



CLARE COMMUNITY
— PRIMARY SCHOOL —

School Complaints Policy

Introduction:

We strive to provide a good education for all our children. The Headteacher and the staff work hard to build positive relationships with all parents and carers.

The majority of issues raised by parents, the community or pupils, are concerns rather than complaints. Clare Community Primary School is committed to taking concerns seriously, at the earliest stage, in the hope of keeping the number of formal complaints to a minimum and without needing formal procedures. However, depending on the nature of the complaint, there may be a need to follow the school's formal complaints procedure. For the school to be able to investigate a complaint, it needs to be made within one year of the incident occurring. If a complaint is older than a year it will not be investigated.

If any parent/carer is unhappy with the educational provision that their child is receiving, or have any concerns relating to the school, we encourage them to talk to their child's class teacher immediately.

The prime aim of Clare Community Primary School's policy is to resolve the complaint as fairly and speedily as possible. Formal complaints will be dealt with in a sensitive, impartial and confidential manner. Malicious complaints may incur appropriate action by the school. The following details outline the stages that can be used to resolve complaints.

The Clare Community Primary School Complaints Policy has four main stages.

In summary they are as follows: -

- Stage 1 – A concern is raised informally with a staff member.
- Stage 2 - If a parent/carer does not feel that their concerns have been addressed, then they can make an appointment to meet with the Headteacher. Most complaints or concerns are normally resolved at this stage.
- Stage 3 – If, after this meeting, the parent/carer feels that the complaint is not resolved, then they should put this in writing to be heard formally by the Headteacher.
- Stage 4 – If, the parent/carer still feels that their complaint has not been resolved, then they can ask for this to be heard by the Governing Body's Complaints Appeal Panel.
- Stage 5 – Complaint is heard by a panel of the Stour Valley Educational Trust Board

Stages 1 and 2 – Raising a concern

Concerns can be raised with the school at any time and will often generate an immediate response, which will resolve the concern. We request that parents make their first contact with the student's class teacher or Key Stage Leader.

Please do not arrive at the school expecting to be seen by a member of staff. In most cases this will not be possible as our first duty is to provide an uninterrupted education to our pupils and staff will only be available by appointment to ensure that there is no disruption to lessons. Planned meetings will also make sure that we allocate sufficient time to listen carefully to your concerns. .

On some occasions the concern raised may require investigation, or discussion with others, in which case you will receive an informal but informed response within a day or two. The majority of concerns will be satisfactorily dealt with in this way. However, if you are not satisfied with the result at stage 1 or 2, please write to or call the school within 10 school days and state why you do not think that the concern has been dealt with to your satisfaction. The school will then take your complaint at the next stage.

Stage 3 – Complaint heard by Headteacher.

Formal complaints should be put in writing and addressed to the Headteacher. The complaint will be logged, including the date it was received. The school will normally acknowledge receipt of the complaint within 2 school days of receiving it. In many cases this response will also report on the action the school has taken to resolve the issue. Alternatively, a meeting may be convened to discuss the matter further. This meeting will normally take place within 10 school days. The aim will be to resolve the matter as speedily as possible. However, if you are not satisfied with the result at stage 3, please write to or call the school within 10 school days of getting our response. You will need to state to the school why you do not think that the concern has been dealt with to your satisfaction. The school will then try and resolve your issue, but if you are not satisfied with the outcome of this process, then you have the option to proceed to Stage 4.

Stage 4 – Complaint heard by the Governing Body’s Complaints Appeal Panel

If the matter has still not been resolved at Stage 3, then you should put your complaint in writing to the Chair of Governors, at the school address, giving details of the complaint. The Chair or a nominated Governor will convene a complaints panel including at least three people who have not been directly involved in the matters detailed in the complaint. The hearing will normally take place within 10 school working days of the receipt of the written request for a Stage 4 investigation. Parents will be invited to attend the panel hearing and, if they wish, they may be accompanied. Efforts will be made to ensure that at least one member of the panel is independent of the running and management of Clare Community Primary School.

The aim of the Appeal Panel hearing is to impartially resolve the complaint and to achieve reconciliation between the school and the complainant. All parties will be notified of the Panel’s decision in writing within three school working days after the date of the hearing. The letter will also contain what you need to do if you wish to take the matter further. A copy of the panel’s decision will also be kept by the school for future inspection.

Written records will be kept of all complaints, indicating whether they were resolved at the preliminary stage or whether they proceeded to a panel hearing. All correspondence, statements and records of complaints will be kept entirely confidential.

N.B. In cases where the matter concerns the conduct of the Headteacher, the Headteacher and Chair of Governors will be informed of the complaint. The Chair will arrange for the matter to be investigated. In cases where the matter concerns the conduct of a member of the Governing Body, the member will be informed of the complaint. Where the complaint concerns the Chair of the Governing Body, the complaint would be referred to OFSTED for investigation.

The Governors’ appeal hearing is the last *school-based* stage of the complaints process.

Stage 5 - Complaints to Trust Board, a similar process to stage 4, but at Trust level.

The Governing Body’s decision will usually be final. However, if you are still dissatisfied you may contact the Trust Board. Your final recourse is to complain to Ofsted.

Ofsted details:

Helpdesk, which is open from 8am – 6pm Monday to Friday. Phone No. 0300 1231 231or Email enquires@ofsted.gov.uk

Online complaints: <http://live.ofsted.gov.uk/onlinecomplaints>

Written complaints:

Enquiries Ofsted
Royal Exchange Buildings
St Ann’s Square
Manchester
M2 7LA

Ratified by Governing Body	CCPS LGB
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