

# Endon Hall Primary & Nursery School

'Learning together and having fun'



## Compliments and Complaints Policy

**Policy in place:** Jan 2013

**Policy updated:** March 2018

**Review date:** March 2019

We believe that Endon Hall Primary & Nursery School provides an excellent education and that school staff work very hard to build positive relationships and have in place clear lines of communication with all parents and others. In so doing, complaints are kept to a minimum.

We would like to hear from you if you:

- are happy with the service we provide and would like to compliment the school staff and/or its children
- have any suggestions about how the school can improve the quality of its provision
- have a concern or complaint

### Expressing Approval

When things go well, it is very rewarding if parents express their approval. Positive feedback really helps. Maintenance of high levels of staff commitment, morale and motivation are so important in enabling us to make the very best provision for our children.

To express your approval you can write, telephone, e-mail or speak personally to school staff and/or the Headteacher. These will be added to our Compliments Book, which is held in the school office. Your words will be much appreciated. If you wish to note your expressions of thanks or approval in this way, please visit the school office.

### Raising a concern or complaint

We take any complaints seriously and deal with them professionally and impartially, following set procedures. This policy outlines the general principles and procedures in place should parents or others wish to raise a concern or make a complaint relating to the school or the services that it provides.

### Aims of this policy

Endon Hall Primary & Nursery School aims to meet its statutory obligations when responding to complaints from parents of children at the school, and others.

When responding to complaints, we aim to:

- Be impartial and non-adversarial
- Facilitate a full and fair investigation by an independent person or panel, where necessary
- Address all the points at issue and provide an effective and prompt response
- Respect complainants' desire for confidentiality
- Treat complainants with respect; we expect the same in return
- Keep complainants informed of the progress of the complaints process
- Consider how the complaint can feed into school improvement evaluation processes

We try to resolve concerns or complaints by informal means wherever possible. Where this is not possible, formal procedures will be followed.

## Legislation and guidance

This document meets the requirements of Section 29 of the Education Act 2002, which states that schools must have and make available a procedure to deal with all complaints relating to their school and to any community facilities or services that the school provides.

It is also based on guidance for schools on complaints procedures from the Department for Education (DfE).

In addition, it addresses duties set out in the Early Years Foundation Stage statutory framework with regards to dealing with complaints about the school's fulfilment of Early Years Foundation Stage requirements.

## Definitions and scope

The DfE guidance explains the difference between a concern and a complaint.

A **concern** is defined as "an expression of worry or doubt over an issue considered to be important for which reassurances are sought".

The school will resolve concerns through day-to-day communication as far as possible.

A **complaint** is defined as "an expression of dissatisfaction however made, about actions taken or a lack of action".

The school intends to resolve complaints informally where possible, at the earliest possible stage. There may be occasions when complainants would like to raise their concerns formally. This policy outlines the procedures relating to handling such complaints.

This policy does not cover complaints procedures relating to:

- Admissions
- Statutory assessments of special educational needs (SEN)
- Safeguarding matters
- Exclusion
- Whistle-blowing
- Staff grievances
- Staff discipline

Please see our separate policies for procedures relating to these types of complaint.

Arrangements for handling complaints from parents of children with SEND about the school's support are within the scope of this policy. Such complaints should be made to the Special Educational Needs Coordinator (Mrs G Fairhall) or the Headteacher (Miss V Lewis), who will intend to resolve any such complaints informally, where possible, and at the earliest possible stage. They will then be referred to this complaints policy. Our SEND & Inclusion Policy and SEND information report include further relevant information.

Complaints about services provided by other providers who use school premises or facilities should be directed to the provider concerned.

## General Principles

- An anonymous concern or complaint will not be investigated under this procedure, unless there are exceptional circumstances.
- Endon Hall Primary & Nursery School will utilise the school's internal 'Complaints Guidance' document when handling concerns or complaints.

When investigating a complaint, we will try to clarify:

- What has happened
- Who was involved
- What the complainant feels would put things right

We intend to address complaints as quickly as possible. To achieve this, realistic and reasonable time limits are set for each action within each stage. Where further investigations are necessary, new time limits will be set, and the complainant will be sent details of the new deadline with an explanation for the delay.

