



## **Glaphorn C.E. Primary School**

### **Complaints Policy**

Reviewed: February 2016

**Date of Next Review: February 2019.**

Person responsible: Katherine Towns, Head

Shared with staff - February 2016  
Reviewed by whole Governing Body - February 2016

Signed by Jane Dalley, Chair of Governing Body:

Date: 10<sup>th</sup> February 2016

A record of this policy is available in the school file that is kept in the office for access for all staff and governors.

**STATUTORY**

*Glaphorn school takes concerns seriously and works with parents and children to try and resolve them. The great majority of complaints can be sorted out informally. If a parent thinks the school has not taken appropriate action or that the school has made the wrong decision, then it is open to the parent to invoke the Complaints policy. Guidance for parents from Northamptonshire County Council can be found at:*

<http://www.northamptonshire.gov.uk/en/councilservices/EducationandLearning/Parents/advice/Pages/Complaint.aspx>

### **General Complaints**

Wherever possible or appropriate, the parent should raise the problem initially with the class teacher.

If a satisfactory solution is not reached the parent should:

*Either* make an appointment to see the Head Teacher.

*Or* make a formal complaint in writing to the Head Teacher.

If the problem is not resolved to the satisfaction of the parent then a formal complaint in writing can be made to the Chair of the Governing Body. The Chair may take advice from a Local Authority officer at this point. The complaint should be acknowledged within 3 working days giving a brief explanation of the procedures and a target date for providing a response (ideally within 10 working days).

If the parent feels the complaint has not been resolved by the Chair, they can appeal to a panel of Governors.

If they wish, parents can complain to the Office for Standards in Education.

### **Other Complaints**

If the complaint is about the Head Teacher or about a particular member of the Governing Body, the parent should write to the Clerk of the Governing Body. For exceptions to this complaints policy, see Appendix 1.

### **Dealing with Complaints**

-All complaints will be dealt with rapidly, consistent with fairness for all.

-The Chair/Head will keep written records of meetings, telephone conversations and other documentation.

-When all relevant facts have been established, the Chair / Head should either write to the parent or arrange a meeting. The meeting should be followed up by a letter summarising the outcome and advising the parent that they may appeal to a panel of governors within 2 weeks of receiving the letter.

### **Appeal to Panel of Governors**

The Chair may wish to seek advice from the Local Authority's Senior Education Officer and/or Diocesan authority.

The Panel should be seen to be impartial and independent. Complaints should be dealt with by a panel of three governors, not the whole body. The Panel members should have had no involvement with the complaint and be sensitive to issues of equal opportunities in composition. It is unlikely that the Chair of Governors will be on the panel as they are likely to have had involvement in the complaint at an earlier stage. Individual governors should not get involved in looking into complaints before this stage to avoid prejudicing their potential involvement. If individual governors are approached by parents, they should refer them to this policy.

### **Procedure for appeal to Panel (upon receipt of a written request from complainant)**

-The appeal procedure will be triggered if the complainant requests this in writing to either the Chair of the Governing Body or the Head Teacher.

-The Chair or Head should convene a panel meeting and ensure that the complainant, Head and any other witnesses are given at least 5 working days notice in writing of the meeting. The complainant

will be informed of their right to have a friend/relative present as advocate. A Local Authority officer may be invited to attend to advise the panel.

- The Panel should elect a chairperson to ensure proper minutes are taken and ensure proceedings are as informal as possible.
- The Panel should invite the Head Teacher to submit a written report in response to the complaint plus the Chair / other members of staff if appropriate.
- All relevant documents should be received by all parties at least five days before the meeting.
- At the end, the Panel will consider the evidence including a judgement about the validity of the complaint, appropriate action to be taken by the school and/or parent and if appropriate, make recommendations on changes to the school's procedures.
- The outcomes should be reported to the complainant and Chair/Head within 5 working days. The broad outcomes will be reported the next Governing Body meeting ensuring confidentiality. The Governing Body should monitor implementation of the recommendations.
- A copy of all correspondence should be kept confidentially separate to the pupils' personal records.

### **The Role of the Local Authority**

The primary responsibility for resolving complaints rests with the Governing Body (1998 Education Act, Part II, Ch. 3, Para 39{1}). The Local Authority's role in school complaints is to provide advice to all parties.

### **Dealing with Complaints about Racism in schools** Racism is a disciplinary offence.

- Racist behaviour to a child: Local Authority guidance 'Notification of Racist Incidents' will be followed
- Racism against school staff: Head teacher to be informed (or Chair if Head teacher is subject of the complaint)

### **Unreasonable Complaints**

Glaphorn C.E. Primary School is committed to dealing with all complaints fairly and impartially, and to providing a high quality service to those who complain. We will not normally limit the contact complainants have with the school. However, we do not expect our staff to tolerate unacceptable behaviour and will take action to protect staff from that behaviour, including that which is abusive, offensive or threatening. Glaphorn C.E. Primary School defines unreasonable complainants as 'those who, because of the frequency or nature of their contacts with the school, hinder our consideration of their or other people's complaints'.

### **Monitoring**

An anonymised report on the formal complaints that have been put in writing during the year will be shared with the full Governing Body as part of the Headteacher's Report to Governors in the Autumn Term.

***Revised following DfE guidance 'Best Practice for School Complaints Procedures' published January 2016.***

### **Appendix 1: Exceptions**

Our complaints policy covers all complaints about any provision of facilities or services that we as a school provide with the exceptions listed below, for which there are separate (statutory) procedures.

Admissions to schools

Statutory assessments of Special Educational Needs (SEN)

School re-organisation proposals

Matters likely to require a Child Protection Investigation

Exclusion of children from school

Whistleblowing

Staff grievances and disciplinary procedures

Complaints about services provided by other providers who may use school premises or facilities.