

# **Moorside Primary School**



## **Complaints Policy**

### **For Parents/Carers**

### **2022-2023**



## **MOORSIDE PRIMARY SCHOOL PURPOSE, VISION & VALUES**

### **Our Purpose**

Moorside Primary is a school at the heart of our diverse community in the West End of Newcastle.

We pride ourselves in being a caring school community where everyone is welcome.

We strive to deliver an outstanding education for all our children.

We help everyone to become caring and active citizens.

We encourage everyone to thrive and achieve their full potential.

### **Our Vision**

We want everyone in our school to work together to make us as good as any school can be.

We want to create new opportunities for everyone to succeed.

We want to create a culture which broadens all of our horizons.

We want everyone to be able to tackle the challenges we will face in an ever changing world.

We want all of our children to effectively engage with each other and with our community.

### **Our values**

#### **We all believe that**

Our local community deserves a school they can be proud of.

We are a caring community where everyone is welcome.

We all value, respect and support each other.

Our community has the right to be safe and healthy.

Our children should have the chance to enjoy and be enthused by their time in our school.

#### **We all work together to make sure that**

Everyone always tries their best and take pride in all that they do.

Everyone demonstrates good manners at all times.

Everyone respects each other and show consideration.

Everyone respects and cares for our environment and resources.

Everyone celebrates each other's successes and achievements.

**Contents:**

<b>Section</b>		<b>Page</b>
1.0	Foreword	
2.0	Reaching Resolution – Possible Outcomes of the Process	
3.0	Issues that are not covered by the Policy	
4.0	The Informal Process	
5.0	The Formal Process	
5.1	Stage one of the Formal Process	
5.2	Stage two of the Formal Process: The Complaints Committee of the Governing Body	

## 1.0 Foreword

Our aim is to provide an excellent educational experience for the children in our school. We strive continually to improve our service. Feedback from children and from their Parents/Carers<sup>1</sup> is important to us and we recognise that we can learn from both compliments and criticism.

We seek to establish open and honest relationships with Parents/Carers and actively canvass their opinions through regular informal contact, through open events and Parents'/Carers' evenings, and through surveys. If a Parents/Carers is dissatisfied with any aspect of our provision we welcome an early conversation so that problems can be sorted out quickly and informally.

This **Complaints Policy** contains information about that informal problem solving approach. It also provides information about what to do if the problem raised cannot be resolved through that informal route.

This Complaints process will not be invoked where the complaint is made anonymously. This is because resolution of issues relies on the parties involved working together to understand the causes of the problem, to identify what needs to be done to resolve it and to avoid any re-occurrence in the future.

## 2.0 Reaching Resolution – Possible Outcomes of the Process

The purpose of the process at all of its stages is to establish whether there is a genuine cause for concern/complaint and to take corrective action where a need for this is established. To achieve this, the school undertakes approaches to address issues/complaints in an open and honest way accepting criticism, acknowledging the fault and implementing relevant changes where it is found to be valid and explaining its position where the issue/complaint proves to be unfounded and has arisen from a misunderstanding or some other cause.

In any case, the outcome that is sought will always be in agreement with the conclusions reached and maintenance of good relationships.

Possible outcomes can include:

- The conclusion that the issue/complaint is not upheld either in full or in part.
- An acknowledgement that the issue/complaint was valid either in full or in part – in this case the school will apologise for any agreed failures in service standards, offer an explanation of what has gone wrong and what will be done to avoid a repetition of the problem in the future.

## 3.0 Issues that are not covered by this Policy

Parents/Carers should be aware that **some issues fall outside the scope of this Policy**.

If your concern relates to:

Schools Admissions

Statutory Assessment of Special Educational Needs

School Re-organisation proposals

You should contact the Local Authority at [admissions.information@newcastle.gov.uk](mailto:admissions.information@newcastle.gov.uk)

Telephone number: 0191 278 7878

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<sup>1</sup> In this Policy document the expression "Parents/Carers" means the people who have a legal responsibility for the care of a child/ren

If your concern relates to issues concerning Safeguarding or Child Protection you should contact Children's Social Care Telephone: 0191 277 2500.

