



This policy was adopted by Governors at the meeting held on :	Summer 2019
Signed (Chair of Governors):	Eileen Duncan
Governing Body minute ref:	11
Date of Review:	Summer 2021

Concerns and Complaints Policy

Introduction

This document sets out the school's procedure for addressing general complaints.

The school is committed to working in partnership with parents to provide a safe and rich learning environment in which children can work and grow. Ellingham C of E Primary School seeks to promote and sustain a positive and effective working relationship with its parent body.

Aims

The school will give careful consideration to all complaints and deal with them fairly and honestly. We will provide sufficient opportunity for any complaint to be fully discussed, and aim to resolve it through open dialogue and mutual understanding.

Complaints Procedure

Most complaints are best dealt with informally. If there are any concerns about the school or the education provided, the matter will be discussed with the child's teacher at the earliest opportunity.

Our policy follows DFE guidance and is used for complaints against the school, a member of staff or the governing body. There are separate arrangements, laid down by law to cover the following:

- Appeals against admissions.
- Appeals against exclusions.
- Appeals about assessments and against Education Health Care Plans.
- Complaints against collective worship and religious education.

For further guidance on any of the above please contact the Head teacher.

Stage 1 - informal

If the concern has not been addressed through discussion with the child's teacher or that the concern is of a sufficiently serious nature, an appointment should be made to discuss it with the Headteacher. The Headteacher considers

any such complaint very seriously and most complaints can be resolved at this stage.

Stage 2 - formal

If the matter cannot be resolved, or the complaint is about the Headteacher (The decision that the Headteacher has made as a result of the complaint does not become a complaint about the Headteacher) then it will be necessary for the complainant to formally complain to the Chair of Governors in writing. The nature of the complaint should be stated, with identified steps and actions that could be considered to remedy the concerns. The Chair of Governors will review the way in which the school has handled the complaint and ensure that the issues have been dealt with properly and fairly. The Chair will write with the outcome of this process within 15 working days of receiving the complaint.

Stage 3 - formal

If the complainant is not satisfied with the result then the complainant can refer to Stage 3 of the procedure. At this Stage, a panel of 3 governors will meet to consider the complaint and make a final decision about it on behalf of the governing body. The panel will consist of governors who have no detailed prior knowledge of the complaint, or connection with the complainant. The meeting will normally take place within 15 working days of your request.

The complainant will have the opportunity to submit written evidence on the complaint prior to the meeting of the panel and also to attend part of the meeting, accompanied by a friend/partner if wished, to put the case. The headteacher will be given the same opportunities.

After the meeting:

The Governors' Complaints Panel will write to all concerned within 10 school days to explain their decision and suggest a resolution to the problem, if appropriate. The decision of the Governor's Complaints Panel is final.

Consideration by the Local Authority

The Local Authority will make arrangements to consider complaints against collective worship and religious education, only once the school's own procedure has been exhausted.

Making a complaint to the Department should only happen once all other routes have been followed. The exception to this may be where there is a child protection concern, or where a child is missing education.

Compliance Review by the DFE

The DFE will now review compliance with the policy and not the LA.

If, after following the school's own complaints procedure, the complainant is

dissatisfied with the outcome or if there were reasons why they could not use that procedure (e.g. through a conflict of interest) they can forward their complaint to the Department for Education using the online school complaints form.

More information about making a complaint can be found on the DfE website:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/school-complaints-procedure>

This document can be accessed on-line via the Governance page of the Northumberland Schools' Information Website

Monitoring and review

The governing body monitors the complaints procedure, in order to ensure that all complaints are handled properly. The Headteacher records all formal complaints received by the school and records how they were resolved. Governors are informed on an annual basis of any formal complaints received by the school and governors also review this complaints procedure document on a bi-annual basis.

Availability

A copy of this procedure is available to all parents on request and it is available on the school website.