The school expects that complaints will be made as soon as possible after an incident arises and no later than 3 months afterwards. We will consider exceptions to this time frame in circumstances where there were valid reasons for not making a complaint at that time and the complaint can still be investigated in a fair manner for all involved.

### **Complaints about our fulfilment of Early Years' requirements**

We will investigate all written complaints relating to the school's fulfilment of the Early Years Foundation Stage requirements, and notify the complainant of the outcome within 28 days of receiving the complaint. The school will keep a record of the complaint (see Section 9) and make this available to Ofsted on request.

Parents and carers can notify Ofsted if they believe that the school is not meeting Early Years Foundation Stage requirements, by calling 0300 123 4234 or 0300 123 4666, or by emailing [enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk](mailto:enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk). An online contact form is also available at <https://www.gov.uk/government/organisations/ofsted#org-contacts>.

We will notify parents and carers if we become aware that the school is to be inspected by Ofsted. We will also supply a copy of the inspection report to parents and carers of children attending the setting on a regular basis.

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

#### **Informal Stage**

##### **1. Verbal**

Many concerns or complaints can be resolved by simple clarification or provision of information and it is anticipated that most concerns and complaints will be resolved at this informal stage.

It is normally appropriate to communicate your concern or complaint directly to the relevant member of staff. In the first instance this should be by telephone or in person, as we have found that this is the most effective way to resolve concerns or complaints. Please contact the office to arrange a mutually convenient time for a telephone conversation to be held. Details of what you wish to discuss will be required in advance.

Following this, if a further discussion were required, a meeting can be requested by contacting the school office. In advance of any such meetings, a summary of the concern should be provided, by completing and submitting the 'Concern Meeting Request' form 1 (see appendix). Completed forms should be passed, in a sealed envelope, to the school office, in advance of the meeting. The envelope should be addressed to the member of staff and marked CONFIDENTIAL. Receipt of a completed 'Concern Meeting Request' form will be acknowledged within 3\* working days (term time). Following acknowledgement, a further discussion/meeting will be arranged within 5\* working days (term time).

*\* Where these timescales cannot be met this will be communicated, with an explanation and an indication of when the timescale will be met.*

If initial contact is made via e-mail, it will be directed to the relevant member of staff, who will make contact with you to discuss it via telephone.

If you are uncertain who to contact about your concern or complaint, please seek advice from the school office or the Clerk to the Governing Board.

##### **2. Written**

If you have already communicated your concern or complaint to a relevant member of staff, but remain concerned, it may be appropriate to raise your concern or complaint directly with the Headteacher, who will be responsible for ensuring that it is investigated appropriately.

Initially, this would also be by telephone. Following this, if a further discussion were required, a meeting can be requested by contacting the school office. In advance of any such meetings, a summary of the concern should be provided, either by completing and submitting the 'Concern Meeting Request' form 1 (if this has not already been completed at the verbal stage) or, if this has already been completed, by completing and submitting 'Concern Meeting Request' form 2 (see appendix). Completed forms should be passed, in a sealed envelope, to the school office, in advance of the meeting. The envelope should be addressed to the Headteacher and marked CONFIDENTIAL. Again, receipt of a completed form (whether it be Form 1 or Form 2) will be acknowledged within 3\* working days (term time). Following acknowledgement, a further discussion/meeting will be arranged within 5\* working days (term time).

*\* Where these timescales cannot be met this will be communicated, with an explanation and an indication of when the timescale will be met.*

## **Concerns or complaints about the Headteacher**

If the concern or complaint is about the Headteacher, it should be recorded and passed to the Clerk to the Governing Board (Mrs M Martin), for the attention of the Chair of the Governing Board (Mr D Higgins). The 'Concern Meeting Request' form 1 (see appendix) is provided to assist you. Completed forms should be passed, in a sealed envelope, to the school office. The envelope should be addressed to the Clerk of the Governing Board or the Chair of the Governing Board (as appropriate) and marked CONFIDENTIAL.

## **Formal stage**

There are two parts to the Formal Stage.

1. If a concern raised at the informal stage (either verbal or written) requires further/full investigation.  
This would be supported by completion of the Concern Form 2 (see appendix), if this has not already been completed and submitted earlier in the process.
2. If, following a full/further investigation at Formal Stage 1, the person raising the concern is not satisfied with the process that has been followed.  
This would be supported by completion of the Review Request Form 3 (see appendix).

