

Redfield Edge Primary School **Complaints Policy and Procedures**

Redfield Edge Primary School aims to work in partnership with parents in the best interests of the children. Any concern or complaint will be given careful consideration and will be dealt with fairly and honestly. We will provide sufficient opportunity for any complaint to be fully discussed, and aim to resolve it through open dialogue and mutual understanding.

General Principles:

- This procedure is intended to allow you 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 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 event, being complained of, will not be considered.
- Where the complaint relates to the conduct of a member of the governing body performing their role as a governor the complaint will be dealt with under the procedure set out in the governors' code of conduct.
- Where a concern or a complaint relates to a third party provider, the concern or complaint will be dealt with under that provider's own complaints policy.

Definitions

Concerns and Complaints – Introduction: A 'concern' may be defined as 'an expression of worry or doubt over an issue considered to be important for which reassurances are sought'. A complaint may be generally defined as 'an expression of dissatisfaction however made, about actions taken or a lack of action'. (Best Practice Advice for School Complaints Procedures 2016 – DFE)

Raising a concern or complaint

The majority of formal complaints against the school will fall within the remit of the Governing Body to consider. However, there are six categories of complaint which the Local Authority Department for Children and Young People has responsibility for, not the Governing Body.

- The curriculum
- Admission to the school
- Statutory Assessment of special educational needs
- Exclusion of pupils from the school Complaints Policy Page 1
- Child protection related issues or allegations of child abuse
- Any complaint about the action of the Governing Body

In any of these six categories, your complaint must be sent directly to the Local Authority at the address detailed below.

Complaints about the curriculum: Helean Hughes, Head of Learning and School Effectiveness Tel: 01454 863255

Complaint about a governor performing their role: Jo Parker Chair of Governors or Andrew Foss Head Teacher Tel:01454 867165 or the school address.

Complaints about exclusions: Guy Halley, Access and Inclusion Officer Tel: 01454 863382

Complaints about admissions to school: Tanya Smith, Student Access and Support Manager Tel: 01454 863334

Complaints about statutory assessment of a child's special educational needs: Mark Nesden, Head of Special Educational Needs Tel: 01454 866497

Complaints concerning child protections/allegations of child abuse: Catherine Boyce, Principal Education Welfare Officer Tel: 01454 868924

All of the above can be reached using the address below: South Gloucestershire Council
Dept for Children, Adults and Health PO Box 298 Civic Centre High Street Kingswood Bristol
BS15 0DQ Appendix 2

Raising a concern or complaint with the school

1) 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. 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 Head Teacher [or to the Chair of the governing body, if the complaint is about the Head Teacher].

If you are uncertain about who to contact, please seek advice from the school office or the Clerk to the governing body.

2) Formal Stage

If your concern or complaint is not resolved at the informal stage you must 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 provided to assist you.

You should 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 you include a clear statement of the actions that you would like the school to take to resolve your concern. Without this, it is much more difficult 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.

The Head Teacher [or Chair] may invite you to a meeting to clarify your concerns and to seek an informal resolution. If you accept that invitation, you may be accompanied by a friend to provide personal support, but not to act on your behalf.

It is possible that your complaint will be resolved through a meeting with the Head Teacher [or Chair]. If not arrangements will be made for the matter to be fully investigated, using the appropriate procedure. In any case you should learn in writing, usually within 10 school days of the school receiving your 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, you will be informed in writing of its conclusion.

If you are 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, within 10 school days of receiving notice of the outcome, and include a statement specifying any perceived failures to follow the procedure. The procedure described below will be followed. A Review Request form is provided for your convenience.

Review Process

Any review of the process followed by the school will be conducted by a panel of 3 members of the governing body. This will usually take place within 20 school days of receipt of your request.

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

The panel will first receive written evidence from the complainant.

The panel will then invite representatives of the school [Usually the Head Teacher or the Chair of the governing body panel that has considered the matter], as appropriate, to make a response to the complaint.

The panel may also have access to the records kept of the process followed.

You, and the school representative[s], will be informed in writing of the outcome, usually within 10 school days of the 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.

