



Responding to Parental Concerns Policy and Procedures

It is a school aim to forge closer links, and enhance communication, with the parents, in the interests of their children. We recognise that children will feel more secure when they receive consistent messages from both home and school. Parents' views about our school are welcomed, including the expression of any concerns. At the same time, we undertake to inform parents as soon as possible about any issues of concern to the school, so that we can gain co-operation in resolving them.

Purpose

The purpose of the policy is to

- Give clear guidance to parents on what to do if they have a concern;
- Ensure the school deals with concerns raised by parents quickly, effectively, with sensitivity and to the satisfaction of all concerned;
- Ensure Governors are involved at the appropriate point and in all cases where formal procedures have been invoked;
- Ensure Parents know where to go and what to do if, having exhausted the schools' procedures, they are still not satisfied.

How the School Will Respond to Parental Concerns:

Stage One:

Parents should discuss their concerns with their child's class teacher or Phase Leader who are usually available at the end of each school day. Experience has shown that most difficulties can be resolved satisfactorily at this informal stage. Concerns about whole school issues can be raised directly with the Headteacher. If concerns cannot be resolved straightaway, the Headteacher will keep the parent informed of the progress of the issue.

We try to sort out stage one complaints within five working days, but sometimes it will take longer. If so, we will contact you and let you know.

If the concerns are not resolved, parents can go to the next stage.

Stage Two:

Parents should contact the Headteacher and ask for an appointment to discuss the matter or, alternatively, put the concern in writing. The Headteacher will usually see parents immediately and without the need for an appointment. If that is not possible, the HT (or Deputy Head in the HT's absence) will respond at the earliest opportunity and within no more than three working days. The Headteacher will look into the issues raised and respond once the relevant facts have been established.

Stage Three:

In the unlikely event that the Headteacher has been unable to resolve the issues to the satisfaction of the parent(s), or the complaint is against the action of the Headteacher, the parent(s) should write to the Chairman of the Governing Body, c/o the school. The Chairman or a nominated Governor will acknowledge receipt of the complaint at the earliest opportunity, which will normally be within 3 working days. The Chairman or Governor will then carry out an informal investigation and report back to parents.

Stage Four: Formal complaint

Very few parental concerns reach this formal stage. However, if the parents remain dissatisfied with the outcomes and wish to take formal action, they should notify the Chairman within five weeks of receiving the outcome letter.

The parents should also write to the Governing Body via the Clerk to the Governors c/o the school stating their wish to make a formal complaint. As soon as practicable, the Governing Body will convene a small panel of governors, who have not been involved previously, to look at any unresolved issues and whether a thorough investigation has been carried out.

The Panel may, if they wish, invite the parent(s) to attend a meeting to discuss the complaint. After fully considering the complaint and the investigation, the Governors will write to the parents to inform the parent(s) of their decision.

All relevant correspondence and documentation regarding the complaint should be given to each panel member by the Clerk as soon as the composition of the panel is confirmed. If the correspondence is extensive, the Headteacher or Chairman will prepare a thorough, chronological summary for sending to Panel members as part of the full documentation.

NB: The investigation of a complaint will not deal with staff disciplinary matters. If, however, during the course of considering a complaint, it is concluded that disciplinary procedures should be initiated, the governing body will consider this as a separate action.

Final Stage:

For most complaints about a school, the decision of the Governors is the last stage of the procedure within Surrey. However, there are certain types of complaints for which another stage is open to parents. This stage refers *only* to the following aspects of school life, as defined under section 23 of the Education Reform Act 1988: Complaints about the:

- National Curriculum
- Collective worship
- Religious education
- Provision of information
- Temporary withdrawal of pupils from part or all of the National Curriculum

If the complaint relates to any of the above and the first four stages in the procedure have been completed, parents have the right of appeal to the County Council's decision-making Executive.

Monitoring Parental Concerns

The Headteacher will keep a central record of all concerns raised so that the Governors are informed about:

- The nature of complaints.
- The point at which any complaint was resolved.
- The measures adopted to resolve the complaints.

The Headteacher and Senior Staff will review this record on a regular basis to enable consideration to be given to any underlying issues that need to be addressed by the School and the Governors.

Policy Review

This Policy will be monitored and evaluated by a nominated Governor and delegated member of the Senior Leadership Team as set out in the School's Policy Framework document. The Headteacher will monitor changes to any statutory requirements and advise the Governing Body accordingly.

What Town Farm Primary Does to Avoid Concerns Arising

At Town Farm Primary we work closely with parents in order to keep them informed of all aspects of school life. We have:

- The Home School Agreement.
- Parent Consultations in the Autumn and Spring terms.
- We produce a report for parents about their child once a year, followed by an opportunity to discuss the report, if requested.
- We hold an Open Day every summer, when the children can share their work and that of their class with their parents and grandparents.
- Regular Parent Newsletters.
- Inset days where Staff and Governors address school issues.

- Meetings for the parents of children in each Reception, Year One and Year 2 class, with their class teacher early in the Autumn term, at which information is provided and questions answered.
- Meetings for parents of children joining the Nursery, in the preceding summer term, followed by home visits at the start of the autumn term.
- Meetings for parents of children joining the Reception classes, in the preceding summer term.

Linked Policies, Procedures and Guidelines


Anti-Bullying Policy, Behaviour Management Policy, Child Protection Policy, Confidentiality Policy, Health, Safety and Welfare Policy, Keeping the School Safe Surrey CC Guidelines. Local Safeguarding Children Board's (LSCB) procedures, Working with Parents Policy

This Policy was Reviewed and Updated: Sept 2013

Reviewed by the Governing Body: Sept 2013

Date of Next Review: Autumn 2015

Signed:  _____ (Head Teacher)

Signed:  _____ (Chair of Governors)