



## *Complaints Policy*

**THIS POLICY IS TO BE READ IN CONJUNCTION WITH THE SAFEGUARDING AND CHILD PROTECTION POLICIES AVAILABLE ON THE SCHOOL WEBSITE**

Ellwood School is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and young people, and expects all staff, and volunteers, to share the same commitment.

### **School Complaints Procedure**

#### **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, the school will not consider any complaint that was raised more than 3 months after the event.

#### **Raising a concern or complaint**

##### **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. If your complaint is linked to a SEND concern, please speak to the class teacher, SENco or Headteacher.

In the case of serious concerns, it may be appropriate to address them directly to the Head Teacher - Mrs Milford (or to the Chair of the Governing Body - Helen Cornock if the complaint is about the Head Teacher).

If you are uncertain about whom to contact, please seek advice from the school office or the Clerk to the Governing Body - Mrs Jennifer Lewis.

##### **Formal Stage**

If your concern 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 - Jennifer Lewis, for the attention of the Chair of Governors (Helen Cornock), if the complaint is about the Head Teacher) who will be responsible for ensuring that it is investigated appropriately. If it is a SEND concern that remains unresolved, then contact SENDIASS (Special Educational Needs and Disability Information and Support Service) 0800 158 3603. This is a free service which supports the parents of children with SEND.

You should include details that might help 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 about what you hope might reasonably contribute to a resolution of the problem at this stage. Without this, it is much more difficult to proceed.

The Head Teacher (or Chair - Helen Cornock) may invite you to a meeting to discuss your complaint and to seek a resolution. If you accept that invitation, a friend may accompany you if you wish to help you in explaining the nature of your complaint.

It is possible that your complaint will be resolved through a meeting with the Head Teacher (or Chair -Helen Cornock). If the complaint is not resolved, arrangements will be made for the matter to be referred formally to the Chair of Governors. In any case, you should learn in writing, usually within 5 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.

The Chair of Governors may invite you to a further meeting to discuss your complaint and to seek a resolution. Again, if you accept that invitation, a friend may accompany you to help you explain the nature of your complaint. In any case, you should learn in writing, usually within 5 working days of the Chair of Governors receiving your formal complaint, of the outcome.

If you are not satisfied with the way in which the process has been followed, you can request that the governing body reviews the process followed by the school in handling the complaint. You must make this request 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. *(See Appendix 1)*

### **Review Process**

A panel of three members of the governing body will conduct any review of the process followed by the school. This will usually take place within 10 school days of receipt of your request.

The governors on the review panel will normally consider written submissions, but will sympathetically consider any reasonable requests to make oral representations. The panel will first receive written evidence from the complainant of perceived failures to follow the procedure.

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 representatives, will be informed in writing of the outcome, usually within 5 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 Education.

## **MONITORING AND REVIEW**

This policy was drawn up following consultation with the whole staff.

Its implementation is seen as the responsibility of all staff. Its use and effectiveness will be supported and monitored by the Head Teacher and the Governors.

Signed: Donna Milford  
Head teacher.

Reviewed: January 2019

This policy is scheduled for review in 12 months time.

## Appendix 1



### Complaints Procedure Form

If you have tried unsuccessfully to resolve your complaint and wish to take the matter further, please complete this form and send it to the Head Teacher (Mrs Milford). If the complaint is against the Head Teacher you will need to send the attached form to the Chair of Governors (Mrs Helen Cornock).

Name:	Address:
Pupil's name:	
Pupil's date of birth:	
Daytime telephone number:	
Evening Telephone number:	
Email:	Postcode:
What is your complaint concerning and what action would you like the Head Teacher to take?	
When did you discuss your concern/complaint with the appropriate member of staff?	
What was the result of the discussion?	
Signed:	Date: