



DOWNE PRIMARY
SCHOOL

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COMPLAINTS POLICY

June 2021

Review 2022

AIM

- To uphold our school ethos and values
- To resolve complaints at the earliest possible stage.
- To follow DFE Complaints Procedure and principles for resolving conflict effectively.

There are two stages 1. Head Teacher 2. Governing Body Complaints Appeal Panel.

- To provide information to enable parents and carers to understand school complaints procedure.

In accordance with Section 29 (1) of the Education Act 2002 all schools must have and make available a procedure to deal with complaints relating to the school.

SAFEGUARDING

If you consider that a child be at immediate risk of harm it is a Child Protection issue.

You should contact the school DSL if it is in school time. You should contact the LBB social care MASH (Multi Agency Safeguarding Hub) team on 0208 461 7373 (Monday to Friday 8.30am-5pm) or out of hours on 0300 303 8671. Or you should call the police.

The difference between a concern and a complaint

A concern is an expression of worry or doubt over an issue that is considered to be important. A complaint is a formal expression of dissatisfaction about actions taken or not taken. It is in everyone's best interest that concerns are taken seriously and that every effort is made to resolve the matter as quickly as possible. It is also best that formal complaints are resolved at the earliest possible stage following the school's complaints procedure.

How to raise a concern or make a complaint

A concern can be raised in person, in writing, by email or by telephone. Most concerns should be initially raised with the class teacher. If the issue remains unresolved, it can then be raised with the Head Teacher.

If after all attempts to resolve the concern there is no resolution a formal complaint can be made. The complaints procedure is published on the school website, it includes the complaints proforma to be used.

Complainants should not approach individual governors to raise concerns or complaints. They have no power to act on an individual basis and it may prevent them from considering complaints at Stage 2 of this procedure.

We will not normally investigate anonymous complaints but the Head Teacher and Chair of governors will consider whether the matter is of serious enough concern to warrant an investigation.

In accordance with Equality law we will consider how to make reasonable adjustments if required to enable a complainant to access and complete the complaints procedure.

Timescale: You must raise the complaint within three months of the incident.

We will consider any complaints made outside of term time to have been received on the first school day after the holiday period.

Intended Outcomes

- Parents feeling that if they have a concern or complaint it will be dealt with professionally and resolved satisfactorily.
- Through the investigation of concerns and complaints it is possible that positive outcomes might come from adjusting systems or procedures which lead to improvements in the school's effectiveness and efficiency.
- Zero complaints reaching the Governing Body Complaints Appeal Panel.

Complaints not in scope of the procedure

There are some exceptions to the school's complaints procedures for which there are separate statutory processes.

- Admissions to schools
- Statutory assessments of SEND
- School re-organisation proposals
- Child Protection investigations

Concerns about any of the above should be raised with Bromley Local Authority

- Exclusion,

This has its own process which will be followed. Parents will be informed of this as required

- Whistleblowing

There is an internal whistleblowing procedure for all employees

If a complaint is made about the conduct of a member of staff. These should be made to the Head Teacher. These matters will be dealt with under the school's internal disciplinary procedures, if appropriate. Complainants will not be informed of any disciplinary action taken against a staff member as a result of a complaint. However, they will be notified that the matter is being addressed. (DFE Guidance 2019)

- Complaints about services provided by other providers who may use the school's premises should be addressed through the providers own complaints procedures.
- Complaints about the content of the National Curriculum should be addressed to the DFE using their contact form on their website
<https://www.gov.uk/government/organisations/department-for-education>

5. Monitoring

The Head Teacher will report complaints annually to the Governors CAPPCC Committee in the Spring Term. This Committee will review the policy every year.

The monitoring and review of complaints by the school and the governing body can be a useful tool in evaluating a school's performance.

DFE guidance about serial and persistent complainants

Schools should do their best to be helpful to people who raise concerns or complaints. We are committed to dealing with all complaints fairly and impartially. Procedures should be followed consistently and thoroughly. It is hoped that a resolution can be reached.

However, in cases where a school is repeatedly contacted by an individual making the same points, schools need to act appropriately.

It is important to recognise when a school has done everything they can to resolve an issue. It is not a good use of school time and resources to reply to repeated letters, telephone calls or emails dealing with the same matter. At this stage the Chair of Governors can politely inform the complainant that the procedure has been completed and that the matter is now closed (DFE January 2016).

There is a DFE complaints procedure for managing serial and unreasonable complaints which the school will follow should it become necessary.

In this procedure the DFE defines unreasonable behaviour as a complainant that:

- Refuses to articulate their complaint or the outcomes sought
- Refuses to co-operate with the complaints procedure
- Insists on the complaint being dealt with in ways which are incompatible with the procedure or with good practice
- Introduces trivial or irrelevant information which they expect to be taken into account, raises large numbers of detailed questions and insists they are answered (often to their own time-scale).
- Changes the basis of the complaint as the investigation proceeds
- Repeatedly makes the same complaint despite previous investigations or responses. It is concluded that this complaint has been addressed.
- Refuse to accept the findings of the investigation where the school's complaint procedure has been fully and properly implemented and completed.
- Makes excessive demands on school time by frequent, lengthy and complicated contact with staff in person, by email, or by the telephone, especially when the complaint is being dealt with through the school procedure.
- Uses threats and intimidation
- Uses violence
- Uses abusive, offensive or discriminatory language
- Knowingly provides falsified information
- Publishes unacceptable information on social media

We do not expect our staff to tolerate unacceptable behaviour and will take action to protect staff from behaviour that is abusive, offensive or threatening. We will inform the police and communicate our actions in writing