



CHURCH WALK C.E. PRIMARY SCHOOL GENERAL COMPLAINTS PROCEDURE

A STATEMENT FOR PARENTS, CARERS AND OTHER USERS OF SCHOOL SERVICES

We very much hope that you and your child will be very happy at our school, and that any concerns that may arise are dealt with swiftly by our staff.

However, we recognise that there may be an occasion when you are not entirely happy with an aspect of the service that we provide, and that you want the school to deal with your concern through a more formal process. This leaflet sets out what the school will do if you wish to raise that concern informally, or make a formal complaint.

Who can raise a concern or make a complaint?

Anyone who uses the school, whether a pupil, a parent or carer, or a provider of a service to the school, or a visitor can use this procedure. If you wish to raise a concern or complain on someone's behalf, the school will only deal with this if the person on whose behalf you are complaining is unable to do so for themselves (for example, they are too young or they have a disability that prevents them from complaining on their own behalf).

How will my concern be handled?

Our procedure has two stages, an informal and a formal stage.

Informal Stage

If your concern is about something that a person has or has not done, for example a member of staff, a governor, or a volunteer, you should first speak to that individual. If it is about an aspect of school practice or policy, you should contact the head teacher. We want to resolve the concern as quickly as possible, but it may not be possible to arrange an immediate meeting: an appointment within a few days may be necessary.

If the matter is not resolved to your satisfaction by the staff you have contacted, then you should take your concern to the head teacher.

If you are still dissatisfied with the response from the head teacher, or your concern is about the head teacher, you should put details of your concern in writing to the chair of governors who will arrange for it to be investigated. If your concern is about the chair of governors, write instead to the clerk to the governing body. State that you are making a formal complaint and request a copy of the school's complaints procedure. **We do not accept AI generated written complaints unless previously agreed as a disability accommodation**

All letters should be sent to the school address, marked 'Confidential: For immediate attention.'

Formal Stage

The head teacher will investigate and respond to you within a set timescale. In cases of complaint about the head teacher the chair of governors (or the clerk) will ask a nominated governor to investigate and respond to you within a set timescale.

If you are still dissatisfied and wish to appeal against the outcome of the investigation, you should write to the clerk to the governing body. The governing body will arrange for a panel of three governors to review your complaint. After this review, the panel will notify you of their decision. This will include informing you that the school's procedure has been exhausted and that the matter is now closed.

There is no further right of appeal to the school against the decision, but you can write to the Director of Children's Services asking for the local authority (LA) to review the procedure followed by the school. The officer has the power to make recommendations to the school about its procedure, but not to overturn the school's decision. You should be aware that the LA will not carry out a review if you have not used the full school procedure first.

Unreasonably persistent, abusive or harassing complainants and vexatious complaints

A persistent complainant may be anyone who engages in unreasonable behaviour when making a complaint. This will include parents and carers who pursue complaints in an unreasonable manner or insist on pursuing unjustified complaints and/or unrealistic outcomes.

The school expects anyone who wishes to raise problems with the school to:

- treat all staff with courtesy and respect;
- respect the needs of pupils and staff within the school;
- recognise the time constraints under which members of staff in schools work and allow the school a reasonable time to respond to your concern;

Whilst we recognise that some concerns may relate to serious and distressing incidents, we will not accept threatening or harassing behaviour, and will take steps supported by legal action as appropriate to ensure that the school can continue its work safely and securely.

A separate leaflet details our policy on this aspect of complaints.

Further Information

Contact the school directly if you wish to see full copies of our concerns and complaints procedure.

For any complaint about the following, contact the local authority, Westmorland and Furness Council for advice and information.

- an appeal against a decision relating to the admission or exclusion of a child
- an appeal against a local authority decision about a child's special educational needs.
- the curriculum, religious education syllabus or collective worship
- an allegation of a criminal offence