

# Maple Policy for dealing with complaints

We welcome suggestions for improving our work in school. Be assured that, no matter what you want to tell us, our support and respect for your child will not be affected in any way. Please tell us of your concern as soon as possible. It is difficult for us to investigate an incident or problem properly if it took place some time ago. We do appreciate the assistance we receive from parents/ carers in addressing any problems that arise.

We receive very few complaints. Problems sometimes arise from misunderstandings which are easily addressed. Most concerns and complaints can be sorted out quickly by speaking with a senior leader.

If, having spoken to the senior leader you still have concerns, you should see the Head teacher. She will investigate the problem and discuss her findings with you so that we can find a way forward together which serves the best interest of both the school and your child. In the unlikely event of the problem remaining unresolved you can put your complaint in writing and, if necessary, could subsequently refer it to the Chair of the Management Committee.

The procedure to be followed in the event of a complaint being made is summarised in the following stages:

## Stage 1: Informal Action

- Parents/ carers discuss concerns with the member of staff concerned
- If they are not happy that the situation is resolved they can discuss this with the relevant senior leader.
- If the senior leader is unable to deal immediately with the matter, a clear note is made, including complainant's name, phone number and date, and the parent is contacted as soon as the matter has been investigated. The teacher may also consult the Head teacher at this stage.
- The senior leader ensures that the parent is clear what action or monitoring of the situation has been agreed.
- If no satisfactory solution has been found, parents/ carers are asked if they wish their concern to be considered further.

At the hospital if a complaint is made we also have to inform the named nurse for the child and the Senior sister of the nature of the complaint.

If the parent/ carer wants to pursue the complaint after consultation with the member of staff and /or the Assistant Head then a DATIX form must be completed and sent to Matron of the Children's hospital.

## Stage 2: Referral to the Head teacher

- The Head teacher acknowledges the complaint, orally or in writing, within 3 working days
- A meeting is arranged with the complainant to clarify and supplement any information given.
- The Head teacher investigates further, interviewing witnesses as appropriate. If the complaint centres on a pupil, the pupil would normally be interviewed with a parent/ carer present or, if this is not possible, with a member of staff who is not directly involved.
- The Head teacher keeps written records of meetings, telephone conversations and other documentation.
- Once all relevant facts have been established, the Head teacher responds. If the complaint was in writing, a written response will be sent.
- If the complainant is not satisfied, they are advised to write to the chair of the Management Committee.

If the complaint is against the Head teacher, the Stage 2 procedures are carried out by the Chair of the Management Committee.

### **Stage 3: Review by the Management Committee**

- The Chair acknowledges receipt of the written complaint, informing the complainant that the complaint is to be heard by a Committee of three members of the School's Management Committee within 20 working days.
- The Chair arranges to convene a Complaints Panel elected from members of the Management Committee. The members should have no prior involvement with the complaint and they should elect a Chair for the committee. All relevant documentation regarding the complaint should be given to the members of the committee as soon as possible.
- The Chair of the Management Committee will write and inform all concerned of the date, time and place of the meeting at least 5 working days in advance. The notification to the complainant should also inform him/her of the right to be accompanied to the meeting by a friend and the right to submit further written evidence.
- It is the responsibility of the Chair of the Management Committee to ensure that the meeting is properly minuted.
- After the meeting, the Management Committee will consider the evidence and a written decision will be sent to the Head teacher and the complainant within 15 working days

### **Stage 4: Beyond the Management Committee**

- Complaints can be taken to the Secretary of State for Education under Education Act 1996 on the grounds that a Governing Body (Management Committee) or LEA is acting or proposing to act unreasonably or has failed to discharge its duties under the Act.

## **Complaints to Ofsted**

The panel's decision will usually be final. However, if you are still dissatisfied you may contact Ofsted.

### **Ofsted details:**

Helpdesk, which is open from 8am – 8pm Monday to Friday. Phone No. 08456 404045 or

Email [enquires@ofsted.gov.uk](mailto:enquires@ofsted.gov.uk)

Online complaints: <http://live.ofsted.gov.uk/onlinecomplaints>

Written complaints: Enquiries Ofsted

Royal Exchange Buildings

St Ann's Square

Manchester

**Date of Policy:** Oct 2018

**Date of Review:** Oct 2020

**Signed**

**Chair of Management Committee** .....

**Head teacher** .....