

The Hollies PRU

Complaints Procedures

Introduction

The main purpose of a complaints procedure is to solve problems and to give parents a means to raise issues of concern and have them addressed. Complainants should be treated respectfully during and after the course of any complaints investigation.

All members of staff are aware of the complaints procedure and understand:

- The importance of attempting to resolve problems before they become formal complaints.
- The importance of treating complaints respectfully

Expressing Concerns

At this informal stage the school should consider the best way of dealing with concerns raised according to the circumstances. It is preferable for all concerned that concerns are resolved now rather than later.

Formal Complaints

Stage 1 – Headteacher

At this stage the Headteacher should consider whether the complainant can be satisfied without recourse to the Management Committee.

Action through a complaints procedure may lead to action being initiated under other procedures. This may be disciplinary or child protection procedures and consideration will be given to this possibility at the earliest stage. In these cases the investigations under the complaints procedures will be suspended until action under the other procedures (including appeals) has been concluded. The complainant will be advised if this is the case and also informed of the likely delay in the final resolution of their complaint.

Stage 2 – Formal complaints to the Management Committee

If a complaint cannot be resolved informally, they will be accepted in writing or verbally to the Management Committee. Where a complaint is accepted verbally it will be reported back to the complainant to ensure that details have been collected correctly. Where a complaint is accepted in writing, appendix 1 may be used.

Staff will record when the complaint is received. A complaint will then be acknowledged in writing by, or on behalf of, the Chair of the Management Committee. The acknowledgement will include an explanation of what will happen next, time scales involved and the name of the person from whom they will next hear about the progress of the investigation.

Details of a complaint should be kept confidential except in so far as they need to be shared with people who might contribute to their resolution.

The role of the Management Committee

The Chair of the Management Committee will need to consider whether the investigation can be completed by the Headteacher (who will already be involved), the Chair him / herself, or whether to refer the complaint to the Local Authority. If the latter course of action is followed the Chair shall present a full report to the Committee and external advice may be sought from the Inclusion Officer.

Outcomes

In all cases where a complaint has been investigated the complainant will be given a written response covering:

- The complaint
- The scope of the investigation
- The conclusion of the investigation
- Any action which has resulted

The Inclusion Officer may wish to offer the complainant the opportunity to discuss the response.

If the investigation upholds the complaint, redress should be appropriate to the complaint and may include:

- An appropriate expression of regret
- Providing the solution desired by the complainant
- Changing procedures to avoid future problems

Each school will take responsibility for:

- Deciding who can take remedial action
- Ensuring the remedy is carried out
- Ensuring that any remedy is within the school's powers
- Ensuring the approach to remedies is reasonable and consistent

Where a complaint is NOT upheld, the complainant must be given a response of any further action that might be appropriate in their situation.

Stages 3 and 4 – The role of the LA

Parents do not have a general right of appeal should they disagree with the Management Committee's decision. They may however, raise the matter with the Local Authority or Secretary of State if they consider the complaint wasn't investigated properly and fairly. If the Management Committee have followed a proper procedure and considered the complaint reasonably, neither the Local Authority nor the Secretary of State can reverse their decision.

Signed _____ Date _____

Chair of Management Committee

Signed _____ Date _____

Headteacher

Appendix 1

Complaints and Compliments

Please complete this form and return it to the school who will then forward it to the Chair of the Management Committee. Please continue on a separate sheet if necessary.

1. Name _____

2. Address _____

3. Telephone Number _____

4. Name of Child _____

5. Details of the Complaint / Compliment (please include the date or period of time to which your complaint relates and confirm whether you have already expressed your concerns formally, to whom and when).

6. Do you have a suggestion for change?

7. Please attach copies of any more information you may have to back up your complaint, such as letters or reports

Signed _____ Date _____