

Ringland Primary School
School Complaints Policy and Procedures

Article 3

Everyone who works with children should always do what is best for each child.



'Compassion, Curiosity and Courage'

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Review Date	March 2025
Reviewed By	

Aims of Policy:

To outline procedures for making a complaint to school.

COMPLAINTS POLICY

Purpose of the Complaints Procedure

Article 18: Both parents share responsibility for bringing up their children, and they should always think about what is best for each child.

Introduction

As a Rights Respecting school we aim to ensure all children, staff and families are aware of children's rights. We aim to not only teach about children's rights but also model rights and respect in all relationships. This is linked to Articles 3, 18, 28,29,30 (UNCRC)

Ringland Primary school values the good relations we enjoy with parents and the community. These good relations are based on a respect for what the school is achieving, on good communications and the provision of relevant and clear information always.

This policy explains concisely the approach that the school will take to address complaints raised by Parents/Carers or other third parties.

Ringland Primary School is staffed by teachers and support staff who are not only qualified and experts in their own field, but who have also chosen to work with children because they care for children and wish to help them in every way possible. However, we recognise, as in any organisation, things from time to time may arise which may lead to a Parent/Carers, pupil or other person involved with the school wishing to express some concern. A concern is not a complaint and should not be treated as such by the parent or the school. A small number of concerns may remain unresolved and result in a complaint, which will be investigated using the formal complaints procedure.

When concerns that have been raised are resolved there should be no need for a formal complaint. However, failure to respond to a concern could give rise to a complaint.

Our definition of a complaint is that suggested in the Welsh Government 'Complaints Procedure for School Governing Bodies' Guidance (2012). A complaint is ***'an expression of dissatisfaction in relation to the school, a governor, or a member of its staff that requires a response from school.'***

It is the school's policy that records will be maintained of all complaints raised in order that full consideration may be made of the complaint at each stage. Records also assist the school in learning from issues raised and to evaluate and improve school performance.

Each stage of the complaint's procedure will be addressed within a specified timescale. This is detailed within the full Complaints Procedure.

Summary of Procedure

The School Complaints Procedure is summarised in this document. The full Complaints Procedure is available in the document EAS Complaints Procedures which is available from the school Office and on the School Website. The procedure encompasses a range of scenarios including complaints by parents

about staff, the Head Teacher, and the Governing Body. If a complaint raises issues about staff capability, staff grievance, staff discipline, admissions, special educational needs provision, the delivery of the curriculum or child protection, then action must be taken under those procedures, and they should take precedence.

This procedure is a way of ensuring that anyone with an interest in the school can raise a concern, with confidence that it will be heard and, if well founded, addressed in any appropriate and timely fashion and in a way, that is compliant with Welsh Government Guidance.

The Complaints Procedure follows a staged approach as set out in Welsh Government guidelines, and can be summarised as follows:

Stage 1: The complaint is raised with the initial point of contact, which in the case of Ringland will usually mean the class teacher, although this could also refer to the Head Teacher. At this stage, the complaint may be verbal, or it may be in writing.

Stage 2: If the complaint is not resolved by the initial contact to the satisfaction of the parent or other complainant, the matter should be referred to the Head Teacher in writing, so that the nature of the complaint can be clearly explained.

If the complaint is about the Head Teacher, the complaint should be made to the Chair of Governors

In most circumstances, a meeting with the Head Teacher will take place to discuss the complaint. It is anticipated that most complaints will be resolved, to the satisfaction of the complainant, at this stage of the process.

Stage 3: If the complainant is not satisfied with the outcome at Stage 2, the complaint may be referred to the Governing Body for consideration. Initially, this should be conveyed in writing to the Chair of Governors, whose contact details can be obtained from the School Office, from the Annual Report to Parents, and from the School Website.

The Governing Body annually elects a panel of Governors to consider complaints that reach Stage 3. The panel will meet, together with the parties involved, to consider the matter.

There is no Complaints Appeal process within the remit of the Governing Body. If the complaint is not resolved by the Governing Body, the complainant may make a representation to the Local Authority. Further information about this process is available from the school and from the Local Authority.

