

Kingsthorpe Grove Primary School



Complaints Policy and Procedures

Person(s) Responsible for Document: ***Alison Dolan***

Date Document Discussed and Agreed with: 10th January 2023

(a) Relevant Staff:

(b) Governor/Relevant Committee: **Standards**

Date Document Ratified at Full Governing Body: 6th February 2023

Signed:

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Tony Woods".

Committee Chair

Signed:

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Ashley".

Chair of Governors

Signed:

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "A. Dolan".

Head Teacher

Date Document to be reviewed: February 2025

Introduction

At Kingsthorpe Grove we aim to ensure that all of our policies take into account the rights of all children.

Section 29 of the 2002 Education Act requires governing bodies to establish procedures for dealing with all complaints relating to the school or the provision of facilities or services, other than “complaints which fall to be dealt with in accordance with procedures required to be established by other statutory provision”, and to publicise these procedures. Kingsthorpe Grove Primary School will review this policy every two years and will publicise the policy on its school website.

General Principles

- This 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 3 months after the event, being complained of, will not be considered.

What is not covered in this policy

Concerns or complaints relating to any of the following are not covered by these procedures, as separate procedures apply.

- Child Protection
- Freedom of Information Access
- Functions of the County Council
- Pupil Exclusions
- School Admissions
- Services provided by other organisations on the school site or through the school
- Staff grievance
- Special Educational Needs assessment and statementing procedure
- Whistleblowing by an employee
- Serious complaints or allegations relating to the abuse of children, assault, criminal or financial matters are also subject to separate procedures. **These should be raised immediately with the headteacher, or the Chair of governors if the complaint is about the conduct of the headteacher.**

Raising a concern or complaint

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 front desk.

Formal Stage

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 school front desk, for the attention of the chair of the governing body. If your complaint is about the Chair of Governors, you should address your complaint to the clerk of the governing body.

A complaint form is provided to assist you as appendix 1 at the back of this policy.

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 friend, if you wish, 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). If not, arrangements will be made for the matter to be fully investigated, using the appropriate procedure. In any case you should learn in writing, usually within 5 days of the school receiving your formal complaint, of how the school intends to proceed. This notification should include an indication of the anticipated timescale.

Any investigation will begin as soon as possible and when it has been concluded, you will be informed in writing of its conclusion.

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. The procedure described below will be followed. A review Request form is provided for your convenience (see appendix 2).

Review Process

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 should be considered sympathetically.

Reporting to Governors

Any formal complaints carried out under this policy will be reported to the governors through the termly Headteacher's Report to Governors. In reporting the headteacher, or the Chair of governors if the complaint was about the headteacher, will not mention names, but comment on the issue surrounding the complaint, how the process worked, and any amendments that the school may have made to prevent such a complaint arising in the future.

Persistent or serial complaints

Kingsthorpe Grove Primary School is committed to dealing with all complaints fairly and impartially, and to providing a high quality service to those who complain. We will not normally limit the contact complainants have with the 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.

Kingsthorpe Grove Primary School defines unreasonable complainants as *'those who, because of the frequency or nature of their contacts with the school, hinder our consideration of their or other people's complaints'*.

A complaint may be regarded as unreasonable when the person making the complaint:

- 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 while still wishing their complaint to be resolved;
- refuses to accept that certain issues are not within the scope of a complaints procedure;
- insists on the complaint being dealt with in ways which are incompatible with the adopted complaints procedure or with good practice;
- introduces trivial or irrelevant information which the complainant expects to be taken into account and commented on, or 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, complicated and stressful contact with staff regarding the complaint in person, in writing, by email and by telephone while the complaint is being dealt with.

A complaint may also be considered unreasonable if the person making the complaint does so either face-to-face, by telephone or in writing or electronically:

- maliciously;
- aggressively;
- using threats, intimidation or violence;
- using abusive, offensive or discriminatory language;
- knowing it to be false;
- using falsified information;
- publishing unacceptable information in a variety of media such as in social media websites and newspapers.

Complainants should limit the numbers of communications with a school while a 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 headteacher or Chair of Governors will discuss any concerns with the complainant informally before applying an 'unreasonable' marking.

If the behaviour continues the headteacher will write to the complainant explaining that their behaviour is unreasonable and asking them to change it. For complainants who excessively contact Kingsthorpe Grove Primary 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 usually be reviewed after 6 months.

In response to any serious incident of aggression or violence, the concerns and actions taken will be put in writing immediately and the police informed. This may include banning an individual from Kingsthorpe Grove Primary School.

Kingsthorpe Grove Primary School Formal Complaint Form

Appendix 1

Please complete this form and return it, via the school office, to the headteacher (or Clerk to the governing body), who will acknowledge its receipt and inform you of the next stage in the procedure.

Your name:	Child/ren's name/s:
Your address:	Contact information: - Daytime: - Evening: - email:
Please give concise details of your complaint. If appropriate, include dates, names of witnesses, etc to allow the matter to be fully investigated.	

What informal action have you taken already to try to resolve your complaint?	
What actions do you feel might resolve this problem at this stage?	
Signed:	Date

SCHOOL USE			
Date form received:		Received by:	
Date acknowledgement sent:		Acknowledgement sent by:	

Attach copies of acknowledgment letter, investigation notes and outcome letter.

A summary of all of this must be included in the subsequent headteacher's report to governors.

Kingsthorpe Grove Primary School Complaint Review Form

Appendix 2

Please complete this form and return it, via the school office, to the headteacher (or Clerk to the governing body), who will acknowledge its receipt and inform you of the next stage in the procedure.

Your name:	Child/ren's name/s:
Your address:	Contact information: - Daytime: - Evening: - email:

Dear Chair of Governors,

I submitted a formal complaint to the school on and am dissatisfied by the procedure that has been followed.

My complaint was submitted to and I received a response from

..... on

I have attached copies of my formal complaint and of the response(s) from the school.

I am dissatisfied with the way in which the procedure was carried out, because: ...

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

Signed:

Date

SCHOOL USE

Date form received:

Received by:

Date acknowledgement sent:

Acknowledgement sent by:

Attach copies of acknowledgment letter, investigation notes and outcome letter.

A summary of all of this must be raised in the subsequent governors meeting by the Chair of Governors.