

MOLDGREEN COMMUNITY PRIMARY SCHOOL



COMPLAINTS POLICY

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Moldgreen Community Primary School is committed to continuous improvement. We consider a positive, effective partnership between home and school to be essential. However, we recognise that there will be times when parents and carers have concerns, or perhaps complaints about school.

Our school aims to be fair, open and honest when dealing with any complaint. We undertake to consider carefully all complaints and deal with them as swiftly as possible. We aim to resolve complaints through dialogue and in all cases we put the interests of the child first.

We deal with all complaints in accordance with the procedures set out by Kirklees Council.

The difference between a concern and a complaint

A 'concern' may be defined as '*an expression of worry or doubt over an issue considered to be important for which reassurances are sought*'. A complaint may be generally defined as '*an expression of dissatisfaction however made, about actions taken or a lack of action*'. It is in everyone's interest that complaints are resolved at the earliest possible stage. Many issues can be resolved informally, without the need to invoke formal procedures. Moldgreen Community Primary School takes any informal concerns seriously and makes every effort to resolve the matter as quickly as possible.

Should anyone contact the local authority regarding a school complaint, they will be provided with information on the procedure and encouraged to contact the school directly. The Complaints Officer will also endeavour to inform the Headteacher of any calls that have been made to the LA regarding a complaint about their school.

Pupils, parents or carers can make a complaint to the school about most aspects of its function including;

- ❖ Attitude / behaviour of staff
- ❖ Teaching and learning.
- ❖ Application of behaviour management systems.
- ❖ Bullying.
- ❖ Provision of extra-curricular activities.

The Local Authority retains responsibility for;

- ❖ The National Curriculum.
- ❖ Collective Worship in schools.
- ❖ Provision of support services e.g. SEN, education welfare, and educational psychology.

Complaints about these matters should be referred to the relevant officer in Children & Young Peoples Service.

Members of the general public may make complaints to the school if the school is directly responsible for the issue being complained about e.g.

- ❖ Behaviour of pupils during break times.
- ❖ Disturbance to neighbours during school hours.
- ❖ Health and Safety issues of premises.
- ❖ Behaviour of staff.

Schools are not responsible for the actions or behaviours of pupils outside school hours, however, pupils are expected to show a high standard of behaviour when:

- ❖ Travelling to and from school
- ❖ Taking part in any school-organised or school-related activity.
- ❖ Wearing school uniform.
- ❖ They are in some way identifiable as a pupil at the school.

Legal, child protection or disciplinary proceedings take precedence over complaints procedures and timescales.

There are occasions when complainants would like to raise their concerns formally. In those cases, the school's formal procedure detailed below will be invoked through the stages outlined.

The Complaints Process

What do I do if.....?

1. I have a worry, a concern or feel unhappy about an issue relating to my child's school life or education.

Please speak to your child's class teacher immediately.

The class teacher works hard to make sure that your child is happy in school and making good progress with their work. They always want to know if there is a problem, so that they can take action to resolve it before it begins to have a serious impact on your child's progress.

At this point, if your concern is around behaviour or attendance, you may be referred to a member of our behaviour and attendance staff, or they may meet with you alongside your child's class teacher.

2. I have spoken to my child's class teacher or member of the behaviour team; however I would like further reassurance.

In this case you may wish to make an appointment to discuss your concerns with the relevant phase leader, who will ensure that the matter is thoroughly investigated and let you know the outcomes of this process.

Most parents' concerns are resolved at this stage.

3. I am still unhappy after speaking to a Phase Leader.

You can then approach the Deputy Headteacher. Please telephone to make an appointment, where a minuted meeting can be arranged. The Deputy will investigate your complaint and in most cases, seek to resolve the matter through discussion with yourself. You will receive a written response within 10 school days. If the matter is still not resolved, the Deputy Headteacher will involve the Headteacher.

