

Reading Girls' School



Complaints Policy

Curriculum and Collective Worship



**Business &
Enterprise**

Reviewed 2015

Introduction

The aim of our school is that all children should be successful in their experience of education and that the curriculum should meet their needs. Where parents consider that this is not the case they have the right to make a complaint

We recognise the importance of establishing and maintaining good relationships with parents, carers and the wider community. We are aware that there may be occasions where people have concerns or complaints and the following procedure sets out the steps that should be followed in order to resolve these as fairly, quickly and informally as possible.

Individual complaints WILL NOT be discussed at Governing Body meetings. If a panel of governors considers a complaint, the recommendations from the panel will be shared with the Governing Body.

Aims of the policy

- To maintain good communication and relationships between the School and persons who wish to express a concern or pursue a complaint
- To support the well-being of students, staff and everyone else who has legitimate interest in the work of the School, including governors and parents
- To provide a clear and fair procedure for the resolution of concerns or complaints

Policy status

- School governing bodies are required, under Section 29 of the Education Act 2002, to have in place a procedure for dealing with complaints.
- This procedure applies for any person, including a Governor, with a specific complaint concerning a pupil or member of staff.

Specifically, parents may complain if they consider that the school is not doing one or more of the following:

- Providing a curriculum to meet the needs of their child
- Complying with the law on charging for school activities
- Providing religious education and daily collective worship
- Providing statutory information
- Carrying out a statutory duty
- Acting reasonably

Where complaints directly implicate a member of staff the Headteacher will:

- Take all complaints seriously and deal with them sensitively
- Request that the complaint is put in writing so that it can be investigated
- Respond to the complaint personally or delegate it to an experienced member of the leadership team
- Involve other members of staff as appropriate
- Where necessary, explain the legal position with regard to the National Curriculum, and the scope available to the school to make changes
- Advise the complainant of their right to pursue the matter with the governing body
- Ensure the governing body is advised of any complaints and provided with guidance to assist the decision-making process.

The governing body will:

- Ensure that a Complaints Panel consisting of at least two governors is established with delegated responsibility to hear complaints.
- Consult with the Headteacher on how to resolve the complaint.
- Advise the Headteacher on the action/decision required
- Write to the complainant within the time frames outlined in the Complaints Policy, explaining the action taken.

Links to other policies:

- Home School Agreement
- Behaviour Policy
- Disciplinary Policy

Equality statement

At Reading Girls' School we believe that all individuals and groups should receive equal access and opportunities to develop and learn. This procedure is part of our work to ensure there is no discrimination arising from disability, ethnicity or gender.

Monitoring/evaluation arrangements

The Governing Body will receive termly reports of the number of complaints reaching the formal stages of the procedure. Individual complaints WILL NOT be discussed at Governing Body meetings. If a panel of governors considers a complaint, the recommendations from the panel will be shared with the Governing Body.

If any person, including a Governor, has a specific complaint concerning the curriculum or collective worship this procedure will apply. Complaints about other matters are dealt with under separate procedures.

Advice for parents making a complaint can be obtained from

- The Advisory Centre for Education www.ace-ed.org.uk Tel: 0207 704 3370
- Reading Borough Council's parent helpline. Tel: 0118 937 2265
- Parent Partnership (For parents of children with Special Educational Needs). Tel: 0118 9399821

1. STAGE 1 - Informal Resolution

Informal Step 1

Any complaint must first be raised in discussion with the class teacher concerned to clarify the situation and to try to reach an early mutually acceptable resolution.

Informal Step 2

If the complaint is unresolved at step 1 the complainant should ask for a meeting with the Headteacher to try to reach an early mutually acceptable resolution.

A complainant should receive a response to a complaint within five working days of receipt of the complaint at either step in stage 1.

2. STAGE 2 - Headteacher Investigation – Formal

Should the complainant be dissatisfied with the resolution proposed at stage 1 they may ask for a Headteacher Investigation of their complaint. The Head or another senior member of staff would normally conduct the investigation.

To escalate to this stage the complainant must write to the Head giving details of the complaint and the reasons why they are dissatisfied with the stage 1 resolution. The written complaint may be in the form of a letter, e-mail or on the form provided on page 4.

A complainant should receive an acknowledgement of their request for an escalation to stage 2 within 5 working days giving an indication of when the investigation will be complete and when the complainant should receive a full response. In any case the complainant should have a full response within 15 working days. In circumstances where the case is so complex that the investigation is going to take longer the complainant should be kept fully informed of progress in the case.

3. STAGE 3 - Review by the Governing Body – Formal

Should the complainant remain dissatisfied with the outcome of the Professional Investigation stage they have the right to request a review by a panel of Governors.

To escalate to this stage the complainant must write to the Chair of the Governing Body at the school address requesting the review and giving their reasons for being dissatisfied with the outcome at Stage 2. The written complaint may be in the form of a letter, e-mail or on the form provided on page 4.

The process for resolving the complaint will be shared with the complainant and a time scale no longer than 20 working days will be agreed to bring the complaint before the Governing Body complaints panel.

On receiving a review request the Chair will call a meeting of the Governing Body complaints panel comprising of no fewer than two governors to hear the complaint (see Guidance on Dealing with Complaints for a model panel procedure)

The panel will:

- dismiss the complaint in whole or in part;
- uphold the complaint in whole or in part;
- or, decide there is insufficient evidence to make a decision

The panel may also:

- recommend appropriate action to be taken to resolve the complaint;
- recommend a review of the relevant school systems or procedures to ensure that problems of a similar nature do not recur.

The decision of the Governing Body complaints panel will be final in most cases. The main exceptions are exclusions, other complaints and statutory admissions where separate procedures are available.

4. STAGE 4 - Review by the Local Authority

If a parent is unhappy with the outcome of the Governing Body review, or if the Governing Body is unable to reach a decision, the Chair of the panel may contact the Local Authority. A representative of the Local Authority will review the provision in question against statutory guidance and report findings and/or recommendations to the complainant, Headteacher and Governing Body.

If, **after exhausting all stages of the complaints procedure**, the complainant feels the school or Local Authority has acted unreasonably they **may make a complaint in writing to the Secretary of State for Education** at the Department for Education:

Department for Education, Castle View House, East Lane,
Runcorn, Cheshire WA7 2GJ or by telephoning: 0870 000 2288

P Kayes
Chair of Governors

Reading Girls' School COMPLAINT FORM (Formal)

Please complete and return to the Headteacher who will acknowledge receipt and explain what action will be taken.

Please give details of your complaint:

A large empty rectangular box with a black border, intended for the complainant to provide details of their complaint.

Your name:

Pupil's name:Year group/class:

Your relationship to the pupil:

Address:

Postcode:

Day time telephone number:

**What action, if any, have you already taken to try and resolve your complaint.
(Who did you speak to and what did they say/do)?**

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

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

Signature:

Date: