



West Wimbledon Primary School

COMPLAINTS POLICY

Title:	Complaints Policy
Status:	Final
Version:	2.0
History:	Written May 2016
Owner	Full Governing Body

General Principles:

- This procedure is intended to allow parents 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 enable 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 three months after the event, being complained of, will not be considered.

Raising a concern or complaint

Informal Stage

It is normally appropriate to communicate directly with the member of staff concerned. This may be by letter, by telephone or in person by appointment, requested via the school office. 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 it may be appropriate to address them directly to the Headteacher (or to the Chair of the governing body, if the complaint is about the Headteacher).

Parents who are uncertain about who to contact, please seek advice from the School office or the Clerk to the governing body.

Formal Stage

If the concern or complaint is not resolved at the informal stage parents may choose to put the complaint in writing and pass it to the Headteacher, who will be responsible for ensuring that it is investigated appropriately. If the complaint is about the Headteacher, the complaint should be passed to the Clerk to the governing body, for the attention of the Chair of the governing body.

A Complaint Form is provided as Appendix 1.

Parents are advised to include details which might assist the investigation, such as names of potential witnesses, dates and times of events, and copies of relevant documents.

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

The completed form should be passed, in a sealed envelope, to the school office. The envelope should be addressed to the Headteacher, or to the Clerk to the governing body, as appropriate.

The Headteacher (or Chair) may invite the complainant to a meeting to clarify the concerns and to explore the possibility of an informal resolution. If that invitation is accepted, the complainant may be accompanied by a friend, if s/he wishes, to assist in explaining the nature of the concerns.

It is possible that the complaint will be resolved through a meeting with the Headteacher (or Chair). If not, arrangements will be made for the matter to be fully investigated, using the appropriate procedure. In any case, the complainant should learn in writing, usually within five 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.

Any investigation will begin as soon as possible and when it has been concluded, the complainant will be informed in writing of its conclusion.

If the complainant is not satisfied with the manner in which the process has been followed, you may 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, and within ten school days of receiving notice of the outcome. It should include a statement specifying any perceived failures to follow the procedure. The procedure described below will be followed. A Review Request form is provided as Appendix 2.

Review Stage

Any review of the process followed by the School will be conducted by a panel of three members of the governing body. This will usually take place within ten school days of the receipt of the request to review.

The review will normally be conducted through a consideration of written submissions, but reasonable requests to make oral representations will be considered sympathetically.

Final stage

If you are not satisfied with the response from the governing body you can contact the Secretary of State for Education via the DFE Helpline on 0370 000 2288.

Unreasonable Complainants

West Wimbledon Primary School is committed to dealing with all complaints fairly and impartially, and to providing a high quality service to those who complain. We will not normally limit the contact complainants have with the School. However, we do not expect our staff to tolerate unacceptable behaviour and will take action to protect staff from that behaviour, including that which is abusive, offensive or threatening.

West Wimbledon Primary School defines unreasonable complainants as *'those who, because of the frequency or nature of their contacts with the school, hinder our consideration of their or other people's complaints'*.

A complaint may be regarded as unreasonable when the person making the complaint: -

- refuses to articulate their complaint or specify the grounds of a complaint or the outcomes sought by raising the complaint, despite offers of assistance;
- refuses to co-operate with the complaints investigation process while still wishing their complaint to be resolved;
- refuses to accept that certain issues are not within the scope of a complaints procedure;
- insists on the complaint being dealt with in ways which are incompatible with the adopted complaints procedure or with good practice;
- introduces trivial or irrelevant information which the complainant expects to be taken into account and commented on, or raises large numbers of detailed but
- unimportant questions, and insists they are fully answered, often immediately and to their own timescales;

- makes unjustified complaints about staff who are trying to deal with the issues, and seeks to have them replaced;
- changes the basis of the complaint as the investigation proceeds;
- repeatedly makes the same complaint (despite previous investigations or responses concluding that the complaint is groundless or has been addressed);
- refuses to accept the findings of the investigation into that complaint where the school's complaint procedure has been fully and properly implemented and completed including referral to the Department for Education;
- seeks an unrealistic outcome;
- makes excessive demands on school time by frequent, lengthy, complicated and stressful contact with staff regarding the complaint in person, in writing, by email or by telephone while the complaint is being dealt with.

A complaint may also be considered unreasonable if the person making the complaint does so either face-to-face, by telephone or in writing or electronically, in any of the following manners:

- maliciously;
- aggressively;
- using threats, intimidation or violence;
- using abusive, offensive or discriminatory language;
- knowing it to be false;
- using falsified information;
- publishing unacceptable information in a variety of media such as in social media websites and newspapers.

Complainants should limit the numbers of communications with a school while a complaint is being progressed. It is not helpful if repeated correspondence is sent (either by letter, phone, email or text) as it could delay the outcome being reached.

Whenever possible, the Headteacher or Chair of Governors will discuss any concerns with the complainant informally before applying an 'unreasonable' marking.

If the behaviour, continues the Headteacher will write to the complainant explaining that their behaviour is unreasonable and asking them to change it. For complainants who excessively contact West Wimbledon Primary School, causing a significant level of disruption, the School may specify methods of communication and limit the number of contacts in a communication plan. This will usually be reviewed after 6 months.

In response to any serious incident of aggression or violence, the concerns and actions taken will be put in writing immediately and the police informed. This may include banning an individual from West Wimbledon Primary School.



West Wimbledon Primary School

Complaints Form

Please complete and return to the appropriate person, as identified within the relevant stage of the School's Complaints Policy, who will acknowledge receipt and explain what action will be taken.

Your name:
Pupil's name (if relevant):
Your relationship to the pupil (if relevant):
Address:
Postcode:
Day time telephone number:
Evening telephone number:
E-mail address:
Please give details of your complaint.
What action, if any, have you already taken to try to resolve your complaint. (To whom did you speak and what was the response)?

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

Are you attaching any paperwork? If so, please give details.

Signature:

Date:

Official use

Date acknowledgement sent:

By whom:

Complaint referred to:

Date:

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:

Request referred to:	
Date:	