4. I am still not satisfied.

Your next step is to make a formal complaint to the Governing Body. This must be done in writing via the Chair, stating the nature of the complaint and how the school has handled it so far. The Governing Body will then ask a small panel of governors to investigate your complaint. This meeting will be arranged within 15 school days of your complaint being received by them. You may be invited to speak to the panel and be accompanied by a friend or representative; you must have 3 days' notice of this meeting. After the panel has met and considered your complaint, you will be advised of the outcome in writing within 10 days of the meeting.

5. Other Complaints.

There is a specific procedure for complaints about the school curriculum and matters relating to it, including the provision of information and charges. In general, these are dealt with in a similar way to other companies. However, there are some differences:

- ❖ You may complain either to Kirklees Council or the Governing Body in the first instance.
- ❖ The complaint will be investigated by whichever of these is responsible for the matter complained about.
- ❖ The Governing Body will inform both the complainant and Kirklees Council of the outcome of the investigation.
- ❖ There is a right of appeal to Kirklees Council, and then to the Secretary of State.

In general, internal school matters are the responsibility of the school Governing Body. However, you may have a complaint which relates to something which is the Local Authority's responsibility. Arrangements for complaining to the Council are summarised below.

Kirklees Council will provide advice to parents and schools on best practice procedures for dealing with complaints. Kirklees Council will, where appropriate, check to make sure that the complaint has been reasonably dealt with. Where required, Kirklees Council officers may play a role in helping schools to investigate and resolve particular complaints.

6. School Procedures

Schools must ensure that they comply with their obligations under the Equality Act 2010. It is common practice to ask for complaints to be made by using a complaint form or in writing, however the complainant may have communication preferences due to disability or learning difficulties and schools must allow alternative methods of contact.

- ❖ A complaint may be made in person, by telephone, or in writing;
- ❖ All formal complaints must be dealt with by the Headteacher or a member of the Senior Leadership Team.
- ❖ In order to prevent any later challenge or disagreement over what was said, brief notes of meetings and telephone calls should be kept and a copy of any written response added to the record. Where there are communication difficulties, schools may wish to use recording devices to ensure the complainant is able to access and review the discussions at a later point.
- ❖ Schools should record the progress of the complaint and the final outcome. The Headteacher or complaints co-ordinator should be responsible for these records and hold them centrally.
- ❖ Schools should be aware that complainants have a right to copies of these records under the Freedom of Information and General Data Protection Rights.

7. School Admissions and Exclusions.

Separate complaint and appeal procedures exist for these matters and appropriate information is available on request from the school.

8. Complaints against School Staff

If your complaint amounts to or includes an allegation against a member of staff, this may need to be considered under the school's disciplinary procedure for employees, rather than the

complaints procedure. You will be advised if these procedures are to be used in dealing with your complaint.

9. Whistleblowing

Moldgreen Community Primary School has an internal Whistleblowing Policy for all our employees and voluntary staff. Other concerns can be raised direct with Ofsted by telephone on: 0330 123 3155, via email at whistleblowing@ofsted.gov.uk or by writing to: WBHL, Ofsted Piccadilly Gate, Store Street, Manchester M1 2WD. The Department for Education is also a prescribed body for whistleblowing in education.

10. A complaint about Kirklees Council

Procedure for complaining about the above are set out in a separate leaflet about the Council's complaints procedure.

11. Withdrawing a Complaint

Complaints may be withdrawn in writing at any time. The Headteacher and Chair of Governors should review the issue of concern and consider whether further investigation is required through other internal management systems.

**MOLDGREEN COMMUNITY PRIMARY
SCHOOL
Complaints Form**

Your name:

Pupil's name:

Your relationship to the pupil:

Address:

Postcode:

Daytime telephone number:

Evening telephone number:

Please give details of your complaint.

What action, if any, have you already taken to try and resolve the complaint. (Who did you speak to and what was the response)?

What actions do you feel might resolve the problem at this stage?

Are you attaching any paperwork? If so, please give details.

Signature:

Date:

Official Use only:

Date received

Date acknowledgement sent:

By whom: