

## **Kingsweston School Complaints Policy & Procedure**

### **Rationale**

Under Section 29 of the Education Act 2002 we are required to have in place a procedure to deal with complaints relating to the school and to any community facilities or services that we provide. The law also requires the procedure to be publicised.

We welcome suggestions for improving our work in school and are keen to alleviate any concerns that parents/carers may have. It is in everyone's interest that concerns and complaints are resolved at the earliest possible stage and most can be sorted out quickly through normal discussions with class teachers. It is only where a complainant remains dissatisfied with the outcome of such discussions that further steps may need to be taken. In such circumstances our Head Teacher and Chair of Governors will become involved if necessary.

### **Purpose**

The school will give careful consideration to all complaints and deal with them fairly and honestly. We will provide sufficient opportunity for any complaint to be fully discussed and aim to resolve it through open dialogue and mutual understanding.

This document sets out the school's procedure in the event of a complaint being made. It should be used only when informal attempts to resolve problems have been unsuccessful.

### **Procedure**

#### Stage1: Complaint heard by staff member

- Parent/carer discusses concerns with a staff member.
- If the staff member is unable to resolve the issue immediately, he/she will make a note of the subject raised and will advise the parent/carer that a response will be given as soon as possible and in any event within five working days. If more time is required to investigate the matter a 'holding' reply will be given within the same timescale.
- The staff member will agree with the parent/carer how the reply will be communicated; i.e. verbally, by e-mail or letter.
- The staff member will ensure that the parent/carer understands what action, if any, has been agreed.
- If no satisfactory solution is found and if the parent/carer wishes the concern to be considered further, he/she will be asked to put the complaint in writing to the Head Teacher

Stage 2: Complaint heard by Head Teacher

- The Head Teacher will acknowledge the complaint in writing within three working days
- If necessary a meeting will be arranged with the complainant to clarify and seek more information.
- The Head Teacher will investigate further and interview any witnesses. If a pupil is involved, any such interview will be done in the presence of the parent/carer or, if this is not possible, of an independent member of staff.
- The Head Teacher will keep written records of all meetings and conversations.
- Once all relevant facts have been established, the Head Teacher will reply to the complainant in writing.
- If the complainant remains unsatisfied he/she will be advised to write to the Chair of Governors.

Stage 3: Complaint heard by the Governing Body

- The Chair will acknowledge receipt of the complaint within three working days, informing the complainant that the case will be heard by a committee of three members of the school's Governing Body within twenty working days.
- A panel of three members of the Governing Body, who have had no prior involvement in the complaint, will be convened and given copies of all documentation relating to the complaint. A Chair will be elected.
- The Chair of the panel will write to the complainant giving at least five working days' notice of a meeting with the panel, and advising that he/she may be accompanied at the meeting and has the right to submit further written evidence.
- After the meeting the panel will consider all the evidence and write to the complainant and Head Teacher with their decision within ten working days.

Stage 4: Beyond the Governing Body

- If the complaint remains unresolved after Stage 3 the complainant may write to the Secretary of State for Education, Sanctuary Buildings, Great Smith Street, London, SW1P 3BT. This will be the final stage in the complaint handling process.

Previous versions: February 2007, 2009, 2011

Date of writing: February 2013 (PAB)

Ratified by Governors:

To be reviewed: February 2015