

Complaints and Disputes Policy – Parent Information

Woodbury Boston Primary School welcomes suggestions and comments from parents and takes seriously complaints and concerns that may be raised. This leaflet will show you how to use our complaints system.

A complaint will be treated as an expression of genuine dissatisfaction that needs a response.

We wish to ensure that:

- parents wishing to make a complaint know how to do so
- we respond to complaints within a reasonable time and in a courteous and efficient way
- parents realise that we listen and take complaints seriously
- we take action where appropriate.

“How should I complain?”

When you contact the school, ask to speak to administration staff, your classroom teacher or the Teaching Principal. Be as clear as possible about what is troubling you.

Members of staff will be happy to help. It may be best to start with the person most closely concerned with the issue – for example, the classroom teacher or administration staff. They may be able to sort things out quickly, with the minimum of fuss. However, you may prefer to take the matter to the Teaching Principal.

“I don’t want to complain as such, but there is something bothering me”

It is important to Woodbury Boston Primary School that you and your child are comfortable with what happens at school, and we want to hear your views and your ideas. Contact a member of staff, as described above.

“I am not sure whether to complain or not”

If as parents you have concerns, you are entitled to raise them. If in doubt, you should contact the school, as we are here to help.

“What will happen next?”

If you raise something face-to-face or by telephone, it may be possible to resolve the matter immediately and to your satisfaction.

If you have made a complaint or suggestion in writing, we will contact you within five working days, to respond to your concerns and explain how we propose to proceed.

In many circumstances, the person you contact will need to discuss the matter with a colleague and consider it further before responding. You will be given a date by which

time you will receive a response. If a detailed exploration of the issue is needed, a letter or report will be sent to you as quickly as possible. This will tell you of the outcome of your complaint. It will explain the conclusion, the reasons for it, and any action taken or proposed.

Parents need to be aware that in some cases the school will not be able to discuss the details of action taken as it would be inappropriate. For example if the action involved staff discipline.

“What happens about confidentiality?”

Your complaint or concern will be treated in a confidential manner and with respect. Knowledge of it will be limited to the Teaching Principal and those directly involved. The Chairperson of the Governing Body may also need to be informed. It is the school’s policy that complaints made by parents should not rebound adversely on their children.

We cannot entirely rule out the need to make third parties outside the school aware of the complaint and possibly also the identity of those involved. This would only be likely to happen where, for example, a child’s safety was at risk or it became necessary to refer matters to the Police. You would be fully informed.

While information relating to specific complaints will be kept confidentially on file, we would point out that anonymous complaints might not be pursued.

“What if I am not satisfied with the outcome?”

We hope that you will feel satisfied with the outcome, or at least that your concerns have been fully and fairly considered.

If you are not satisfied, the Teaching Principal will offer to refer the matter to the Chairperson of the Governing Body. Alternatively, you may wish to write directly to the Chairperson. The Chairperson will call for a full report from the Teaching Principal, and will examine matters thoroughly before responding. This may result in a satisfactory solution, but if it does not, the Chairperson will invite you to a meeting. You may wish to be supported by a friend, but legal representation would not be appropriate at this stage.

If the meeting does not bring about a resolution, the matter would be referred to the school’s Conciliation Committee or an independent arbiter. It is their task to look at the issues in an impartial and confidential manner. The Committee Convenor will invite you to a meeting. You will be asked if there any papers you would like to have circulated beforehand. As with the Chairman’s meeting, you will be invited to bring a friend with you.

The school recognises and acknowledges your entitlement to complain and we hope to work with you in the best interests of the children and young people in our care.

Parent Complaint Flow Chart

