MANAGING COMPLAINTS POLICY

This policy was agreed by governors.

Committee	Date:	Next Review Date:
Learning & Attainment	Spring 2019	Spring 2022
Learning & Attainment & FGB	Spring 2022	Spring 2023
Learning & Attainment & FGB	Spring 2023	Spring 2025
Learning & Attainment & FGB	Spring 2025	Spring 2027

Reviewed: Spring 2025
Next Review: Spring 2027

Principles

Robin Hood Junior School is committed to dealing with all complaints fairly and impartially, and to providing a high-quality service to those who complain.

There is a clear and comprehensive Complaints Procedure which is available on the website and from the School Office. It can be emailed or a hard copy printed on request.

We will deal with complainants politely and calmly; respecting their views and listening to their concerns.

We will not normally limit the contact complainants have with our school. However, we do not expect our staff to tolerate unacceptable behaviour and will take action to protect staff from that behaviour, including that which is abusive, offensive or threatening.

We will follow government guidance currently contained in: *Best practice guidance for school complaints procedures 2020 – updated January 2021* https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/school-complaints-procedures/best-practice-advice-for-school-complaints-procedures-2019

Aims

- To build and maintain positive relationships and good communication in the interests of the whole school community
- To try to resolve all concerns and complaints informally or through the use of the complaints procedure available on the school website. This procedure is in line with DFE guidance (2019).
- If this is not successful we will use this policy to ensure the smooth operation of the school and the safety and wellbeing of all members of school staff.

Practice

It is in everyone's interest that concerns and complaints are resolved at the earliest possible stage. Many issues can be resolved informally, without the need to use the formal stages of the complaints procedure. Robin Hood Junior School takes concerns seriously and will make every effort to resolve the matter as quickly as possible.

Concerns and complaints will be dealt with according to the procedure set out. We will try to communicate clearly and within the time limits contained in the procedure.

A concern may be defined as '*an expression of worry or doubt over an issue considered to be important, for which reassurances are sought'*.

A complaint may be defined as '*an expression of dissatisfaction however made, about actions taken or a lack of action*'.

Unreasonable behaviour or complaints & serial complaints

Robin Hood Junior School defines unreasonable behaviour as that which hinders our consideration of complaints because of the frequency or nature of the individual or complainant's contact with the school, such as, if the complainant:

- refuses to articulate their complaint or specify the grounds of a complaint or the outcomes sought by raising the complaint, despite offers of assistance
- refuses to co-operate with the complaints investigation process
- refuses to accept that certain issues are not within the scope of the complaints procedure
- insists on the complaint being dealt with in ways which are incompatible with the complaints procedure or with good practice
- introduces trivial or irrelevant information which they expect to be taken into account and commented on
- raises large numbers of detailed but unimportant questions, and insists they are fully answered, often immediately and to their own timescales
- makes unjustified complaints about staff who are trying to deal with the issues, and seeks to have them replaced
- changes the basis of the complaint as the investigation proceeds
- repeatedly makes the same complaint (despite previous investigations or responses concluding that the complaint is groundless or has been addressed)
- refuses to accept the findings of the investigation into that complaint where the school's complaint procedure has been fully and properly implemented and completed including referral to the Department for Education
- seeks an unrealistic outcome
- makes excessive demands on school time by frequent, lengthy and complicated contact with staff regarding the complaint in person, in writing, by email and by telephone while the complaint is being dealt with
- uses threats to intimidate
- uses abusive, offensive or discriminatory language or violence
- knowingly provides falsified information
- publishes unacceptable information on social media or other public forums.

Complainants should try to limit their communication with the school that relates to their complaint, while the complaint is being progressed. It is not helpful if repeated correspondence is sent (either by letter, phone, email or text), as it could delay the outcome being reached.

Whenever possible, the Head Teacher or Chair of Governors will discuss any concerns with the complainant informally before applying an '*unreasonable*' marking.

If the behaviour continues, the Head Teacher will write to the complainant explaining that their behaviour is unreasonable and ask them to change it. For complainants who excessively contact Robin Hood Junior School causing a significant level of disruption, we may specify methods of communication and limit the number of contacts in a communication plan. This will be reviewed after six months.

In response to any serious incident of aggression or violence, we will immediately inform the police and communicate our actions in writing. This may include barring an individual from Robin Hood Junior School.

Monitoring & Evaluation

This policy will be monitored via the Governor Committees as appropriate to the complaint or concern. Complaints and any deemed unreasonable will be reported to FGB.