**Formal Stage 1:** If a concern or complaint raised at the informal stage requires further/full investigation.

If a concern or complaint is not resolved at the informal stage and/or requires further/full investigation, a Concern Form 2 (see appendix) should be completed (if not already completed previously) or updated and re-submitted (if completed previously). The completed form should be passed, in a sealed envelope, to the Headteacher. The envelope should be addressed to the Headteacher and marked CONFIDENTIAL.

Receipt of the completed form will be acknowledged within 3\* working days (term time). Following acknowledgement, the nature of the investigation required will be decided and the complainant will be updated in writing within 10\* working days (term time). The correspondence will include an indication of the timescale for the investigation and/or response.

*\* Where these timescales cannot be met this will be communicated, with an explanation and an indication of when the timescale will be met.*

The investigation will begin as soon as possible. Once concluded, the complainant will be informed in writing of its conclusion. Standard practice\*\*, if an Investigation Team / Lead Investigating Officer are required, is to offer to meet with the complainant(s) at the start of the investigation process in order to clarify the exact nature of the complaint in detail (in writing). Impartiality will be evident in the form of records kept, outlining what factors were taken into account when making the decision as to who should investigate.

*\*\* There may be occasions when 'standard practice' does not apply, for example, cases which have already taken a substantial period of protracted debate at previous stages, concerns or complaints for which there is evidence that it could progress e.g. via litigation or disciplinary processes. In such instances, the reason for that decision will be documented. All involved with the investigation will remain impartial throughout the process. All personnel involved with the investigation will adhere to confidentiality throughout the process.*

If at any point during the investigation process new complaints or concerns are highlighted, or the original complaint changes significantly, a new investigation process will commence. This will be agreed via a discussion between the Chair of

the Panel, the Chair of the Governing Board and the Governor appointed as the Independent Investigating Officer. Should the confirmed complaint differ from the original complaint already investigated, the matter will be formally referred back to the school for investigation before the panel considers it.

If at any point during the entire complaints process, including the Panel process, information is provided by the complainant that could be considered as a serious allegation to be handled via the Disciplinary Policy or a potential legal matter, the process will be put on hold and external HR or legal advice will be obtained.

**Formal Stage 2:** If, following a full/further investigation at Formal Stage 1, the person raising the concern is not satisfied with the process that has been followed.

If you are not satisfied with the manner in which the complaints process has been followed, you may request that the Governing Board reviews the process followed by the school, in handling the complaint. Any such request must be made in writing to the Clerk to the Governing Board 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 then be followed. A 'Review Request Form' 3 (see appendix) is provided to assist you. The completed form should be passed to the school office, in a sealed envelope, marked for the attention of the Clerk to the Governing Board and CONFIDENTIAL. Receipt of a completed Form 3 will be acknowledged within 3\* working days (term time). Following acknowledgement, the complainant will be updated in writing within 10\* working days (term time).

*\* Where these timescales cannot be met this will be communicated, with an explanation and an indication of when the timescale will be met.*

## **Review Process**

Any review of the process followed by the school will be conducted by a panel of three members of the Governing Board who are impartial to the situation.

The review will normally be conducted through a consideration of written submissions, but reasonable requests to make oral representations should be considered.

## **Reporting**

All formal complaints will be reported anonymously to the Governing Board as part of the Headteacher's report. Any further detail necessary to be reported to the Governing Board will be reported within the confidential section of the meeting. This will include, where applicable, any trends, actions and/or learning points.

