



**Thomas Whitehead C of E Primary School**

**COMPLAINTS POLICY**

<b>Policy:</b> Complaints Policy	<b>Issue Date and Version Number:</b> June 2013	<b>Page:</b> 1 of 3
<b>Review Date: June 2015</b> (or sooner if there is a change in legislation or additional guidance given)	<b>Related Policies and Guidance:</b> Behavior Policy Anti-Bullying Policy	
<b>For further information please contact: Head Teacher / Governing Body</b>		
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This is a Church of England school and in common with all church schools, aims to provide the best possible education for each of its pupils, within the context of a caring Christian community.

**1. Introduction**

1.1 We believe that our school provides a good education for all our 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. The following policy sets out the procedure that the school follows in such cases.

**2. Aims and objectives**

2.1 Our school aims to be fair, open and honest when dealing with any complaint. We give careful consideration to all complaints and deal with them as swiftly as possible. We aim to resolve any complaint through dialogue and mutual understanding and, in all cases, we put the interests of the child above all other issues. We provide sufficient opportunity for any complaint to be fully discussed, and then resolved.

In line with the requirements of the Education Act 2002, Thomas Whitehead Primary School will:

- Have a complaints procedure that is easily accessible, simple to use and easy to understand.

- Promote an open door policy where every parent can express their concerns to any member of staff.
- Encourage resolution of problems by informal means wherever possible.
- Resolve all issues swiftly to established timescales, impartially and in a spirit of co-operation.
- Ensure a full and fair investigation by an independent person where necessary.
- Respect people's desire for confidentiality.
- Provide an effective response and appropriate redress where necessary.
- Ensure that the Governing Body regularly monitors complaints received by the school.

Thomas Whitehead Primary School prides itself on the quality of the teaching and the pastoral care provided for its pupils. However if parents do have concerns, they can expect any issues raised to be treated seriously by the school in accordance with this policy document.

### **3. The complaints process**

#### How to share a concern

**3.1 Informal Stage 1** - If a parent is concerned about anything to do with the education that we are providing at our school, they should, in the first instance, discuss the matter with their child's class teacher. Most matters of concern can be dealt with in this way. All teachers work very hard to ensure that each child is happy at school, and that they are making good progress; they always want to know if there is a problem, so that they can take action before the problem seriously affects the child's progress.

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

**3.2 Informal Stage 2** Where a parent feels that a situation has not been resolved through contact with the class teacher, or that their concern is of a sufficiently serious nature, they should make an appointment to discuss it with the head teacher. This should be done as soon as possible to avoid any escalation of the problem. The head teacher considers any such complaint very seriously and investigates each case thoroughly. Most complaints are normally resolved at this stage.

#### Sharing a concern about the head teacher

**3.3** Should a parent have a complaint about the head teacher, s/he should first make an informal approach to the Chair or one of the members of the governing body, who

is obliged to investigate it. The governor in question will do all s/he can to resolve the issue through a dialogue with the school, but if a parent is unhappy with the outcome, s/he can make a formal complaint, as outlined below. A list of governor names is available from the school office.

### How to take the matter further

**3.4 Formal Stage 3** Review by a Governing Body Panel. The complainant should write to the Chair of Governors clearly stating their complaint and why they feel the matter has not been resolved. The process will be as follows:

- The complainant's letter is acknowledged and a panel of Governors are informed within 5 school days on receipt.
- The Panel sets a date to meet as soon as reasonably practical but no longer than 15 school days from the acknowledgement date of the letter.
- The Governors Panel obtains any reports from the Head teacher and any further information/documentation required within 5 school days before the meeting. The person who has made the complaint is invited to attend the meeting so that s/he can explain their complaint in more detail.
- After hearing all the evidence, the governors consider their decision and inform the parent about it in writing. The governors do all they can at this stage to resolve the complaint to the parent's satisfaction.

After the Panel has met, the Governing Panel will write to all concerned explaining their decision and may suggest a resolution if appropriate. The decision of the Panel is final.

### Who to appeal to next

If the Complainant feels that the School or Governors have not followed the School's procedures correctly, then they may request the Local Education Authority District Schools Officer to look at the issue and see whether the School and Governors have acted within the terms of their agreed procedures.

In extreme circumstances, the complainant may refer the issue to the Secretary of State for Education under the Education Act 1996 on the grounds that the Governing Body and/or the Local Education Authority is acting or proposing to act unreasonably or has failed to discharge its duties under the Act.

## **4. Monitoring and review**

4.1 The governors monitor the complaints procedure, in order to ensure that all complaints are handled properly. The head teacher logs all complaints received by the school and records how they were resolved. Governors examine this log on an annual basis.

4.2 Governors take into account any local or national decisions that affect the complaints process, and make any modifications necessary to this policy. This policy is made available to all parents via the school website and on display at parents evening, so that they can be properly informed about the complaints process.