



Theale C of E Primary School

Complaints policy

At Theale CE Primary School the children come first. They are central to every decision made in school. We will ensure that our children are happy and successful. They will grow to be ambitious and resilient and their talents will be nurtured so they become highly skilled. Our children will be courageous and always behave with integrity.

“And you shall love the LORD your God with all your heart, with all your soul, with all your mind, and with all your strength.’ This *is* the first commandment. And the second, like *it*, *is* this: ‘You shall love your neighbour as yourself.’ There is no other commandment greater than these.” *Mark 12: v 30-31*

“I have come that they may have life and that they may have it more abundantly.”
John 10:10

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Related documents	Complaints procedures

This policy applies to all complaints received by the school.

Status

Section 29 of the Education Act 2002 states the need to have in place a procedure to deal with complaints relating to the school and to any community facilities or services the school provides. The law also requires the complaints procedure to be publicised.

Scope

This document sets out the policy for dealing with complaints and grievances and should be read in conjunction with the School's Complaints Procedures.

This policy should be used for:

- ◆ complaints relating to the schooling of your child,
- ◆ complaints relating to your child's special educational needs and/or disability,
- ◆ complaints about the education and care provided to pupils at the school,
- ◆ complaints about the school's operational arrangements.

This policy is limited to matters which can reasonably be investigated and therefore complaints should normally relate to matters which have occurred within the last 12 months.

This policy should **not** be used for:

- ◆ complaints by staff relating to grievances about their employment for which there is a separate procedure,
- ◆ complaints about the actions of a governor which should be reported to the Chair of Governors in the first instance,
- ◆ complaints about the actions of another parent which should be reported to the Headteacher who will investigate whether action can be taken by the school,
- ◆ allegations of abuse which should be discussed with the Headteacher or a senior staff member in the first instance
- ◆ issues between the school and community groups/PTA which will be resolved informally by discussion

Purpose

The school's values are concerned with meeting the needs of pupils, parents and other stakeholders. The governing body believes that feedback is an important ingredient in self-evaluation and raising standards. All stakeholders should feel that their concerns or complaints can be voiced and will be

considered seriously. The school takes informal concerns seriously and aims to resolve them at the earliest stage in order to reduce the numbers that develop into formal complaints.

The underlying principle is that concerns will be handled, if at all possible, without the need for formal procedures. The requirement to have a complaints procedure will not in any way undermine efforts to resolve the concern informally. Staff will endeavour to resolve issues on the spot.

Formal procedures will be invoked when initial attempts to resolve the issue are unsuccessful and the person raising the concern remains dissatisfied and wishes to take the matter further.

Applicability

The policy shall apply to all employees and governors of the school. It is the shared responsibility of the Headteacher and the Chair of the Governing Body to ensure that these groups are made aware of the policy and procedure.

The Complaints Procedure will:

- ◆ encourage resolution of problems by **informal** means wherever possible;
- ◆ be easily **accessible** and **publicised**;
- ◆ be **simple** to understand and use;
- ◆ be **impartial**;
- ◆ be **non-adversarial**;
- ◆ allow **swift** handling with established **time-limits** for action and keeping people informed of the progress;
- ◆ ensure a full and **fair** investigation by an independent panel where necessary;
- ◆ respect people's desire for **confidentiality**;
- ◆ address all the points at issue and provide an **effective** response and **appropriate** redress, where necessary;
- ◆ provide **information** to the school's senior management team so that services can be improved.

Roles and responsibilities

This section of the policy is taken from the separate document: School Complaints Procedure, which explains the process in more detail.

In brief the procedure is as follows:

Stage one, informal

A complaint or concern heard by a staff member, the Headteacher that is resolved to the satisfaction of the complainant and no further action is required.

Stage two, formal

- a) Complaint heard by Headteacher, or
- b) Complaint is heard by the Chair of Governing Body (if complaint is about the Headteacher).

Stage three

- a) Concern/complaint heard by Chair of the Governing Body (if not heard at Stage 2b), or
- b) Complaint heard by Governing Body's Complaints Panel (review);

A dissatisfied complainant can always take a complaint to the next stage. The Complaints Policy and Procedure are publicised to all stakeholders through the school website.

If, at any stage of the process, the complainant starts legal action in relation to the matters under considerations, the complaints process will automatically cease, and all further correspondence will be with the School's legal representatives.

Monitoring and evaluating the policy

All documentation regarding complaints (including notes of any related meetings and telephone calls), the action taken and the final outcome will be recorded and shared with the Chair of Governors termly.

The governing body will monitor the level and nature of complaints and review the outcomes on a regular basis to ensure the effectiveness of the procedure and make changes where necessary. Complaints information shared with the whole governing body will not name individuals.

The monitoring and review of complaints by the school and the governing body is a useful tool in evaluating the school's performance, and will contribute to school improvement. Any underlying issues identified will be addressed.

Record Keeping

Only complaints relating to the schooling of the specific child would fall within the child's files. Other issues will be filed separately in a secure location and will be retained for a period of 7 years.

Complaints and grievance procedures flow chart

