



# Oxenhope Church of England Primary School

## **Complaints policy – November 2018**



Created By:	Date:	Next Review Date:
A Jones	November 2018	November 2020

This policy is based on guidance from the DFE and the Local Authority.

## **Introduction:**

The majority of issues raised by parents, the community or pupils are concerns rather than complaints. Oxenhope Church of England Primary School is committed to taking concerns seriously and improving the school in response to feedback. Our aim is to resolve concerns informally. If we are unable to do this, you may wish or be asked to follow the school's formal Complaints Procedure. For the school to be able to investigate a complaint, it needs to be made within three months of the incident occurring. If a complaint is older than one term it will not normally be investigated.

Oxenhope Church of England Primary School will attempt 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 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 – A Complaint is heard by head teacher.
- Stage 3 – A Referral is made to the Chair of Governors.
- Stage 4 – A Complaint is heard by Governing Body's Complaints Appeal Panel.

***All meetings from Stage 2 will be recorded.***

### **Stage 1 – Raising a concern with a member of staff**

Concerns can be raised with the school at any time and will often generate an immediate response, which will resolve the concern. The school requests that parents make their first contact with the class teacher. 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, please write to or call the school within 10 school working days and state what you would like the school to do. The school will then consider your concern as a complaint and move to Stage 2.

If the complaint is received from a member of the school community, this would normally be directed to a senior member of staff for Stage 1 or straight to Stage 2

### **Stage 2 – Complaint heard by the head teacher**

If the matter has not been resolved at Stage 1, the head teacher will arrange further investigation. Please write to the head teacher of the school telling them why you are still not satisfied and what you would like the school to do.

- The complaint will be logged in the complaints file, including the date it was received.
- The school will acknowledge receipt of the complaint within two working days of receiving it.
- Either you will receive a written response reporting on the actions being taken or a meeting will be convened to discuss the matter further. If possible this meeting will take place within 10 school working days of the receipt of the complaint. The aim will be to resolve the matter as speedily as possible.

Following the investigation, the head teacher will normally give a written response within 10 school working days.

If you are dissatisfied with the result at Stage 2, you should write to the Chair of Governors at the school address (Oxenhope Church of England Primary School, Cross Lane, Oxenhope BD22 9LH) within 10 school working days of getting the response marking the envelope 'Private & Confidential'. This will then be referred directly to the Chair of Governors.

### **Stage 3 – Referral to the Chair of Governors**

The Chair of Governors will review the documentation and may speak to the persons involved. He/she will then mediate between the persons involved to attempt a resolution. The Chair of Governors will give a written response within 10 school working days. If the complainant believes the response from the Chair of Governors is not sufficient or appropriate an appeal can be made within 10 working days to a Governing Body Complaints Panel.

### **N.B. Complaints against the Head teacher**

In cases where the matter concerns the conduct of the head teacher, a written complaint should be sent 'For the Attention of the Chair of Governors' to the school and marked Private & Confidential. The Chair will refer the matter directly to a Governing Body Complaints Panel 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. The above procedure will then be followed.

### **Stage 4 – Complaint heard by the Governing Body's Complaints Appeal Panel**

If the matter has still not been resolved at Stage 3, then the Chair of Governors will pass the matter for consideration to a Governing Body Complaints Panel. The clerk or a nominated governor will convene a panel of usually 3 governors. If at all possible, the hearing will take place within 10 school working days of the receipt of the written request for a Stage 4 investigation.

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 5 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.

### ***The Governors Appeal Panel Hearing is the last school-based stage of the complaints process.***

If you are not satisfied with the outcome of Stage 4, the final stage of appeal is to the Secretary of State for Education.

Complainants will be advised to write to:

*The School Complaints Unit (SCU)*

*Department for Education*

*2nd Floor*

*Piccadilly Gate*

*Manchester*

*M1 2WD*

### **What will the Department for Education do?**

If a complaint has exhausted the local procedures, School Complaints Unit (SCU) will examine if the school's complaints policy and any other relevant policies were followed in accordance with the provisions set out. SCU also examines policies to determine if they adhere to education legislation.

However, the department will not re-investigate the substance of the complaint. This remains the responsibility of schools.

If legislative or policy breaches are found, SCU will report them to the school and the complainant and, where necessary, require remedial action to be taken. Failure to carry out remedial actions could ultimately result in a formal Direction being issued by the Secretary of State.

Written by Alice Jones

November 2018

Review date – November 2020