



**Branscombe CE Primary School, Broadhembury CE Primary School and
Farway CE Primary School**

**Complaints Policy
(Including Complaints relating to the Curriculum)**

Responsible for review	
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Due for review: Summer	Approved by Governing body on	Head teacher signature	Chair of Governors signature
2015			
2017			
2019			

Introduction

The staff and governors of The Jubilee Federation are committed to providing a high quality education for all children in a secure and supportive environment.

Branscombe CE Primary School, Broadhembury CE Primary School and Farway CE Primary School generally have good relations with parents and the community. These good relations are based on mutual respect and the willingness to listen to other points of view. All concerned strive to achieve their best for the welfare of pupils, however, there may be occasions when there are concerns about a child's education or well being whilst at school. The purpose of the complaints procedure is to provide a framework for the governing body to adopt giving a structured opportunity for all concerned to express and resolve concerns and to improve provision.

Complaints Procedure

Outlined below is the general complaints' procedure which should be used for all complaints. This has been based around DfE guidelines. Further information, compiled by Devon County Council, is included within Appendix A.



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Any problem or concern should be raised promptly with the class teacher. If a concern is more serious it may be appropriate to make an appointment to discuss it with the headteacher. All staff will make every effort to resolve a problem promptly at this informal stage. Most concerns and potential complaints can best be resolved through informal discussion with the headteacher or relevant member of staff.

Dealing with Complaints – Initial concerns

All parties concerned need to be clear about the difference between a concern and a complaint. Taking informal concerns seriously at the earliest stage will reduce the numbers that develop into formal complaints.

The key messages within this policy deal with complaints but the underlying principle is that concerns ought to be handled, if at all possible, without the need for formal procedures. The requirement to have a complaints procedure need not in any way undermine efforts to resolve the concern informally. In most cases the class teacher or the individual delivering the service in the case of extended school provision, will receive the first approach. It would be helpful if staff were able to resolve issues on the spot, including apologising where necessary.

Stage 1 (Headteacher)

If dissatisfied with the response of the member of staff (or the headteacher if they have been involved at the informal stage) concerns may be put in writing to the headteacher as a complaint. It should be made clear if the matter is to be dealt with as a complaint. The headteacher will investigate the complaint and provide a written response. This will normally be within 10 school days of receipt of the letter, but the parent/stakeholder will be kept informed if, for example, more time is needed to complete the investigation.

If the original concern was about an action by the headteacher personally, and you have already discussed it at the informal stage, then the complaint should be put in writing to the chair of governors.

Stage 2 (Governing Body)

If a satisfactory response is still not received at the end of stage 2, the complaint can be referred to the governing body by writing to the chair or clerk to the governing body. The chair or clerk (names on school website) can be contacted via the school office. The governing body will ask a small panel of governors to investigate the complaint. This will normally be arranged within



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fifteen school days of the complaint being received, depending on the availability of all concerned. The complainant may be invited to speak to the panel at a meeting and be accompanied by a friend or representative. After the meeting they will be advised of the outcome in writing. This will normally be within 10 school days of the meeting.

If the initial complaint was in relation to the headteacher (and therefore initially the chair of governors was approached) or a specific member of the governing body, then either the chair or individual member of the governing body (whichever applicable) will not be part of the Complaint Panel.

For most complaints the decision of the governors is the last step in the procedure.

Stage 3 (Local Authority)

The Governing Body's decision will usually be final. Schools are independently managed and governed. The areas where the local authority can instruct a school to take particular action are limited however, if the complainant wishes to pursue the matter further, you can ask Devon County Council whether your complaint is one that can be heard by them. Devon County is required only to deal with complaints that concern the following:

- School Admissions
- Exclusions
- Home to School Transport
- Special Educational Needs

If the LA receives an anonymous complaint, the details will be passed to the school, but it will be at the school's discretion if this is investigated. N.B. this will not apply in relation to issues connected with Child Protection.

Stage 4 Complaints to the Secretary of State

If it is believed that the school's governing body is acting 'unreasonably' a complaint can be made in writing to the Secretary of State at the Department for Education. This should be a last resort. We would advise that, unless the school or LA has acted unreasonably or has not



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followed its own procedures, there is little further action that can be taken. This is because Governing Bodies are empowered to deal with many issues without reference to either the LA or Secretary of State.