



Vernham Dean Gillum's Primary School

Complaints Policy

Vernham Dean Gillum's Primary School aims to provide a broad and balanced education for all pupils so that they may develop physically, socially, spiritually and academically within a happy and secure school community.

Our school places a high value on the relationship between home and school. If at any time parents should feel that the school is falling short of these aims, then they are encouraged to raise their concerns.

This school complaints procedure provides a framework to ensure that parent concerns are dealt with in a timely and consistent manner. We would always endeavour to resolve any concern at the informal stage.

Informal Stage

Parents should speak informally to their class teacher about any concern or complaint; they can do this by arranging a mutually agreeable time in order to discuss the matter. If parents find it difficult to talk to the class teacher they can make an appointment to talk to the Senior Lead or Headteacher.

If the parent concern/complaint involves the Headteacher the school encourages parents to have a preliminary discussion to determine if there has been a simple misunderstanding by one part or another. If a parent concern/complaint cannot be resolved in this way, or they have reasons for not wishing to meet the Headteacher, then parents should meet with the Chair of Governors.

After investigation, a response will be given, where possible, within 7 school days. If parents are not satisfied with the response, they may send a written complaint within 10 school days of receiving the response.

Formal Stage 1

Parent formal complaints should be made in writing, or by telephone or email in the first instance and subsequently confirmed in writing. Parents should give details of their concerns and provide any appropriate paperwork, should there be any.

The school will write to parents within 2 school days, where possible, to say that their written complaint has been received. The Headteacher will then investigate. After any meeting parents may have with the Headteacher, they will receive a follow-up letter summarising the main points of the meeting. The Headteacher will then write to parents with a decision where possible, within 5 school days of receiving the complaint. If the complaint requires an in-depth investigation which may take longer than 5 school days, the Headteacher will advise parents of this and give an indication of how long it will be before parents receive a response. Generally, this should not be more than 20 days. If parents are not satisfied with the Headteacher's response, parents may move to stage 2 of the formal proceedings.

Formal Stage 2

If parents are not satisfied with the response to their formal written complaint, parents should then raise the matter, in writing, with the Chair of Governors; they should address the envelope 'confidential' and send it to the school office. The Chair of Governors will discuss their concerns with the Headteacher before taking action. The Chair will write to parents within 2 school days, where possible, to acknowledge receipt and will investigate their response; the Chair will discuss parent concerns with the Headteacher before taking action.

Formal Stage 3

If parents are not happy with the decision of the Chair of Governors, they should then write to the Clerk to the Governors via the school office requesting that a Governing Body Complaints Panel be set up. The Clerk to the Governors will then set in place a meeting of this Panel, which will meet within 20 school days of receiving the letter. The Panel will consist of three Governors with no prior involvement in the matter.

The Complaints Panel has specific powers in relation to formal complaints. Where the issues relate to responsibilities delegated to the Headteacher by the Governing Body, then the Committee will reconsider the parent complaint afresh. Any new information, previously unavailable to the Headteacher at the time of their initial response to parents will be considered. In this event, the committee may ask the Headteacher to reconsider the initial decision. If the matter falls within the Headteacher's designated decision-making remit then the Panel will only have the power to review the decision not to consider it afresh. This may include an opinion on the 'reasonableness' of the decision. If new evidence comes to light then the Panel will refer the matter back to the Headteacher, who may consider amending the initial decision.

Parents may be sent an invitation to attend this meeting at least 10 school days before it happens. This Panel will also invite the Headteacher and Chair of Governors, and after hearing the complaint, will then decide whether to agree or not with the Headteacher or Chair of Governor's decision. Everyone at this meeting will receive a written response outlining the decision and recommendations of the Complaints Panel within 5 school days. The Panel's decision is final; there is no further appeal except in very specific circumstances give below.

Further level of appeal in specific circumstances.

If a parent complaint relates to the National Curriculum or the provision of Collective Worship or Religious Education, then you may appeal to Hampshire County Council which offers a further level of appeal only when the school complaints procedure has been exhausted. The Children's Services Complaints Team on 01962 847484 will be able to give you further information and advice.

Parents also have the right to complain to Ofsted if the complaint concerns whole school issues such as a concern that the school is not providing a good enough education throughout the whole school. Ofsted cannot investigate any matters that relate to a specific child's needs.

Christian Ethos

As a Church of England school we wish to foster Christian values of care and consideration towards each other. We value each child as a unique individual and take very seriously any suggestion that we are failing a child in any way. Parents are encouraged to raise matters of concern as soon as you have them and we will do all we can to effect a speedy resolution.

Date of policy review: Autumn 2021

Signed.....Headteacher

Signed.....Chair of Governors