



Simonside Primary School

COMPLAINTS POLICY AND PROCEDURE

This policy will be used in conjunction with the Department for Education Guidance (School Complaints Procedure 2016) and alongside our Home/School Agreement.

Introduction:

Simonside Primary School welcomes comments and complaints as an opportunity to improve and develop the quality of the education and wider opportunities that we provide. If you feel that something has gone wrong or that you or your child has been unfairly treated or if you are not happy with any aspect of the school then please contact a member of staff as soon as possible.

Simonside Primary School is committed to taking concerns seriously, at the earliest stage and we will do our best to informally resolve any concerns to your satisfaction.

While we will do our best to deal with any concerns informally, we recognise that there may be an occasion when you wish to make a more formal complaint. While we hope that this situation does not arise, we do have a formal Complaints Procedure in place. The aim of this procedure is to resolve the complaint as fairly and speedily as possible.

Formal complaints will be dealt with in a sensitive, impartial and confidential manner. Malicious or serial complaints which are unreasonable, involve threatening behaviour or the posting/sharing of false information on social media, will be logged and result in appropriate action being taken by the school.

The following details outline the stages that will be used to resolve complaints:

- Stage 1 – A concern is raised informally with a member of staff or with the Headteacher.
- Stage 2 – A formal complaint is made to and heard by the Headteacher.
- Stage 3 – A formal complaint is made to the Chair of Governors and heard by the Governing Body's Complaints Appeal Committee.

Stage 1 – Raising a concern

Concerns can be raised with the school at any time and will often generate an immediate response, which will resolve the concern. The school requests that parents make their first contact with the child's Class Teacher or Headteacher.

On some occasions the concern raised may require investigation, or discussion with others. If this is the case you will receive an informal but informed response within a day or two. The vast majority of concerns will be satisfactorily dealt with in this way. However, if you are not satisfied with the result at Stage 1, please write to or call the school within 10 school working days and state what you would like the school to do. The school will then look at your complaint at the next stage.

Any person has a right to make a complaint, however the scope of complaint does not cover the following exceptions. These exceptions are covered by other policies and procedures.

- Staff grievances
- Admissions policy
- Exclusions

Stage 2 – Complaint made to and heard by Headteacher.

Formal complaints can be made in writing, verbally, face to face or over the phone. The school will keep a written record of that complaint. The school will acknowledge receipt of the complaint within 2 school working days of receiving it. The Headteacher will investigate the complaint and following this will give a written response within 10 school working days. In many cases, this response will also report on the action the school has taken to resolve the issue. Alternatively, a meeting may be convened to discuss the matter further. This meeting will take place within 10 school working days. The aim will be to resolve the matter as speedily as possible.

Stage 3 – Complaint made to Chair of Governors and heard by the Governing Body's Complaints Appeal Panel

If the matter has still not been resolved at Stage 2, then you will need to write to the Chair of Governors giving details of the complaint. Please address the envelope to: The Chair of Governors and mark it Confidential. The Chair or a nominated Governor will convene a complaints panel. The hearing will normally take place within 10 school working days of the receipt of the written request for Stage 3 investigation.

The aim of the Appeal panel hearing is to impartially resolve the complaint and to achieve reconciliation between the school and the complainant. All parties will be notified of the Panel's decision in writing within three school working days after the date of the hearing. The letter will also contain what you need to do if you wish to take the matter further.

Please note: In cases where the matter concerns the conduct of the Headteacher, the Chair of Governors will be informed of the complaint. The Chair of Governors will arrange for the matter to be investigated. In cases where the matter concerns the conduct of a member of the Governing Body, the Headteacher and Chair of Governors will be informed of the complaint.

The Governors appeal hearing is the last school-based stage of the complaints process. Although the Governing Body is accountable for the conduct of the school, additional support from Newcastle Children's Services Complaints Officer may be available to support resolution of complaints. This facility can only be used where the school complaint procedure as set out in this document has been fully exhausted.

Contact Details:

- Chair of Governors c/o Simonside Primary School, Bedeburn Road, Newbiggin Hall, NE5 4LG
- Headteacher Mrs Louise Thompson, Simonside Primary School, Bedeburn Road, Newbiggin Hall, NE5 4LG

Reviewed April 2018