

Ruskin Infant School and Nursery
Complaints Policy and guide for Parents/Carers Sept 2019

Sharing your concerns about your child's education

Ruskin Infant School and Nursery recognises that at times things may not be going as well as they should be. This guidance will help you understand how to resolve concerns you may have about your child's education.

Principles informing our complaints procedure:

- be well publicised and easily accessible
- be simple to understand and use
- be impartial
- be non-adversarial

The school has procedures for dealing with concerns or complaints and we value any feedback about our services, including compliments and suggestions. If you are concerned about any aspect of your child's education, you should contact the Head teacher at the school.

The school's governing body has overall responsibility for the school and for ensuring the well-being of pupils and that all pupils receive an appropriate and high standard of education.

The Head teacher is responsible for making decisions on a daily basis about the school's internal management and organisation. So you should contact the school if you are concerned about an issue such as:

- your child's academic progress
- special education needs provision
- your child's welfare
- bullying
- something that has happened in school;

How do I complain to the school?

First, we hope you will speak to the relevant member of staff as soon as you have a concern. This will be the class teacher (primary).

This informal approach is nearly always the quickest and most effective way of resolving your concerns.

If you feel that your concern has not been resolved, then it is important to speak to or write to the Head teacher who will look into your concern.

If you are unhappy with the Head teacher's response you should write with your complaint to the Chair of Governors/Clerk to the Governing Board at the school address. Mark your envelope 'FOR IMMEDIATE ATTENTION' – Private and Confidential.

This is how your written complaint will be handled

Within 5 working days the Chair of Governors will clarify the nature of your complaint by asking you to complete a complaint form and will offer help in completing the form, if appropriate.

Within 5 working days of receiving the form the Chair will decide whether mediation should be offered to help you and the Head teacher explore possible resolution.

Mediation can be a good way to resolve a complaint because:

- It gives both complainant and Head teacher another opportunity to hear each other's points of view (with a third party facilitating)
- It gives the third party an opportunity to help Head teacher and complainant explore and build on areas of agreement
- It gives Head teacher and complainant a structure within which they can resolve remaining differences.
- If both complainant and Head teacher emerge from the mediation satisfied, that is the best foundation for a continuing positive relationship between them.
- Even if the complaint continues to a governors' panel, the issues to be considered should be much clearer.

If mediation is agreed, the Chair of Governors will endeavour to set up the meeting **within 10 working days**. If that timescale is not possible you will be told the reason.

If mediation is not deemed appropriate or if it is not successful, the Chair of Governors or Clerk will set up a panel of governors to meet **within 15 working days** of receipt of complaint form to consider your complaint. The Clerk will provide details of the hearing and will request any further information you may wish to provide.

The complaints panel will consist of three governors who (as far as possible) will have no prior knowledge of the events being complained of. The panel will be supported by a Clerk who will take notes during the hearing and will stay with the panel while they make their decision in case governors need to be reminded about responses to a particular question. The panel will hear the complaint impartially and make their decision based on the facts and the evidence they have been provided with.

Five working days before the hearing the Clerk will send to you, the complainant, the Head teacher and the three panel members, copies of all papers submitted by both sides so that there is sufficient time to read the evidence before the hearing (which must be submitted to the Clerk seven days before the hearing).

At the hearing:

1. You and the Head teacher will be invited into the room where the panel is being held at the same time.
2. After introductions, you, the complainant will be invited to explain your complaint,
3. The Head teacher may question you.
4. The panel will question you.
5. The Head teacher will be invited to explain the school's actions.
6. You, the complainant may question the Head teacher.
7. The panel will question the Head teacher.
8. The panel may ask questions at any point.
9. You, the complainant will then be invited to sum up your complaint.
10. The Head teacher will then be invited to sum up the school's actions and response to the complaint.
11. The chair will explain that you and the Head teacher will hear from the panel **within five working days.**
12. Both you and the Head teacher will leave together while the panel decides on the issues.
13. The Clerk will remain with the panel.

Can I take my complaint further?

You cannot take your complaint to the local authority. The local authority cannot investigate school matters on a parent's behalf nor can it review how the school has dealt with your complaint. If you are not satisfied with the way your complaint has been handled you can write to:

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

Ruskin Infant School and Nursery - Complaint Form

Please complete and return to..... who will
acknowledge receipt and explain what action will be taken.

Your name:

Address (with postcode):

Daytime telephone number:

Evening telephone number:

If applicable, name of child(ren) at school:

Please give details of your complaint:

What action, if any, have you already taken to try and resolve your complaint? (Who did you speak to
and what was the response?)

Your relationship to the school, e.g. parent, carer, neighbour, member of public:

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

Are you attaching any paperwork? If so, please give details.

Signature:

Date:

Official Use:

Date of acknowledgement sent:

By Whom:

Complaint referred to:

Date: