

## Yorkley Primary School Complaints Policy

### Policy status

Statutory

### School Ethos:

The Head Teacher and Governors expect an ethos where every child has a right to learn without disruption. At Yorkley Primary School there is an expectation of outstanding behaviour at all times. We expect a high standard of behaviour both in our school and in the wider community, which promotes respect and enables effective learning to take place. No pupil has the right to disrupt the learning of others. Teachers will have disruption free classrooms in which they can teach and pupils will have disruption free classrooms in which they can learn. 'Only our best is good enough'

### Introduction:

Yorkley Primary School Governors and staff believe that the school provides a good education for all children, and that the Head Teacher and other staff work very hard to build positive relationships with all parents. However, the school is obliged to have procedures in place in case there are complaints by parents/carers. The following policy sets out the procedures that the school follows in such cases. A copy of this policy is available on the school's website.

### Aims and Objectives:

The school aims to be fair, open and honest when dealing with any complaint giving careful consideration to all complaints and dealing with them as swiftly as possible. The aim is to resolve any complaint through dialogue and mutual understanding and in all cases putting the interests of the child above all other issues. There will be sufficient opportunities for any complaint to be fully discussed, and then resolved.

### Child Protection:

Please note that all complaints against any member of staff with regards to child protection, will refer to the Child Protection Policy

### The Complaints Procedure General Principles:

- This procedure is intended to allow parents, carers and other stakeholders 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 allow for a proper investigation, concerns or complaints should be brought to the attention of the school as soon as possible. In general, the school will not consider any complaint raised more than 3 months after the event.

- Yorkley School's Governing Body is responsible for the complaints policy but the responsibility for dealing with general complaints lies with the school.

The Governors have adopted the principles outlined in the Department for Education 'Best Practice Advice for Schools Complaints Procedures 2016'. This document has been used to inform the school's policy. Governors have adopted the advice regarding serial and persistent complainants; unreasonable complainants and barring from the school premises.

#### **Concern:**

A concern can be defined as a query or an expression of a worry about possible danger or apparent failure in respect of the school. A matter should be viewed as a concern if it is capable of being resolved locally and does not require a formal response and is described more fully in Stage 1, below.

#### **Complaint:**

A complaint can be defined as an expression of dissatisfaction with the school. It requires a formal response. The school will deal with any matter as a complaint as described more fully below, when:

- the person raising the matter requests the matter to be dealt with as a formal complaint or
- when informal attempts to deal with the concern have been exhausted and the person who raised the concern remains dissatisfied.

### **Stage 1 - Informal Procedure**

#### **How to share a concern**

If a complainant is concerned about anything to do with the school or the services it provides they should, in the first instance, discuss the matter with their child's class teacher, or the Head Teacher if the concern is about the teacher. Should a complainant have a concern about the Head Teacher, s/he should first make an informal approach to the Chair of Governors.

#### **Procedure for dealing with concerns**

The teacher, Head Teacher or Chair will endeavour to resolve the concern informally. The member of staff complained against will be kept fully informed of the content of the concern and will be given an opportunity to explain their actions. The parent will be updated as to the outcome. It is anticipated that most complaints will be resolved by this informal stage.

#### **What to do if the matter is not resolved through informal discussion**

Where a complainant feels that a situation has not been resolved or that their concern is of a sufficiently serious nature a formal complaint should be made in writing, using the attached form, addressed to:

- the Head Teacher if a member of staff is involved or
- the Chair of Governors if the Head Teacher or a Governor is involved.

## **Stage 2 - Formal Procedure**

### **How to take the matter further**

If the concern is not resolved at the informal stage a complainant must put the complaint in writing and pass it to the Head Teacher, (or to the Clerk to the Governing Body, for the attention of the Chair, if the complaint is about the Head Teacher) who will be responsible for ensuring that it is investigated appropriately. Please use the Complaint Form attached.

It is very important that the complainant includes a clear statement of the actions that they would like the school to take to resolve the concern. Without this, it is much more difficult to proceed.

The Head Teacher (or Chair) may invite the complainant to a meeting (held at school) to discuss the complaint and to seek a resolution. If the parent accepts that invitation, s/he may be accompanied by a friend, if they wish, to support them in explaining the nature of the complaint. To uphold any complaint, both parties will formally meet within 20 school working days of receipt of the complaint with the intention of resolving it.

