records kept of the process followed.
7. The complainant and the school representative(s) will be informed in writing of the outcome, usually within 10 school days of the panel meeting.
8. The matter will then be closed as far as the school is concerned.
9. If you believe that the Governing Body has acted illegally or arbitrarily in handling the complaint, then you may make representations to the Secretary of State for Children, Schools and Families.



COMPLAINT FORM

Please complete this form and return it to the Chair of the Governing Body in an envelope marked 'Strictly Confidential'. Upon receipt, the Chair of the Governing Body will inform you of the next stage in the procedure.

| | | | |
|--|--|----------------------|--|
| Your name | | Pupil's name & class | |
| Relationship with school e.g. parent | | Daytime phone number | |
| | | Mobile phone number | |
| Your address | | | |
| Please provide your email address if you would like to receive a response via this means | | | |

Please give concise details of your complaint including dates, names of witnesses etc. You may continue on a separate sheet or attach additional documents.

What action, if any, have you already taken to try to resolve your complaint? For example who have you spoken with or written to and what was the outcome?

What actions do you feel might resolve the problem at this stage?

| | |
|-------------------------------------|--|
| Number of additional pages attached | |
|-------------------------------------|--|

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| Signature | |
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|------|--|
| Date | |
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SCHOOL USE

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| Date form received | |
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| Received by | |
|-------------|--|

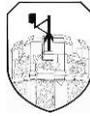
| | |
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| Date acknowledgement sent | |
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| Acknowledgement sent by whom | |
|------------------------------|--|

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| Acknowledgement sent via e.g. email, post, by hand | |
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| Complaint referred to | |
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|---------------|--|
| Date referred | |
|---------------|--|



ANNEX B (to be sent with the complaint form)

1. Governors Complaints Panel

The Governing Body will nominate 3 members with delegated powers to hear complaints. The procedure adopted by the committee for meeting appeals is part of the school's complaints procedure. The committee will be drawn from the Governing Body and will consist of three people. The committee will choose its own chair.

2. The Remit of the Complaints Panel

The aim of the Complaints Panel, which will be held in private, will always be to resolve the complaint and achieve reconciliation between the school and the complainant. The Committee can:

- i. Dismiss the complaint in whole or in part;
- ii. Uphold the complaint in whole or in part;
- iii. Decide on the appropriate action to be taken to resolve the complaint;
- iv. Recommend changes to the school's systems or procedures to ensure that problems of a similar nature do not recur.

3. The Complaints Panel Must Try To:

- i. Be independent and impartial and be seen to be so. No governor may sit on the committee if they have had a prior involvement in the complaint or in the circumstances surrounding it. In deciding the make-up of the committee, governors need to try and ensure that it is a cross-section of the categories of governor and sensitive to the issues of race and gender.
- ii. Ensure that the proceedings are as welcoming as possible. The layout of the room will reflect this and the tone will be informal and not adversarial.
- iii. Take extra care when the complainant is a child. The Complaints Panel will be aware of the views of the child and give them equal consideration to those of adults. Where the child's parent is the complainant, the parent will be given the opportunity to say which parts of the meeting, if any, the child needs to attend.

4. Roles and Responsibilities

a) Clerk to the Governors

The Clerk will be the contact point for the complainant and be required to:

- i. Set the date, time and venue of the meeting, ensuring that the dates are convenient to all parties and that the venue and proceedings are accessible;
- ii. Collate any written material and send it to the parties in advance of the meeting;
- iii. Meet and welcome the parties as they arrive at the meeting;
- iv. Record the proceedings;
- v. Notify all parties of the committee's decision.

b) Chair of the Complaints Panel

The Chair of the Complaints Panel will ensure that:

- i. The remit of the committee is explained to the parties and each party has the opportunity of putting their case without undue interruption;
- ii. The issues are addressed;
- iii. Key findings of fact are made;
- iv. Parents and others who may not be used to speaking at such a meeting are at ease;

- v. The meeting is conducted in an informal manner with each party treating the other with respect and courtesy;
- vi. The Complaints Panel is open-minded and acting independently;
- vii. No member of the committee has a vested interest in the outcome of the proceedings or any involvement in an earlier stage of the procedure;
- viii. Each side is given the opportunity to state their case and ask questions;
- ix. Written material is seen by all parties. If a new issue arises all parties will be given the opportunity to consider and comment on it.

c) What will happen at the meeting?

- i. The meeting is as informal as possible;
- ii. Witnesses are only required to attend for the part of the meeting in which they give their evidence;
- iii. After introductions, the complainant is invited to explain their complaint, and be followed by their witnesses;
- iv. The Headteacher or her representative may question both the complainant and the witnesses after each has spoken;
- v. The Headteacher or her representative is then invited to explain the school's actions and be followed by the school's witnesses;
- vi. The complainant may question both the Headteacher and her representative and the witnesses after each has spoken;
- vii. The committee may ask questions at any point;
- viii. The complainant is then invited to sum up their complaint;
- ix. The Headteacher or her representative is then invited to sum up the school's actions and response to the complaint;
- x. The chair of the committee explains that both parties will hear from the committee within a set time scale;
- xi. Both parties leave together while the committee decides on the issues.

5. Notification of the Complaints Panel's Decision

The chair of the Complaints Panel will notify the complainant of the committee's decision, in writing, with the committee's response; this is usually within 10 days. The letter will explain if there are any further rights of appeal and, if so, to whom they need to be addressed.