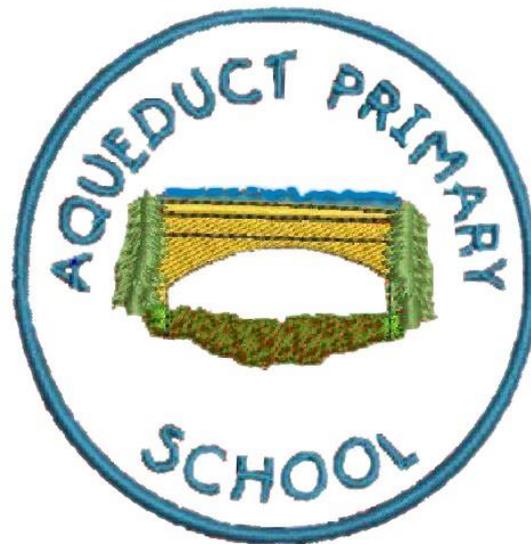


Aqueduct Primary School Complaints Policy



Chair of Governors	Christine Marsh
Discussed and Agreed by Governing Body	May 2017
Shared with all Staff	May 2017
Next Review Date	Summer 2018

Signed T. Lockley

Date

Signed I. Moreton

Date

Complaints Policy

1 Introduction

- 1.1 We believe that our school provides a good education for all our children, and that the Headteacher and other staff work very hard to build positive relationships with all parents. However, the school is obliged to have procedures in place in case there are complaints by parents. The following policy sets out the procedure that the school follows in such cases.
- 1.2 If any parent is unhappy with the education that their child is receiving, or has any concern relating to the school, we encourage that person to arrange to talk to the child's class teacher immediately.
- 1.3 We deal with all complaints in accordance with procedures set out by the DfE. If the school cannot resolve any complaint itself, those concerned can ask the LA to intervene.
- 1.4 All parents have the right, as a last resort, to appeal to the Secretary of State for Education, if they still feel that their complaint has not been properly addressed.

2 Aims and objectives

- 2.1 Our school aims to be fair, open and honest when dealing with any complaint. We give careful consideration to all complaints and deal with them as swiftly as possible. We aim to resolve any complaint through dialogue and mutual understanding and, in all cases, we put the interests of the child above all other issues. We provide sufficient opportunity for any complaint to be fully discussed, and then resolved. We have a complaints co-ordinator who is kept informed of complaints and the outcomes of them. The complaints co-ordinator can also be asked to intervene in the complaints procedure. This intervention can be sought by the complainant during the first stage of the complaints procedure. The complaints co-ordinator is Mrs J Clarke (Deputy Headteacher)

3 The complaints process

There are 4 stages to the complaints process and these are detailed below. At each stage the school will try to resolve the complaint, but at each stage it will be explained to the complainant how to escalate the complaint to the next stage should they still be unhappy with the outcome.

3.1 Stage 1 - Informal:

If a parent is concerned about anything to do with the education that we are providing at our school, they should, in the first instance, arrange to

discuss the matter with their child's class teacher. Most matters of concern can be dealt with in this way. All teachers work very hard to ensure that each child is happy at school, and is making good progress; they always want to know if there is a problem, so that they can take action before the problem seriously affects the child's progress. A complainant can ask for their complaint to be heard by the complaints co-ordinator at this point. The complainant will also be told how to escalate the complaint to the next stage should they wish to do this.

3.2 Stage 2 - Formal:

Where a parent feels that a situation has not been resolved through contact with the class teacher, or that their concern is of a sufficiently serious nature, they should complete a formal complaints form and submit this to the Headteacher along with a request for an appointment to discuss the matter further should they so wish. The formal complaints form is required in order for the Headteacher have as much information about the complaint as possible. The Headteacher considers any such complaint very seriously and investigates each case thoroughly. Most complaints are normally resolved at this stage.

The Headteacher will then investigate the complaint and write to the complainant to inform them of the outcome. This will usually be within 5 working days from receipt of the complaint. A longer time may be required where there are serious concerns that need to be investigated or for other specific reasons. In this case the Headteacher will notify the complainant if the timescale needs to be increased in writing. The complainant will also be told how to escalate the complaint to the next stage should they wish to do this.