Our general approach to handling complaints:

- Most concerns can be settled quickly in school by speaking to the relevant person in school without a formal procedure.
- We recognise the right of children to be listened to and to participate under the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC)
- We believe all complainants have the right to be heard, understood and respected. School staff and governors have the same right and we expect complaints to be made in a polite and courteous way. We will not tolerate aggressive, abusive or unreasonable behaviour. We will also not tolerate unreasonable demands, unreasonable persistence or vexatious complaining.
- We will consider all your concerns and complaints in an open and fair way.

- At all times the school will respect the rights and feelings of those involved and to protect confidential information.
- Timescales for dealing with your concerns or complaints may need to be extended following discussion with you.
- We may ask the local authority for advice.
- Some types of concern or complaint may raise issues that must be dealt with in another way, in which case we will explain why this is so and tell you what steps need to be taken.
- The governing body will keep the records of documents used to investigate your concern or complaint for seven years after it has been dealt with.
- Complaints made anonymously will be recorded but investigation will be at the discretion of the school depending on the nature of the complaint.

Statutory Complaints

There are special arrangements for dealing with Statutory complaints and they are not to be dealt with under the above complaint's procedures.

The following special arrangements exist for dealing with Statutory complaints:

The Local Authority has a Statutory responsibility to consider a relevant complaint about the Curriculum, Religious Education and Collective Worship, and Relationships and Sexual Education. (The school's prospectus will give parents details of the arrangements. In each case, however, they should first discuss the problem with the Head Teacher).

Appeals against decisions about a child's special educational needs. (A tribunal has been established to deal with complaints of this nature. The school, or the Local Education Authority will be able to give parents details.)

If parents are not offered a place at the school of their choice, or if their child is suspended or excluded from school. (The school will tell them how to appeal if these situations arise)

Other Complaints

Complaints can be made by several people/bodies.

They can be made by members of the public, residents in the community, after school club coordinators. They can be regarding the conduct of children, conditions of the building, usage of the school site etc. In these circumstances, complaints are to be made direct to the Head Teacher, preferably in writing. Those complaining will be advised of the complaint's procedures, with unresolved complaints being referred to the Governing Body.

Special circumstances

Where a complaint is made about any of the following, the complaints procedure will be applied differently.

- **A governor or group of governors** - The concern or complaint will be referred to the Chair of Governors for investigation. The Chair may alternatively delegate the matter to another governor for investigation. Stage B onwards of the complaint's procedure will apply.

- **The Chair of Governors or Headteacher and Chair of Governors**- The Vice Chair of Governors will be informed and will investigate it or may delegate it to another governor. Stage B onwards of the complaint's procedure will apply.
- **Both the Chair of Governors and Vice Chair of Governors** - The complaint will be referred to the Clerk to the Governing Body who will inform the Chair of the Complaints Committee. Stage C of the complaint's procedure will then apply
- **The whole Governing Body**- The complaint will be referred to the Clerk to the Governing Body who will inform the Headteacher, Chair of Governors, and Diocesan Director of Education. The authorities will usually agree arrangements with the Governing Body for independent investigation of the complaint.
- **The Headteacher** - The concern or complaint will be referred to the Chair of Governors who will undertake the investigation or may delegate it to another governor. Stage B onwards of the complaint's procedure will apply.

In all cases the school and Governing Body will ensure that complaints are dealt with in an unbiased, open and fair way.

Our commitment to you at Ringland Primary School

- We are committed to working effectively with our Parents/Carers to ensure that they are listened to and where complaints are made, they are resolved quickly.
- We will take your concerns and complaints seriously and, where we have made mistakes, will try to learn from them.
- If you need help to make your concerns known we will try and assist you. Advice and support can also be accessed from the Children's Commissioner for Wales.
- The Governing Body has consulted with staff and pupils on this policy and will consult further if any amendments are made in the future.

EQUALITY STATEMENT

We do not discriminate (either directly or indirectly) against anyone on the grounds of their gender, race, colour, ethnic origin, religion, ability, disability or any aspect of their social/cultural background. Furthermore, the school community is committed to countering all forms of racial prejudice and discrimination. All complaints procedures are practices designed to be free of bias, prejudice and discrimination. Please refer to our School Equalities policy for further information.

[Article 30- Your right to use your own language](#)