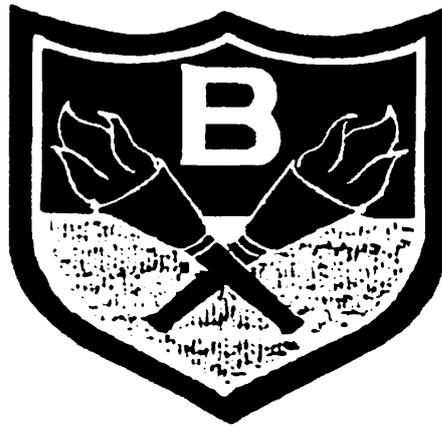


Beaconsfield Primary School



Concerns and Complaints Policy

January 2013

Date approved by governors: January 2013
Review date: January 2015

General

We value warm relationships with parents and enjoy working with you to enable your child to reach their full potential. We want your child to be happy and safe at Beaconsfield Primary School. We welcome suggestions for improving our work in school. Be assured that, no matter what you want to tell us, our support and respect for your child will not be affected in any way.

Please tell us of your concern as soon as possible. It is difficult for us to investigate an incident or problem properly if it took place some time ago. We do appreciate the assistance we receive from parents in addressing any problems that arise.

We receive very few concerns/ complaints however we recognise that sometimes things may not go as we would all wish and you may feel that we have fallen short of our high standards; be dissatisfied or require clarification of school matters.

Most issues can be solved quickly and easily, when and if, they arise and we ask you to follow the four steps detailed below.

Step 1 – Talk to the Teacher

The first thing to do is to talk to the teacher involved. You will need to make an appointment at the School Office to do this, especially if the concern/ complaint is complicated or likely to take a while to resolve. Please do not try to see the teacher at the morning line or during the school day as they will be teaching at this time. The vast majority of concerns will be satisfactorily dealt with at this stage. However, if you are not satisfied with the result at Step 1, please write or call the school with 10 school working days and state what you would like the school to do. The school will then look at your concern/ complaint at the next step.

Step 2 – Concern/ Complaint heard by the Assistant Head Teacher or Deputy Head Teacher

This should only happen if Step 1 has been completed or if the issue is particularly serious or urgent. Your concern/ complaint should be put in writing and addressed to the Assistant Head Teacher or the Deputy Head Teacher. The school office logs the receipt of your concern/ complaint, including the date it was received. This would normally happen within 3 working days. In many cases this response will also report on the actions that the school has taken to resolve the issue. Alternatively, a meeting will be arranged for you to see the Assistant Head Teacher or the Deputy Head Teacher within 10 school working days. The aim is to resolve the matter as speedily as possible. Afterwards the school will write to you saying what it has decided. We hope that the decision will satisfy you, but if not you can go to Step 3. Please write to the school within 10 school working days stating why you are still not satisfied and what you would like the school to do.

Step 3 – Concern/ Complaint heard by the Head Teacher

This should only happen if the matter has not been resolved at step 2, unless the issue is particularly serious or urgent. Your concern/ complaint should be put in writing and addressed to the Head Teacher. The school office logs the receipt of your concern/ complaint, including the date it was received. This would normally happen within 3 working days. The head teacher will undertake additional investigations and/ or convene a meeting with 10 school working days. The aim is to resolve the matter. Afterwards the school will write to you saying what it has decided. We hope that the decision will satisfy you, but if not you can go to Step 4. Please write to the school within 10 school working days stating why you are still not satisfied and what you would like the school to do.

Step 4 – Go to the Governors

If the matter has not been resolved at step 3, then you should write to the 'Chair of the Governing Body' at the school address giving the details of your complaint / concerns, explaining your reasons for pursuing it beyond the Head Teacher's response and enclosing copies of any paperwork or documents. You may use the attached form if you prefer. The Governors will either respond in writing to your concern/ complaint or they may arrange a meeting of the Governing Body Complaints Appeal Panel with at least three of the Governors within 10 school working days.

The aim on 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 5 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. **The Governors Appeal Hearing is the last school-based step of the complaints process.**

Step 5 – Complaint to Secretary of State for Education

If the matter has not been resolved at step 4 and you believe the governing body has acted unreasonably or is failing to carry out its statutory duties properly, then you should write to the Secretary of State for Education giving full details of your concerns and the reasons why the complaint is being submitted. You should enclose all previous correspondence relevant to the complaint. This information should be sent to the Department for Education.

Vexatious Complaints

In rare circumstances a complainant might, having exhausted the complaints procedure, persist with the complaint.

- Complaints become vexatious when they are:
- repeatedly and obsessively pursued; or
- unreasonable or seeking unrealistic outcomes; or
- reasonable but pursued in an unreasonable manner.

Governors may need to decide whether all future contacts should be:

- directed to, and only be dealt with, a named individual restricted, for example, to letter only.

If a conclusion has been reached about a complaint but the complainant continues to pursue it, the school may consider writing:

- to reiterate that the matter is concluded and there will be no further correspondence
- to say that, if correspondence continues, it will be read and filed but will receive no acknowledgment
- to give a short response referring to previous documents that have already dealt with the matter.

Abusive Complaints

Verbal aggression can be as intimidating as physical aggression. All parties have a right to be treated courteously and with respect. If staff feel threatened, they should report their fears to the Head Teacher who will consider:

- writing to the complainant requesting that the behaviour cease
- setting restrictions for further contact with staff
- reporting the incident to the police.

If a telephone caller becomes aggressive or offensive, the person taking the call should explain that they will end the call if the behaviour persists. If they need to hang up, they should record this action and any further incidents.

Repeated abusive or aggressive contacts can be considered as harassment and Head Teachers will need to consider reporting them to police.

Anonymous Complaints

Generally, schools should not respond to anonymous complaints, nevertheless, the Head Teacher or Chair of Governors will need to consider whether:

- the issue and the fear of identification are genuine
- the issue is one of child protection.

If you would like to report an issue, please contact the school.

Monitoring of Complaints

Formal complaints requiring investigations which reach the stage of the deputy head teacher or head teacher are reported to the governing body on a termly basis. This reporting includes:

- i. details of the complaint
- ii. how complaint was dealt with
- iii. resolution of complaint

Step _____ Formal Concern Form

Name:	
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Address:	
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Telephone:	
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What concern do you wish to raise?

Have you spoken to the Class Teacher?	YES	NO
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When did you do this?	Date:
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What happened when you spoke to the Class Teacher?

Have you spoken to the Deputy Head Teacher (or Assistant Head Teacher)?	YES	NO
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When did you do this?	Date:
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What happened when you spoke to the Deputy Head Teacher (or Assistant)?

What would you like us to do to put things right?

Signed	
Date	

Please return this form to the Head Teacher (Step 3) or Chair of Governors (Step 4) ,
c/o Beaconsfield Primary School
Beaconsfield Road
Southall UB1 1DR