Any member of staff against whom a complaint has been made will be notified that a complaint has been received and that the appropriate school procedure will be followed. It is usually not appropriate to provide the member of staff with details of the evidence on which the complaint is based until any investigation has been completed. However, the member of staff does need to be able to understand the nature of any complaint against them.

It is possible that the complaint will be resolved through a meeting with the Head Teacher (or Chair). If not arrangements will be made for the matter to be referred to the Chair of Governors. In any case the complainant should be informed in writing, usually within 5 school days of the school receiving the formal complaint, of how the school intends to proceed. This notification should include an indication of the anticipated timescale.

The Chair of Governors may invite the complainant to a further meeting to discuss the complaint and to seek a resolution. Again, if the complainant accepts that invitation, a friend may accompany them to help the complainant explain the nature of the complaint. In any case, the complainant will be informed in writing, usually within 5 school days of the Chair of Governors receiving the formal complaint, of the outcome of the investigation.

If a complainant is not satisfied with the way in which the process has been followed, s/he can request that the Governing Body reviews the process followed by the school in handling the complaint. A request must be made in writing to the Clerk to the Governing Body, within 10 school days of receiving notice of the outcome, and include a statement specifying any perceived failures to follow the procedure. The procedure described below will be followed. A Review Request form is provided.

## **Stage 3 - Review Process**

Any review of the process followed by the school will be conducted by a panel of 3 members of the Governing Body. This will usually take place within 10 school days of receipt of your request.

The Governors on the Review Panel will normally consider written submissions, but will sympathetically consider any reasonable requests to make oral representations.

The panel will first receive written evidence from the complainant of perceived failures to follow the procedure.

The panel will then invite representatives of the school (usually the Head Teacher or the Chair of the Governing Body panel that has considered the matter), as appropriate, to make a response to the complaint.

The panel may also have access to the records kept of the process followed.

The complainant and the school representatives, will be informed in writing of the outcome, usually within 5 school days of the panel meeting.

The matter will then be closed as far as the school is concerned.

If a complainant believes that the Governing Body has acted illegally or arbitrarily in handling the complaint, then representations can be made to the Secretary of State for Education.

### **Monitoring and review**

The Governors monitor the Complaints Procedure, in order to ensure that all complaints are handled properly.

### **Links with other policies;**

This policy should be read in conjunction with the following policies;

Admissions

Allegations against Staff

Anti-Bullying

Equal Opportunities

Safeguarding and Child Protection

Special Educational Needs and Disability

Teaching and Learning

Child Protection

Home School Agreement

Exclusions

Whistling blowing

### **Policy Review**

Compiled by; P.Taylor & K.Burke

Agreed by Governors; **May 2018**

Date for review; **May 2020**

## Yorkley Complaint Form 1

Please complete the form and return it to the Head Teacher (Or Clerk to the Governing Body), who will acknowledge its receipt and inform you of the next stage in the procedure.

Your name:	
Your Address:	
Daytime telephone number:	
Evening telephone number:	

Relationship with school e.g. parent of a child on the school's roll.	
Child's name (if relevant to your complaint):	

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, or attach additional documents, if you wish.

Number of additional pages attached:

What action, if any, have you already taken to try and resolve your complaint? (I.e. whom have you spoken with or written to and what was the outcome?)

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

Signature:

Date:

**School Use:**

Received by:		Date	
Acknowledgement sent by:		Date	

**Complaint referred to:**

Name		Date	
Name		Date	
Name		Date	

## Yorkley Complaint Form 2

Please complete the form and return it to the Head Teacher (Or Clerk to the Governing Body), who will acknowledge its receipt and inform you of the next stage in the procedure.

Your name:	
Your Address:	
Daytime telephone number:	
Evening telephone number:	

Dear sir / madam

I submitted a formal complaint to the school on

Date:

My complaint was submitted to

Name:

And I received a response from

Name:

on

Date:

I have attached copies of my formal complaint and of the responses from the school.

I am dissatisfied with the way in which the procedure was carried out because:

You may continue on separate paper, or attach additional documents, if you wish.

Number of additional pages attached:

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

Signature:

Date:

**School Use:**

Received by:		Date	
Acknowledgement sent by:		Date	

**Complaint referred to:**

Name		Date	
Name		Date	
Name		Date	