If your concern relates to a service provided by an organisation or individual using school premises or facilities but not employed by or part of the school you should contact the organisation concerned.

#### **4.0 The Informal Process**

The informal process consists of a number of different approaches.

An early conversation with the Parent Advisor or member of the Senior Leadership Team (SLT) may be all that is needed to sort out a problem. We therefore encourage Parents/Carers to discuss any concern they may have with the relevant member of staff before it becomes a cause for complaint. If something is troubling you, talk to us.

To arrange this either come to the school reception office and arrange an appointment or ring school on 0191 2720239 and arrange an appointment or email the Head Teacher at [linda.hall@moorside.newcastle.sch.uk](mailto:linda.hall@moorside.newcastle.sch.uk) or admin at [admin@moorside.newcastle.sch.uk](mailto:admin@moorside.newcastle.sch.uk)

If you would prefer, you can put your issue/complaint in writing and forward it to the Head Teacher at the school address.

**If your concern is about the Head Teacher** you can contact the Chair of Governors. To do this you should either bring or send your letter to the school marked "Confidential for the attention of the Chair of Governors" or e-mail your communication to [admin@moorside.newcastle.sch.uk](mailto:admin@moorside.newcastle.sch.uk) again marked "Confidential for the attention of the Chair of Governors".

If your issue/complaint cannot be addressed through the school's procedures, you will be advised of this at the informal stage and you will be given details of the process that you should follow.

#### **5.0 The Formal Process**

The Formal Process is used where the informal process has failed to deliver a satisfactory outcome. There are two stages but we would always strive to resolve issues/complaints through Stage one.

##### **5.1 Stage one of the Formal Process**

If, after going through the informal process, you remain dissatisfied, you can request that Stage one of the formal procedure is followed. This involves the Head Teacher, or other member of the Senior Leadership Team [the Investigating Officer], conducting a formal investigation into the issues/complaint you have raised. If your issue/complaint is about the Head Teacher you should provide details to the Chair of Governors using the contact arrangements outlined in Section 3 above.

The Formal Process requires you to provide details of your issue/complaint either verbally in the context of a formal meeting with the Investigating Officer or in writing using the contact arrangements for the Senior Leadership Team detailed in Section 3 above.

Where the issue/complaint relates to the Head Teacher, the Investigating Officer will be the Chair of Governors or another nominated member of the Governing Body.

A record will be made of the issue/complaint you have raised and of the Investigating Officer's findings.

Wherever possible, you will be notified of the outcome within five working days. If, for any reason, this time period has to be extended [e.g. COVID related issues] you will be notified of the expected delay and of the reasons for it.

## **5.2 Stage two of the Formal Process: The Complaints Committee of the Governing Body**

If, after going through Stage one of the formal process, you remain dissatisfied, you can request that Stage two of the formal procedure is followed using the proforma which is provided as Appendix 1 to this document. This proforma is also available from the school office and is posted on the school website under the 'Key information' tab. It should be returned to the School Business and Finance Manager at [admin@moorside.newcastle.sch.uk](mailto:admin@moorside.newcastle.sch.uk) Your request will be acknowledged within three working days of receipt.

Following receipt of your request, a Complaints Committee of the Governing Body will be convened. To ensure independence, the Governor/s involved in earlier stages of the process cannot serve on this Committee. Staff Governors are also excluded from serving on this Committee.

The Committee will receive all available information of the issue/complaint raised and of the outcomes of the investigation already conducted. Governors will provide an opportunity for you to present your issues/complaint to them as well as receiving information from the other party/parties involved.

On completion of this Stage, the Chair of the Complaints Committee will write to you to inform you of the Committee's conclusions and any proposals concerning next steps.

The maximum time from receipt of your request to move to Stage two of the process to notification of the Committee's conclusions, in normal circumstances, will be no more than twenty-eight days.

It should be noted that the conclusions arrived at through Stage two of the process represent completion and the issue is then regarded as closed. The school will not enter into further correspondence nor take any further action in relation to the issue/complaint that has been investigated, assessed and addressed.