

# MEOLE BRACE C OF E PRIMARY SCHOOL AND NURSERY

# COMPLAINTS PROCEDURE

## Introduction.

The governors and staff of Meole Brace C of E Primary School and Nursery are wholeheartedly committed to providing for the education and well-being of every child under their care, and understand that they do so in partnership with parents, carers and the wider community. There may of course be times when parents, carers or others wish to raise concerns with the school regarding the services it provides, and this policy outlines the mechanism for doing so. In particular it aims to facilitate the reporting and investigation of such concerns or complaints, and to ensure prompt and effective resolution of issues raised.

It is likely that most concerns can be swiftly resolved via an informal approach to the relevant member of staff, but in the event that matters need to be investigated further this policy sets out the means for doing so, by referring the issue either to the Headteacher or to the Chair of Governors, as appropriate.

If you need assistance either understanding the procedure, or with the completion of any of the forms, please ask for help at the school office.

## **General Principles:**

- Meole Brace C of E Primary School and Nursery is committed to investing wholeheartedly in the children in its care, their parents and carers and the community they are part of. It is recognised however that from time to time, and in spite of everyone's best intentions, parents, carers or others in the community may have concerns about the school or the services it provides.
- This procedure is intended to allow you to raise a concern or complaint relating to the school, or the services that it provides.
- An anonymous concern or complaint will not be investigated under this procedure, unless there are exceptional circumstances.
- To enable a proper investigation, concerns or complaints should be brought to the attention of the school as soon as possible. In general, any matter raised more than 3 months after the event, being complained of, will not be considered.

## **Raising a concern or complaint**

**(Please follow the flow chart – Appendix 4)**

### **1) Informal Stage**

It is normally appropriate to communicate directly with the member of staff concerned. This may be by letter, by telephone or in person by appointment, requested via the school office. Many concerns can be resolved by simple clarification or the provision of information and it is anticipated that most concerns will be resolved by this informal stage.

We encourage anyone with a concern to talk to us as soon as possible so that school can endeavour to resolve it quickly and effectively at an early stage.

In the case of serious concerns it may be appropriate to address them directly to the Headteacher. If you are uncertain about whom to contact, please seek advice from the school office or the Chair of Governors. A School Meeting Request Form is provided to assist you and is a useful starting point to provide information to those dealing with a concern or complaint. (Appendix 1).

### **2) Formal Stage**

If your concern or complaint is not resolved at the informal stage you may choose to put the complaint in writing and pass it to the Headteacher, who will be responsible for ensuring that it is investigated

appropriately. If the complaint is about the Headteacher, your complaint should be passed to the school office for the attention of the Chair of the Governing Body.

A School Complaint Form is provided to assist you and should be used for the submission of all formal complaints (Appendix 2).

You should include details which might assist the investigation, such as names of potential witnesses, dates and times of events, and copies of relevant documents. It is very important that you include a clear statement of the actions that you would like the school to take to resolve your concern. Without this, it is much more difficult to proceed. Please pass the completed form, in a sealed envelope to the school office. The envelope should be addressed to the Headteacher, or to the Chair of the Governing Body, as appropriate.

### **Stage 1**

The complaint will generally be heard and investigated by the Headteacher (if not the subject of the complaint, otherwise it will be undertaken by the Chair of Governors) and he/she may invite you to a meeting to clarify your concerns and to explore the possibility of an informal resolution. If you accept that invitation, you may be accompanied by a friend, if you wish, to assist you in explaining the nature of your concerns. It is possible that your complaint will be resolved through this meeting with the Head teacher. If not, arrangements will be made for the matter to be fully investigated, using the appropriate procedure. In any case you should learn in writing, usually within 5 working days of the school receiving your School Complaint Form, or within 5 working days of a meeting with the Head, of how the school intends to proceed. This notification should include an indication of the anticipated timescale. Any investigation will begin as soon as possible and when it has been concluded, you will be informed in writing of its conclusion. This should be within 15 school days, following written notification, save in exceptional circumstances.

### **Stage 2**

If you are not satisfied with the manner in which the complaints process has been followed, you may request that the Chair of Governors reviews the complaints process followed by the school, in handling the complaint. If the complaint is related to the headteacher then the Chair of Governors will already be involved. Any such request must be made in writing to the Chair of the Governing Body, within 10 school days of receiving notice of the outcome by the Headteacher, and include a statement specifying any perceived failures to follow the procedure.

The School Complaint Form previously submitted will be used to inform the Chair of Governors of the complaint under investigation. The complaint process will be reviewed by the Chair of Governors and he/she may invite you to a meeting with the Headteacher to clarify your continuing concerns and to explore the possibility of a resolution at this stage. If you accept that invitation, you may be accompanied by a friend, if you wish, to assist you in explaining the nature of your concerns. It is possible that your complaint will be resolved through this meeting with the Chair of Governors and Headteacher. Even at this stage it is hoped that the complaint can be resolved informally and the Chair of Governors will attempt to do this in the first instance, if at all possible. The Chair of Governors will write to you with the outcome of the review within 10 working days of your complaint being referred to him/her, or of the date of an agreed meeting, save in exceptional circumstances.

