

Lincolnshire Teaching and Learning Centre

Complaints Policy

September 2016 – review September 2017

Introduction

All maintained schools in England are required to have a procedure in place for dealing with complaints relating to the school and any community facilities or services that the school provides. There are certain complaints which fall outside of this procedure because there are established statutory or other prescribed procedures available, for example, staff grievances or disciplinary procedures; school admissions; exclusions; statutory SEN assessments; Child Protection procedures; public examinations; school reorganisation proposals.

In this school all staff are dedicated to giving all children the best possible education and caring properly for their health, safety and welfare at all times. We are committed to working closely with parents/carers and believe that school and parents/carers must work together in partnership, each carrying out our own particular responsibilities to help pupils gain the most from their time in school. We also desire to have good relations with our neighbours and the wider community.

If you feel that something is not going quite as you would like, that we are doing something that you are unhappy with, or not doing something that you feel we should, please tell us about it.

The First Step – Informal

Please arrange to discuss any concerns with your child's class teacher, or with the particular teacher concerned. We hope that most problems can be sorted out this way. If you are not the parent/carer of a child at our school, please start at the second step and make contact with the Principal to discuss your concerns.

The Second Step – Informal

If, after speaking to your child's teacher, and having allowed sufficient time to deal with the issue, you do not feel that your concern has been properly dealt with, or if your concern is about the conduct of a particular teacher, then you should discuss the matter with that teacher's manager. In our school this is the Principal. In almost all cases we can sort things out satisfactorily in this way.

The Third Step - Formal

If your attempts to resolve the matter informally have not been successful, you should make a formal written complaint to the Principal, unless the complaint is about the conduct of the Principal. If your complaint is about the conduct of the Principal, you should make a formal written complaint to the Chair of IEB, addressing your envelope to the Clerk to IEB, care of the school's address. If for some reason you do not feel able to put your complaint in writing, please contact the school office to arrange an alternative means of capturing your complaint.

You will receive an acknowledgement from the Principal (or Chair of IEB if your complaint is about the Principal) within five school working days. The acknowledgement letter will also indicate the date by which you can expect to receive the written response to your formal complaint letter. This will normally be within ten school working days from the date of the acknowledgement letter

Taking Matters Further – IEB members’ Review

If you are dissatisfied with the Principal’s response to your formal complaint letter, or if your complaint is about the conduct of the Principal and you are dissatisfied with the Chair's written response, then you will need to contact the Clerk to IEB who will convene the IEB members’ Complaints Committee.

You should send written details of your complaint, with any correspondence and evidence to support your complaint, to the Clerk to the IEB at the school address. If, for some reason, you do not feel able to do so, you should contact the Clerk, via the school, who will record your complaint as a statement for you to sign.

The Clerk to IEB will write to acknowledge receipt of your complaint within five school working days. The acknowledgement letter will explain the process which is to be followed and the expected timescale for that process.

Where your complaint is considered under written representations, this process may take up to twenty-eight school working days to allow for the collection of representations and evidence. The IEB members' Complaints Committee will consider your complaint and write to advise you of the outcome within the timescale provided by the Clerk to the IEB.

Complaints Against Individual IEB members

For complaints against the Chair of IEB, or any other individual IEB member, you should send written details of your complaint, with any correspondence and evidence to support your complaint, to the Clerk to the IEB at the school address. If, for some reason, you do not feel able to do so, you should contact the Clerk, via the school, who will record your complaint as a statement for you to sign.

The Clerk to IEB will acknowledge receipt of your complaint and initiate the correct process. The Chair of IEB will consider complaints against an individual IEB member and the Vice Chair will consider complaints against the Chair of IEB.

The appropriate IEB member will consider your complaint and write to advise you of the outcome within ten school working days. There will be no further internal right of appeal, for complaints against individual IEB members.

Complaint Procedure Timescales

We will use our best endeavours to address complaints in a timely and efficient manner; however, there will be times when timescales may need to be adjusted. If, at any stage of the process, we believe we are unable to meet the timescales which have been provided to you, the Clerk will contact you to explain the reasons for any delay and to provide you with a new timescale for the conclusion of that part of the process.

External Appeal

The decision of the IEB members' Complaints Committee is normally final; however, if you are dissatisfied with their response, you may be able to take your complaint to an external body.

For certain complaints about schools maintained by the Local Authority, complainants can write to the Secretary of State for Education.

You must do this in writing, either by post to:

School Complaints Unit
Department for Education
2nd Floor,
Piccadilly Gate
Manchester
M1 2WD

Or, by using the online School Complaints form. This can be accessed at:
<https://www.gov.uk/complain-about-school>

You should be aware that the School Complaints Unit (SCU) will usually only consider a complaint once the school's internal processes have been exhausted. The SCU will examine whether the complaints policy and any other relevant policies were followed in accordance with the provisions set out. The SCU will also examine whether the school's policies adhere to education legislation. The SCU will not usually re-investigate the substance of the complaint.

Please note that, unless your complaint is about the IEB's response or lack of response, your complaint will generally have to be considered first by the IEB of the school.

Implementation:

This policy will be reviewed annually and presented to the Full IEB for adoption. It will be reviewed earlier if required by legislation or new DfE guidance.

Adopted by the IEB.

Chair of IEB Date.....

Executive Principal Date