## **Responsibility for the Policy and Procedure**

### **Role of the Board of Governors:**

The Board of Governors has:

- a duty to have in place a complaints procedure
- delegated powers and responsibilities to the Headteacher to ensure all school personnel and visitors to the school are aware of and comply with this policy
- responsibility for receiving an update of compliments, comments, and complaints at each meeting of the Governing Board
- to put in place a self-evaluation process to monitor the way complaints are dealt with
- responsibility of taking into account any local or national decisions that affect the process, and making any modifications necessary to this policy
- responsibility for ensuring that the school complies with all equalities legislation
- responsibility for reviewing this and relevant policies and procedures to ensure the clear scope of the documents is apparent i.e. whether the policies apply to staff or children
- responsibility for ensuring policies are available to parents
- make effective use of relevant research and information to improve this policy
- responsibility for the effective implementation, monitoring and evaluation of this policy

## **Role of the Headteacher:**

The Headteacher will:

- log complaints received by the school and how they were resolved
- have responsibility for providing an update of compliments, comments, and complaints at each meeting of the Governing Board
- ensure all school staff, children and parents are aware and comply with this policy
- make effective use of relevant research and information to improve this policy
- monitor the effectiveness of this policy
- report to the Board of Governors on the success and development of this policy

## **Raising Awareness of this Policy**

We will raise awareness of this policy via:

- the school's website
- Staff induction
- meetings with parents
- meetings with school personnel

At any point in the application of this policy, where the process is compromised by the way in which complaints are addressed, our Vexatious Complaints Policy may be used in conjunction.

## **Learning lessons**

The Governing Board will review any underlying issues raised by complaints with the Headteacher, where appropriate, and respecting confidentiality, to determine whether there are any improvements that the school can make to its procedures or practice to help prevent similar events in the future.

## **Monitoring arrangements**

The Governing Board will monitor the effectiveness of the complaints procedure in ensuring that complaints are handled appropriately. The number and nature of complaints will be tracked and underlying issues reviewed.

**ENDON HALL PRIMARY & NURSERY SCHOOL – CONCERN / COMPLAINT DISCUSSION / MEETING REQUEST FORM (1)**

Please complete this form and return it to the relevant person.

**Brief details to be discussed:**

**Dates / times when it would be most convenient for a discussion / meeting:**

**How do you feel the problem may be resolved at this stage?**

**Please complete this form and return to the school office.**

**Your Name:**

**Relationship with school** (e.g. parent of a child on the school roll):

**Child's name** (if relevant to the matter to be discussed):

**Your Address:**

**Telephone Numbers:-**

**Day:**

**Evening:**

**E-mail address:**

**Signed:**

**Date:**

---

**School use:**

Date form received:

Date response sent:

Received by:

Response sent by:

**ENDON HALL PRIMARY & NURSERY SCHOOL – CONCERN/COMPLAINT FORM (2)**

Please complete this form and return it to the relevant person.

**Your name:**

**Relationship with school** (e.g. parent of a child on the school roll):

**Child's name** (if relevant to the matter to be discussed):

**Your Address:**

**Telephone Numbers:-**

**Day:**

**Evening:**

**E-mail address:**

**Signed:**

**Date:**

**Please give details of your concise complaint, (including which staff member/s have already been made aware of and attempted to resolve your concern) to allow the matter to be further/fully investigated:**

**You may continue on a separate paper, or attach additional documents, if you wish.**

**Number of additional pages attached =**



**What action, if any, have you already taken to resolve your complaint?** (i.e. who have you spoken with or written to and what was the outcome?)

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

**School Use:-**

**Date form received:**

**Received by:**

**Date acknowledgement sent:**

**Acknowledgement sent by:**

<b>Concern referred to:</b>			
<b>Date:</b>			

**ENDON HALL PRIMARY & NURSERY SCHOOL – CONCERN/COMPLAINT REVIEW REQUEST FORM (3)**

Please complete this form and return it to the relevant person.

**Your name:**

**Your Address:**

**Relationship with school** (e.g. parent of a child on the school roll):

**Child's name** (if relevant to the matter to be discussed):

**Telephone Numbers:-**

**Day:**

**Evening:**

**E-mail address:**

**Signed:**

**Date:**

Dear

I submitted a formal complaint to the school on ..... and am dissatisfied by the procedure that has been followed.

My complaint was submitted to ..... and I received a response on .....

I have attached copies of my formal complaint and response(s) from the school.

I am dissatisfied with the way in which the procedure was carried out, because:

**You may continue on separate paper, or attach additional documents, if you wish.**

**Number of additional pages attached =**

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

**School Use:-**

**Date Form received:**

**Received by:**

**Date acknowledgement sent:**

**Acknowledgement sent by:**

<b>Concern referred to:</b>			
<b>Date:</b>			