### **Stage 3**

If having had your complaint reviewed by the Chair of Governors you are still not satisfied with the manner in which the complaints process has been followed, you may request that the Governing Body reviews the complaints process followed by the school, in handling the complaint. Any such request must be made in writing to the Chair of the Governing Body Complaints Committee, within 10 working days of receiving notice of the outcome by the Chair of Governors' review, and include a statement specifying any perceived failures to follow the procedure.

A School Complaint Review Request Form is provided to assist you and should be used for all Governing Body Complaints Committee formal complaints review requests (Appendix 3).

## **Governing Body Complaints Committee Review Process**

Any review of the process followed by the school will be conducted by a panel of 3 members of the Governing Body Complaints Committee. This will usually take place within 15 school days of receiving your School Complaint Review Request Form, unless a longer period is required, in which case the Chair of the committee will inform you of the reason why. The review will normally be conducted through a consideration of written submissions, but reasonable requests to make oral representations should be considered sympathetically. The Committee will not deal with any new issues or concerns at this stage, either verbally or in writing, by the complainant and will refer to the original submission in the School Complaint Form submitted. The Chair of the Complaints Committee will notify the complainant in writing, with the Committee's responses within 5 working days of the review meeting.

This is the last stage of the school complaints process and if you are still dissatisfied then you can write to the Secretary of State for Education at the Department for Education (0370 000 2288).

### **What To Do If The Complaint Is About The Headteacher**

Complaints about the Headteacher that the complainant cannot or does not wish to raise directly with the Head should, in the first instance, be sent to the Chair of Governors who will investigate the matter as set out above in stage 1, and stage 3 if required.

All forms can be sent to you electronically by emailing a request to:

[admin@meolebrace-pri.shropshire.sch.uk](mailto:admin@meolebrace-pri.shropshire.sch.uk)

Policy last reviewed and updated April 2016

Agreed at Governing Body Meeting on

This complaints procedure has been produced with reference to the Department of Education's **Best Practice Advice for School Complaints Procedures 2016**, which contains further useful advice and can be accessed at [https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/489056/Best\\_Practice\\_Advice\\_for\\_School\\_Complaints\\_2016.pdf](https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/489056/Best_Practice_Advice_for_School_Complaints_2016.pdf)

**School Meeting Request Form**

I wish to meet..... to discuss the following concern:

Your name: \_\_\_\_\_

Pupil's name: \_\_\_\_\_

Your relationship to the pupil: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Postcode: \_\_\_\_\_

Day time telephone number: \_\_\_\_\_

Evening telephone number: \_\_\_\_\_

Email address: \_\_\_\_\_

Brief details of concern to be raised:

What actions do you feel might resolve the issue at this stage?

Dates/times when it would be most convenient for a meeting:

Signature: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

<p>Official use Date form received: _____ Date acknowledgement sent: _____ By whom: _____ Complaint referred to: _____ Date: _____</p>
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## **School Complaint Form**

Appendix 2

*Please complete and return to Mrs Davies (headteacher) who will acknowledge receipt and explain what action will be taken.*

**Your name:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Pupil's name:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Your relationship to the pupil:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Address:** \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

**Postcode:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Day time telephone number:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Evening telephone number:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Email address:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Please give concise details of your complaint (including dates, names of witnesses etc.) to allow the matter to be fully investigated:-**

(You may continue on separate paper if you wish)

**What action, if any, have you already taken to try and resolve your complaint? (Whom did you speak or write to and what was the response)?**

**What actions do you feel might resolve the problem at this stage?**

**Are you attaching any paperwork? If so, please give details.**

**Signature:** \_\_\_\_\_ **Date:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Official use**

**Date form received:** \_\_\_\_\_ **Date acknowledgement sent:** \_\_\_\_\_

**By whom:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Complaint referred to:** \_\_\_\_\_ **Date:** \_\_\_\_\_

## **School Complaint Review Request Form**

Appendix 3

*Please complete and return to the Headteacher (or chair of governors) who will acknowledge receipt, explain what action will be taken, and forward this form to the Chair of Governing Body Complaints Committee.*

**Your name:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Address:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Postcode:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Day time telephone number:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Evening telephone number:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Email address:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Dear Sir/Madam I submitted a formal complaint to the school on \_\_\_\_\_ and I am dissatisfied by the procedure that has been followed. My complaint was submitted to \_\_\_\_\_ and I received a response from \_\_\_\_\_ on \_\_\_\_\_ . I have attached copies of my School Complaint Form and the response(s) from the school. I am dissatisfied with the way in which the procedure was carried out because:**

*(You may continue on separate paper if you wish)*

**What action do you feel might resolve the problem at this stage?**

**If you are attaching any paperwork, please give details:**

**Signature:** \_\_\_\_\_ **Date:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Official use**

**Date form received:** \_\_\_\_\_ **Date acknowledgement sent:** \_\_\_\_\_

**By whom:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Complaint referred to:** \_\_\_\_\_ **Date:** \_\_\_\_\_

## APPENDIX 4 – COMPLAINTS PROCESS FLOWCHART

