

West Coker Church of England VC Primary School

Parental Complaints Policy

This policy should be taken and used as part of West Coker Church of England Primary School's overall strategy and implemented within the context of our vision, instrument of government aims and values as a Church of England school.

1 Introduction

- 1.1 We strive to provide a good education for all our children. The headteacher and staff work very hard to build positive relationships with all parents. However, the school is obliged to have procedures in place in case there are complaints by parents or guardians. The following policy sets out the procedures that the school follows in such cases.
- 1.2 If any parents are unhappy with the education that their child is receiving, or have any concerns relating to the school, we encourage them to talk to the child's class teacher immediately.
- 1.3 We deal with all complaints in accordance with procedures laid down by the LA.
- 1.4 As a last resort, those concerned can appeal to the Secretary of State for Education, if they still feel that their complaint has not been properly addressed.

2 Aims and objectives

- 2.1 Our school aims to be fair, open and honest when dealing with any complaint. We give careful consideration to all complaints, and deal with them as swiftly as possible. We aim to resolve any complaint through dialogue and mutual understanding. In all cases, we put the interests of the child above all else. We provide sufficient opportunity for any complaint to be fully discussed, and then resolved.

3 The complaints process

- 3.1 If a parent is concerned about anything to do with the education that we are providing at our school, they should, in the first instance, discuss the matter with their child's class teacher. In our experience, most matters of concern can be resolved positively in this way. All teachers work very hard to ensure that each child is happy at school, and is making good progress; they naturally want to know if there is a problem, so that they can take action before it seriously affects the child's progress.
- 3.2 Where parents feel that a situation has not been resolved through contact with the class teacher, they should make an appointment to discuss it with the headteacher. The headteacher considers any such complaint very seriously, and investigates each case thoroughly. Most complaints are normally resolved by this stage.
- 3.3 Should any parents have a complaint about the headteacher, we would hope that they would approach the headteacher directly. If they feel unable to do so, then they should make an informal approach to the Chair of the Governing Body, who is obliged to investigate it. The Chair of Governors will do all s/he can to resolve the issue through a dialogue with the school. If parents are unhappy with the outcome, they can make a formal complaint, as outlined below.
- 3.4 Only if an informal complaint procedure fails to resolve the matter, should a formal complaint be made to the governing body. This complaint must be made in writing, stating the nature of the complaint, and how the school has handled it so far. The parent should send this written complaint to the Chair of Governors.

- 3.5 The governing body must consider all written complaints within three weeks of receipt. It will arrange a meeting to discuss the complaint, and will invite the person making it to attend the meeting, so that s/he can explain the complaint in more detail. The school gives the complainant at least three days' notice of the meeting.
- 3.6 After hearing all the evidence, the governors will consider their decision and inform the parent about it in writing. The governors do all they can at this stage to resolve the complaint to the parent's satisfaction.
- 3.7 If the complaint is still not resolved, representation may be made directly to the Secretary of State for Education. This should be a last resort, and you should highlight in your letter the steps you have already taken to resolve the problem. Guidance can be found on the Directgov website.

4 Monitoring and review

- 4.1 The governors monitor the complaints procedure, in order to ensure that all complaints are handled properly. The headteacher logs all complaints received by the school, and records how they were resolved. Governors examine this log on an annual basis.
- 4.2 Governors take into account any local or national decisions that affect the complaints process, and make any modifications necessary to this policy. This policy is made available to all parents, so that they can be properly informed about the complaints process.
- 4.3 This policy will be reviewed every two years, or before if necessary.

Review Date: May 2022