Signed: _____ Signed: _____

Chair of Governors

Head Teacher

Reviewed October 2016

To be reviewed October 2019

Contact/Complaints Triage Table

Nature of Contact	Appropriate person to receive contact	Relevant Policy/Procedure
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
Complaint about GB policy [content or application of]	Clerk/Chair	General Complaints Procedure
Unreasonable exercise of discretion by Head Teacher e.g. declining to accept a volunteer or to sign a passport application	Head Teacher Chair	General Complaints Procedure
Allegation about conduct of a member of staff	Head Teacher Or Chair [if allegation against head]	School Staff Discipline Procedure [Confidential to School and Employee]
Allegation of verbal or physical assault by employee on pupil	Head Teacher OR Child Protection co-ordinator Or Chair [if allegation against head]	Local Child Protection Procedures [Confidential to school, LA CPO and 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 and Employee]
Conduct of another pupil [e.g. bullying]	Head Teacher or Senior member of staff	School behaviour and discipline procedures [Confidential to School and parents of alleged perpetrator]
Discipline of a pupil	Head Teacher or Senior member of staff	School behaviour and discipline procedures [Confidential to School and parents of pupil]
Content of /Failure to maintain a statement of SEN	Head Teacher /SENCO LA	LA procedures
Admissions	Chair/Clerk [Foundation/VA] LA [Community/VC]	Admissions Procedure Admissions Appeal Procedure
Exclusion	Chair/Clerk [Foundation/VA] LA [Community/VC]	Exclusion Appeal Procedure
Failure to provide NC Entitlement or Inappropriate curriculum	Head Teacher Clerk to GB LA	LA Procedure
Extended Services	Manager of relevant service	Procedures of Service Provider

GB Decision to remove licence for a person to enter school premises [banning]	Clerk to GB/Chair	GB Appeal Committee
Selection of pupil for school team/play	Head Teacher/Clerk to GB	General Complaints Procedure

Redfield Edge Primary School Complaint Form

Please complete this form and return it to the 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. who 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:			

Redfield Edge Primary School **Policy For Handling Unreasonably Persistent, Harassing Or** **Abusive Complainants**

The Head Teacher and governing body are fully committed to the improvement of our school. We welcome feedback from parents/carers and will always try to resolve any concerns as quickly as possible. There is a procedure for parents to use if they wish to make a formal complaint.

Sometimes, however, parents or carers pursuing complaints or other issues treat staff and others in a way that is unacceptable. Whilst we recognise that some complaints may relate to serious and distressing incidents, we will not accept threatening or harassing behaviour towards any members of the school community.

The aim of this leaflet is to provide information about our school policy on unreasonably persistent complainants or harassment of staff.

What do we mean by 'an unreasonably persistent complainant'?

An unreasonably persistent complainant may be anyone who engages in unreasonable behaviour when making a complaint. This will include persons who pursue complaints in an unreasonable manner.

Unreasonable behaviour may include:

- actions which are
 - out of proportion to the nature of the complaint, or
 - persistent – even when the complaints procedure has been exhausted, or
 - personally harassing, or
 - unjustifiably repetitious
- an insistence on
 - pursuing unjustified complaints and/or
 - unrealistic outcomes to justified complaints
- an insistence on
 - pursuing justifiable complaints in an unreasonable manner (eg using abusive or threatening language; or
 - making complaints in public; or
 - refusing to attend appointments to discuss the complaint.

What is 'harassment'?

We regard harassment as the unreasonable pursuit of issues or complaints, particularly if the matter appears to be pursued in a way intended to cause personal distress rather than to seek a resolution.

Behaviour may fall within the scope of this policy if:

- it appears to be deliberately targeted at one or more members of school staff or others, without good cause;
- the way in which a complaint or other issues is pursued (as opposed to the complaint itself) causes undue distress to school staff or others;
- it has a significant and disproportionate adverse effect on the school community.

What does the school expect of any person wishing to raise a concern?

The school expects anyone who wishes to raise concerns with the school to:

- treat all members of the school community with courtesy and respect;
- respect the needs of pupils and staff within the school;
- avoid the use of violence, or threats of violence, towards people or property;
- recognise the time constraints under which members of staff in schools work and allow the school a reasonable time to respond to a complaint;
- follow the school's complaints procedure.

Schools' responses to unreasonably persistent complaints or harassment

This policy is intended to be used in conjunction with the school's complaints procedure. Taken together, these documents set out how we will always seek to work with parents, carers and others with a legitimate complaint to resolve a difficulty.

However, in cases of unreasonably persistent complaints or harassment, the school may take some or all of the following steps, as appropriate:

- inform the complainant informally that his/her behaviour is now considered by the school to be unreasonable or unacceptable, and request a changed approach;
- inform the complainant in writing that the school considers his/her behaviour to fall under the terms of the Unreasonably Persistent Complaints/ Harassment Policy;
- require all future meetings with a member of staff to be conducted with a second person present. In the interests of all parties, notes of these meetings may be taken;
- inform the complainant that, except in emergencies, the school will respond only to written communication and that these may be required to be channelled through the Local Authority.

Physical or verbal aggression

The governing body will not tolerate **any** form of physical or verbal aggression against members of the school community. If there is evidence of any such aggression the school may:

- ban the individual from entering the school site, with immediate effect;

- request an Anti-Social Behaviour Order (ASBO);
- prosecute under Anti-Harassment legislation.
- call the police to remove the individual from the premises, under powers provided by the Education Act 1996.

Legitimate new complaints will always be considered, even if the person making them is (or has been) subject to the Unreasonably Persistent Complaints/ Harassment Policy. The school nevertheless reserves the right not to respond to communications from individuals subject to the policy.

Signed:_____ Signed:_____

Chair of Governors

Head Teacher

Reviewed October 2016

To be reviewed October 2019