3.3 Stage 3 - Formal:

If the complainant is still unhappy with the outcome of the investigation by the Headteacher, the complaint should then be submitted to the Chair of Governors. This complaint must be made in writing, stating the nature of the complaint and how the school has handled it so far. The parent should send this written complaint to the Chair of Governors.

The Chair of Governors will write to the complainant acknowledging receipt of the complaint within 3 days. The complaint will then be investigated by the Chair of Governors and the outcome will be made clear to the complainant, in writing, within 10 working days of receipt of the complaint. The complainant will also be told how to escalate the complaint to the next stage should they wish to do this.

3.4 Stage 4 – Formal:

Escalation to stage 4 requires that the complainant requests, in writing, that the complaint be heard by the Governors Complaints Committee. The Complaints Committee must consider all written complaints within three weeks of receipt. It arranges a meeting to discuss the complaint, and invites the person making it to attend the meeting, so that s/he can explain her complaint in more detail. The school gives the complainant at least three days' notice of the meeting.

The process to be used by the Complaints Committee will ensure that:

- They make the hearing as informal as possible.
- Witnesses are only required to attend for the part of the hearing in which they give their evidence.
- After introductions, the complainant is invited to explain their complaint, and be followed by their witnesses.
- The Headteacher may question both the complainant and the witnesses after each has spoken.
- The Headteacher is then invited to explain the school's actions and be followed by the school's witnesses.
- The complainant may question both the Headteacher and the witnesses after each has spoken.
- The panel may ask questions at any point.
- The complainant is then invited to sum up their complaint.
- The Headteacher is then invited to sum up the school's actions and response to the complaint.
- Both parties leave together while the panel decides on the issues.
- The Chair explains that both parties will be asked to return once the panel have made their decision. This will usually be within the same day and in person. The outcome of the complaint will also be given to both parties in writing by the clerk of the committee.

The governors do all they can at this stage to resolve the complaint to the parent's satisfaction.

- 3.5** If the complaint is still not resolved, a parent may make representation to the LA. Further information about this process is available from the school or from the LA. A further meeting is chaired by an independent person, who considers all the evidence and makes a further judgement in an attempt to resolve the complaint.
- 3.6** If any parent is still not content that the complaint has been dealt with properly, then s/he is entitled to appeal to the Secretary of State for Education.

4 Monitoring and review

- 4.1 The governors monitor the complaints procedure, in order to ensure that all complaints are handled properly. The Headteacher logs all complaints received by the school and records how they were resolved. Governors examine this log on an annual basis.
- 4.2 Governors take into account any local or national decisions that affect the complaints process, and make any modifications necessary to this policy. This policy is made available to all parents, so that they can be properly informed about the complaints process.

Reviewed Date: Summer 2016
Next Review: Summer Term 2018

Further information can be found by accessing the DfE complaints toolkit using the link below.

https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/489056/Best_Practice_Advice_for_School_Complaints_2016.pdf

Safeguarding

Aqueduct School is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and expects all staff and volunteers to share this commitment. This means that we have a Child Protection Policy and procedures in place which we refer to in our prospectus. All staff (including supply staff, volunteers and governors) must ensure that they are aware of these procedures. Families are welcome to read the Policy on the school website.

Our Designated Safeguard Leads (DSLs) are: Tammy Lockley, Jo Clarke, Victoria Waring and Emma Plowman.



Complaint Form

Please complete and return to Jo Clarke (complaints co-ordinator) who will acknowledge receipt and explain what action will be taken.

Your name:

Pupil's name (if relevant):

Your relationship to the pupil (if relevant):

Address:

Postcode:

Day time telephone number:

Evening telephone number:

Please give details of your complaint.

What action, if any, have you already taken to try and resolve your complaint.

(Who did you speak to and what was the response)?

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

Are you attaching paperwork? If so, please give details.

Signature:

Date:

Official use

Date acknowledgement sent:

By who:

Complaint referred to:

Date: