



# Brompton-Westbrook Primary School

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Acting Executive Head: Mrs Jane Heyes

Acting Head: Mrs Sue Mason

## **POLICY ON: Complaints (Summary for Parents)**

### **General Principles:**

- The procedure is intended to allow you to raise a concern or complaint relating to the school or the services that it provides
- An anonymous concern or complaint will not be investigated under this procedure unless there are exceptional circumstances
- To enable a proper investigation, concerns or complaints should be brought to the attention of the school as soon as possible. In general, any matter raised more than three calendar months after the event being complained of, will not be considered.

### **Raising a Concern or Complaint**

#### **Stage 1 - Informal Stage**

It is normally appropriate to communicate directly with the member of staff concerned. This may be by letter, by telephone or in person by appointment, requested via the school office. Many concerns can be resolved by simple clarification or the provision of information and it is anticipated that most complaints will be resolved by this informal stage.

In the case of serious concerns it may be appropriate to address them directly to the head teacher (or to the chair of the governing body, if the complaint is about the head teacher).

If you are uncertain about who to contact, please seek advice from the school office or the clerk to the governing body.

#### **Stage 2 - Formal 1**

If your concern or complaint is not resolved at the informal stage you may choose to put the complaint in writing and pass it to the head teacher, who will be responsible for ensuring that it is investigated appropriately. If the complaint is about the head teacher, your complaint should be passed to the clerk to the governing body, for the attention of the chair of the governing body.

A complaint form is provided to assist you. You should include details which might assist the investigation, such as names of potential witnesses, dates and times of events, and copies of relevant documents. It is very important that you include a clear statement of the actions that you would like the school to take to resolve your concern. Without this, it is much more difficult to proceed. Please pass the completed form, in a sealed envelope to the school office. The envelope should be addressed to the head teacher, or to the clerk to the governing body, as appropriate.

The head teacher (or chair) may invite you to a meeting to clarify your concerns and to explore the possibility of an informal resolution. If you accept that invitation, you may be accompanied by a companion, to assist you in explaining the nature of your concerns. It is possible that your complaint will be resolved through a meeting with the head teacher (or chair) or alternatively, the head teacher / chair of governors may decide that, because of the nature of the complaint it should be considered under a different and separate procedure.

### **Stage 3 - Formal 2**

If there is no resolution at Stages 1 and 2, a panel may be convened to look into the complaint. The panel will include at least 3 people and one member will be a person who is not employed in or associated with the school. An example of such a person might be a governor from another school. The panel will be asked to fully review the matter and if necessary, investigate further. You will be informed in good time about when the panel will convene and be invited to attend (with a companion if you wish). The panel will communicate its findings and recommendations, a copy of which will be stored in the school and given to the complainant. **These findings will be strictly confidential.**

Although panel members will be aware that, in some circumstances, the content of the complaint might be emotive, under no circumstances will they accept behaviour which is abusive, aggressive or threatening, whether that be verbal or physical. Neither will the panel continue the meeting if the complainant uses language that would be considered derogatory to minority groups e.g. racist, or homophobic. If such behaviour occurs, you will be asked to leave the meeting and risk being banned from entering the school premises for a given period. If you are asked to leave the meeting, the panel may decide to conclude the hearing without you or reconvene a meeting for another time.

### **Timescales**

All complaints will be acted upon within 5 working days and concluded within 10 working days.

### **Reviewing Complaints**

If you are not satisfied with the manner in which the process has been followed, you may request that the governing body 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 body, within 10 school days of receiving notice of the outcome, and include a statement specifying any perceived failures to follow the procedure. A Review Request form will be provided.

Any review of the process followed by the school will be conducted by a panel of 3 members of the governing body. This will usually take place within 10 school days of receipt of your request. The review will normally be conducted through a consideration of written submissions, but reasonable requests to make oral representations will be considered sympathetically.

If you are still not satisfied that the procedure has been followed correctly, you can contact the Education Funding Agency (EFA) using their Schools Complaint Form on their website. The EFA will may look at whether the complaint has been dealt with properly and will only intervene if:

- there has been undue delay
- the school did not comply with its own policy
- the school is in breach of its funding agreement
- the school has failed to comply with a legal obligation

They will NOT intervene to overturn a decision made by an academy about a complaint but if it has not been dealt with properly, they may ask for the complaint to be looked at again from the appropriate stage. If the school's complaints policy is incorrect, they EFA will ask the academy to put it right.

### **EFA Complaints Form Link**

<https://www.education.gov.uk/form/school-complaints-form>