Long Sutton Primary School

Complaints Policy

1 Introduction

We believe that our school provides a good education for all our children, and that the Headteacher and other staff work very hard to build positive relationships with all parents. However, the school have procedures in place in case there are complaints by parents. The following policy sets out the procedure that the school follows in such cases.

If any parent is unhappy with the education that their child is receiving, or has any concern relating to the school, we encourage that person to talk to the child's class teacher immediately.

We deal with all complaints in accordance with procedures set out by the LEA. If the school cannot resolve any complaint itself, those concerned can ask the LEA to intervene.

All parents have the right, as a last resort, to appeal to the Secretary of State for Education, if they still feel that their complaint has not been properly addressed.

2 Aims and objectives

Our school aims to be fair, open and honest 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.

3 The complaints process

i) If a parent is concerned about their child at school, 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 progress.

ii) Where a parent 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 the Headteacher. The Headteacher considers any such complaint very seriously and investigates each case thoroughly. Most complaints are normally resolved at this stage. If the parent prefers they should write to the Headteacher who will acknowledge the letter within 5 days, investigate the complaint, agree to meet the parent and confirm the outcome within 20 days.

iii) Should a parent have a complaint about the Headteacher, s/he should first make an informal approach to the Chair of Governors, who is obliged to investigate it. The Chair will do all s/he can to resolve the issue through a dialogue with the Headteacher and parents,but if a parent is unhappy with the outcome, s/he can make a formal complaint, as outlined below.

iv) Only if an informal complaint fails to resolve the matter should a formal complaint be made to the Governing Body. 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 Governors, who will hand it to the appropriate member of the

Complaints Panel which is made up of other members of the Governing Body as agreed by that body.

v) The Complaints Panel must consider and investigate all written complaints within three weeks of receipt. It arranges a meeting to discuss the complaint, and invites the person making it to attend the meeting, so that s/he can explain her complaint in more detail. The school gives the complainant at least three days' notice of the meeting.
After hearing all the evidence, the Complaints Panel must consider their decision and inform the parent about it in writing. The Panel do all they can at this stage to resolve the complaint to the parent's satisfaction.

vi) If the complaint is not resolved, a parent may make representation to the LEA. Further information about this process is available from the school or from the LEA. A further meeting is chaired by an independent person, who considers all the evidence and makes a further judgement in an attempt to resolve the complaint.

vii) If any parent is still not content that the complaint has been dealt with properly, then s/he is entitled to appeal to the Secretary of State for Education.

4 Monitoring and review

The governors monitor the complaints procedure, in order to ensure that all complaints are handled properly. The headteacher logs all formal complaints received by the school and records how they were resolved. Governors examine this log on an annual basis.

Governors take into account any local or national decisions that affect the complaints process, and make any modifications necessary to this policy. This policy is made available to all parents, so that they can be properly informed about the complaints process.

Signed: …… Headteacher

Signed: …… Chair of Governors

Date of Review: January 2011

Date of New Review: