



OUR SCHOOL AIMS

Haresfield Church of England Primary School provides a secure and creative environment where individuals are valued, nurtured & encouraged to achieve all they can. It is supported by effective partnerships with parents and the community and is underpinned by its Christian ethos.

Complaints Policy

General Principles:

In line with its vision and aims, Haresfield School wants to provide a friendly and secure learning environment for pupils supported by effective partnerships with parents and the community. However, we recognise that from time to time there may be a need for individuals to raise a concern in order to resolve it.

- This procedure is intended to allow you to raise a general concern or complaint relating to the school, or the services that it provides.
- There may be various sources of complaints and any complaint will be dealt in accordance with the specific policy that it falls under. If a complaint does not relate to a specific policy then it will be dealt with under this general complaints procedure.
- In most cases the School will be able to help with problems informally by listening and discussing them with you. However, if it is not possible to resolve problems informally then a formal process is available.
- 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, any matter raised more than 3 months after the incident/event, being complained of, will not be investigated.
- Parents, Members of Staff, Governors and anyone else involved in any stage of these procedures must treat all matters discussed with strict confidence.
- The Table in Annex 1 indicates how different types of complaint are dealt with dependent upon which policy they fall under

Raising a concern or complaint

1) Informal Stage:

Any complaint shall be raised with the staff member concerned. This may be by letter, by telephone or in person by appointment. It is recommended that an appointment be made to enable a face-to-face conversation to take place. However, communication may also be via letter or by telephone. Many concerns can be resolved by simple clarification or the provision of information and it is anticipated that most complaints will be resolved by this informal stage.

In the case of serious concerns i.e. child protection, health and safety or financial it may be appropriate to address them directly to the Head Teacher [or to the Chair of the Governing Body, if the complaint is about the Head Teacher].

If you are uncertain about whom to contact, please seek advice from the School Office or the Clerk to the Governing Body.

Only when these informal processes have failed to resolve your concern shall you move to the formal stage.

2) Formal Stage:

If your concern or the complaint is not resolved at the informal stage or if the complaint is of a serious nature, you should 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.

A Complaint Form is available from the School Office.

You should include relevant details that will assist the investigation, such as names of potential witnesses, dates and times of events and copies of relevant documents. It is important that you include a clear statement of the actions that you would like the school to take to resolve your concern. Without this we will not be able to proceed.

Please pass the completed form, in a sealed envelope to the Head Teacher or to the Clerk to the Governing Body, as appropriate. You should be informed in writing of how the school intends to proceed with your complaint. This should be within 5 days of the school receiving your formal complaint.

The Head Teacher [or Chair] will invite you to a meeting in which you can provide further details of your complaint/concerns and work towards resolution. If you accept that invitation, a friend may

accompany you to the meeting to support you. If the issue is complex or of a serious nature then the Head/Chair may decide to set up a panel of Governors to investigate the matter.

It is possible that your complaint will be resolved through this initial meeting with the Head Teacher [or Chair]. However, it may be necessary to adjourn the meeting to speak to other parties in order to investigate the concerns raised. Any investigation will begin as soon as possible and when it has been concluded, you will be informed in writing of its outcome. You will be advised as to how long the investigation is likely to take.

The Table in Annex 2 outlines the timescales for dealing with for hearing complaints.

If you are not satisfied with the outcome or manner in which the process has been followed, you may appeal and request that the Governing Body reviews the process followed by the school in handling the complaint. Any such request must be made in writing to the Clerk to the Governing Body, within 10 school days of receiving notice of the outcome. You should include a statement specifying any perceived failures to follow the procedure. The procedure described below will be followed. An Appeal form is available from the school.

Appeal/Review Process:

A panel of 3 members of the Governing Body will hear the appeal and review the process followed by the school. These Governors will have had no previous involvement with the complaint or the investigation.

The appeal panel will arrange to meet at a time convenient to all parties. This will usually take place within 10 school days of receipt of the appeal. The complainant, Head Teacher, any member of staff the complaint is about or anyone involved in the investigation will be invited to attend this hearing. All parties will have an opportunity to state their case.

If an individual would prefer then they may make written submissions to the Appeal Panel.

The panel will first listen to evidence from the complainant and ask relevant questions.

The panel will then invite representatives of the school [Usually the Head Teacher or the Chair of the Governing Body panel that considered the matter], as appropriate, to make a response to the complaint and will again ask relevant questions.

Finally the panel will question any other parties involved. The panel will also review any relevant documentation including the records of the initial investigation and process followed.

You, and the school representative[s], will be informed in writing of the outcome, usually within 5 school days of the Appeal Panel meeting.

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

If you believe that the Governing Body has acted illegally or arbitrarily in handling the complaint, then you may make representations to the Secretary of State for Children, Schools and Families.

Annex 1
Outline of how different complaints are dealt with

Nature of Complaint		Appropriate person to receive contact	Relevant Policy/Procedure
Information	Request for published information	School Office	FOI Act Charging Policy
	Request for personal pupil information	Head Teacher or Senior member of staff	DPA Charging Policy
Policy	Complaint about GB policy – either content or application	Clerk/Chair	Complaints Policy
	Admissions	Chair/Clerk [Foundation/VA] LA [Community/VC]	Admissions Procedure Admissions Appeal Procedure
	Exclusion	Chair/Clerk Foundation/VA] LA [Community/VC]	Exclusion Appeal Procedure
General Complaint	Unreasonable exercise of discretion by Head e.g. declining a volunteer or refusal to sign passport application	Head Teacher Chair	Complaints Policy
	Selection of pupil for school team/play	Head Teacher/Clerk to GB	
	Content of /Failure to maintain a statement of SEN	Head Teacher /SENCO LA	LA procedures
	Failure to provide National Curriculum entitlement or inappropriate curriculum	Head Teacher Clerk to GB LA	
	Extended Services	Manager of relevant service	
Allegation about behaviour/ conduct	Allegation about conduct of a member of staff	Head Teacher Or Chair if allegation against Head	School Staff Discipline Procedure [Confidential to School & Employee]
	Allegation of verbal or physical assault by member of staff on pupil	Head Teacher Or Child Protection co-ordinator Or Chair [if allegation against head]	Local Child Protection Procedures [Confidential to school, LA CPO & parents of alleged victim]
	Allegation about capability of a member of staff	Head Teacher Or Chair [if allegation against head]	School Staff Competence Procedure [Confidential to School & Employee]
	Allegation about conduct of a pupil [e.g. bullying]	Head Teacher or Senior member of staff	School behaviour & discipline procedures [Confidential to School & parents of alleged perpetrator]
	Discipline of a pupil	Head Teacher or Senior member of staff	
	Inappropriate postings on website or social networking site	Head Teacher Or Chair	E-safety Policy Staff Discipline or School behaviour & discipline procedures
	GB Decision to remove licence for a person to enter school premises [banning]	Clerk to GB/Chair	Complaints Policy

Annex 2

Complaint Policy Timescales

	Complaint Acknowledged	Complaint Heard	Outcome Notified	Appeal Request	Appeal Heard	Outcome Notified
How	In writing	Meeting	In writing	In writing	Meeting	In writing
Who	Head/Chair	Head or Chair * ¹	Head or Chair	Complainant	Governing Body panel (3)	Governing Body panel
Timescale	Within 5 school days of receiving complaint	Within 10 school days of request being received	Within 5 school days of meeting	Within 10 school days of receiving outcome letter	Within 10 school days of request being received	Within 5 school days of meeting

*¹ In some circumstances it may be appropriate for a Governing Body panel comprising 3 Governors (who have no previous involvement with the case) to hear the complaint at this stage. If this is required then due to diary commitments it may take longer than 10 school days for this panel to come together to hear the complaint.

The aim throughout is always to investigate the matter thoroughly within these timescales. Occasionally matters may take longer to investigate, if this is the case you will be notified as to the delay and provided with an indication of the anticipated timescale to investigate your complaint.

Annex 3
Complaint Forms

Haresfield School Complaint Form

Please complete this form and return it to 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:

Relationship with school [e.g. parent of a pupil on the schools roll]:

.....

Pupil's name [if relevant to your complaint]:

.....

Your Address:

Daytime telephone number:

Evening telephone number:

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 to 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:

Date Form received:

Received by:

Date acknowledgement sent:

Acknowledgement sent by:

Complaint referred to:			
Date:			