



## MANOR INFANT SCHOOL

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<b>CHAIR OF GOVERNORS &amp; HEADTEACHER TO COMPLETE</b>

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## COMPLAINTS POLICY AND PROCEDURES

*Valued as Individuals, Inspired as Learners'*

### RATIONALE

Manor Infant School strives to provide a good education for all our children. We work hard to build positive relationships with all parents and carers and to resolve issues quickly and informally as they arise. However, the school is obliged to have procedures in place in case there are any complaints. The following policy sets out the process that the school follows in such cases.

### AIMS

Manor Infant 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.

## **THE COMPLAINTS PROCESS**

### **Preliminary Stage - Informal Approach**

We value our relationship with the community and especially the parents or carers of pupils who attend the school. Consequently, we offer a range of opportunities during the school year for parents to discuss any concerns they have about their child's progress or arrangements for learning. However, concerns may arise at other times.

If a parent/carer is concerned about anything at Manor 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 staff work very hard to ensure that every 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 or well-being.

### **Stage 2 – Senior Leadership**

If the matter has not been resolved informally, the parent should write to the one of the senior leadership team (as detailed below) who will look into the complaint and respond accordingly. In most cases, we believe the complaint will be dealt with satisfactorily at this stage.

- Where parents/carers feel that a situation has not been resolved through contact with the class teacher, or that their concern is of a sufficiently serious nature, they can make a complaint to the Deputy headteacher or Assistant headteacher by arranging a meeting. The Deputy headteacher or Assistant headteacher will arrange to meet the parents/carers to discuss the problem. Most complaints are normally resolved by this stage.
- Where parents/carers feel that a situation has not been resolved through contact with the Deputy headteacher or Assistant headteacher or has a complaint against the Deputy headteacher or Assistant headteacher then they can make a complaint to the headteacher. This must be made in writing, clearly stating that it is a formal complaint. The headteacher will arrange to meet the parents/carers to discuss the problem. They are welcome to take a friend or someone else with them if they wish. Following the meeting, the headteacher will conduct a full investigation of the complaint and may interview any members of staff or pupils involved. Parents/carers will receive a written response to their complaint within 5 days of the meeting.

### **Stage 3 - Chair of governors**

If the parent/carer is still not satisfied with the response from the headteacher, or has a complaint against the headteacher, then they may write formally to the chair of governors, via the school address. This must include a covering letter stating the nature of the complaint, and how the school has handled it so far. The Chair of Governors will write to the complainant to acknowledge receipt of their written request and arrange a meeting within fifteen school working days of receipt of this letter. They 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 will give the complainant at least three days' notice of the meeting.

The meeting will be arranged with the senior member of staff dealing with the matter, the complainant and the chair of governors who will act as a mediator and try to resolve the concerns.

#### **Stage 4 - The governing body's complaints panel**

If, in the very rare circumstance, a parent remains dissatisfied with the outcomes and wishes to pursue the complaint, they may request that the governing body's complaints panel hears the case. The request should be made in writing to the clerk to the governing body, via the school address and should include information about the:

- nature of the original complaint
- and copies of any information held in relation to previous meetings or discussion

The school will notify the LA of a parent's request.

#### **The complaints panel meeting**

The clerk will arrange a meeting within 20 days of the request and inform parents about the process and agenda. The complaints panel will consist of three governors with no previous involvement in the matter. For complaints specifically about the national curriculum, religious education and related matters, members will, where possible, be drawn from the governors' curriculum committee. Parents will be given the opportunity to submit additional supporting information prior to the meeting. The panel will then meet with all parties to consider both written and oral submissions.

An *example* of a typical agenda would be:

1. Introductions
2. Oral submissions by the complainant
3. Questions from the school
4. Oral response by the headteacher and chair of governors.
5. Questions by the complainant
6. Brief summary by the complainant, with no new information
7. Brief summary by the school, with no new information

Parents will then be notified of the panel's decision in writing, with the panel's response including the reasons for the decision, within a stated timescale.

#### **The local authority's (LA) procedure**

##### **Stage 5– the LA**

If a parent is not satisfied with the decision of the governors' complaints panel, they may appeal to the LA. The letter of complaint should include copies of information submitted to the governors' complaints panel and the panel's decision letter and should explain the reason for appealing to the LA. This should be sent to:

Education Department  
Portsmouth City Council  
Civic Offices  
Guildhall Square

Portsmouth  
PO1 2EA

The LA will acknowledge the request within five days and arrange for an appointed person to consider the process the school has undertaken in responding to the complaint.

### **Stage 6 – The final Stage**

If the complaint is not resolved by the Local Authority, a parent/carer is entitled to appeal to the Secretary of State for Education.