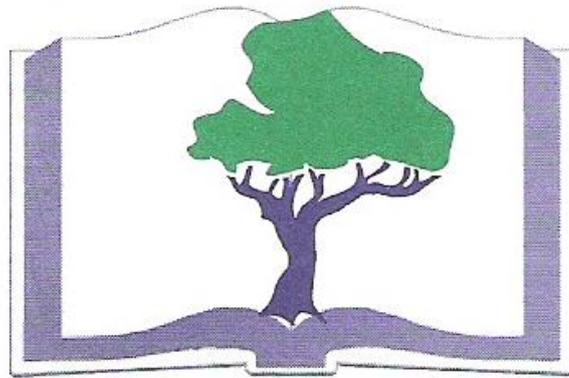


GREENWOOD PRIMARY SCHOOL AND NURSERY UNIT

GREENWOOD



PRIMARY SCHOOL

School Complaints Procedure

June 2017

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COMPLAINTS PROCEDURE FOR

GREENWOOD PRIMARY SCHOOL AND NURSERY UNIT

Foreward from the Principal

Mission Statement

The mission statement for Greenwood

“Nurturing children for a life of learning”

encapsulates our belief that “care of the child” cannot be separated from “educating the pupil”.

The school aims to provide rich and varied learning experiences to promote the all-round development of the child, in a happy and caring environment. Central to the creation of this environment Greenwood Primary School and Nursery Unit aims:

- To develop attitudes and dispositions which will be the foundation for life-long learning.
- To develop each child’s capacity to gain competence in the key areas of Communication, Using Mathematics and Using ICT.
- To develop knowledge, skills and understanding in all Areas of Learning and enhance the children’s abilities in the Thinking Skills and Personal Capabilities.
- To help each child to thrive at a level appropriate to their stage of development, facilitating the development of their self-esteem, self- confidence and independence.
- To enable the children to respect and value each individual’s ideas and views, recognising we are all different.
- To enable the children to appreciate their personal contribution to the school community and begin to understand aspects of our local environment and the wider world.

At Greenwood Primary School and Nursery Unit we recognise the importance of and value parental involvement in the life of the school. We believe that education is a collaborative enterprise involving amongst others, parents, staff and children. As a school we are, therefore, committed to establishing and maintaining effective and purposeful working relationships between the school and home.

At Greenwood Primary School and Nursery Unit we take complaints very seriously. We have the best interests of all our pupils and their families at the centre of all we do. In this regards, we encourage anyone with a concern to speak to us as soon as possible. If

concerns are dealt with at an early stage, then they are more likely to be resolved and there is no unnecessary dissatisfaction.

Many issues can be addressed simply by talking to the relevant staff who will be happy to help. Open communication and regular engagement between the school, parents/carers and other stakeholders is vital to the effective management of the school.

We welcome open communication with our staff; parents/carers can speak to staff by

- accessing the school's Open Door policy – staff may be available to deal with concerns at the end of the school day when children are being collected. (Staff are involved in meetings each Tuesday and Wednesday.)
- contacting the school office to organise an appointment time for matters of greater importance requiring more time and attention. (Office Telephone Number: 02890 471610)

If you have any issues please talk to the teacher as soon as possible. Concerns about matters other than in the classroom should be raised with the Principal. We take all concerns seriously and make every effort to resolve matters as quickly as possible.

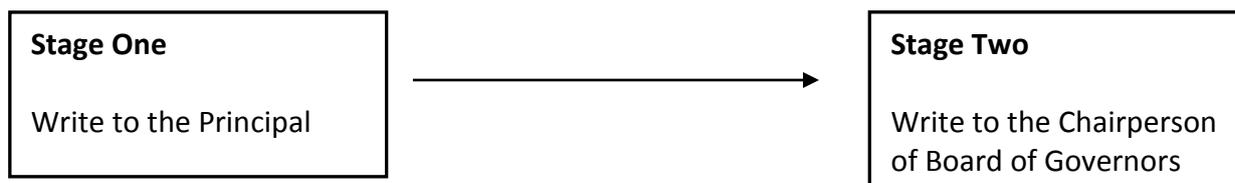
Aims

When dealing with complaints we aim to:

- Encourage resolution of all concerns as quickly as possible;
- Provide timely responses to concerns and complaints;
- Keep you informed of progress;
- Ensure a full and fair investigation of your complaint where appropriate;
- Have due regard for the rights and responsibilities of all parties involved;
- Respect confidentiality;
- Fully address your complaint and provide an effective response;
- Take appropriate action to rectify the issue and prevent it happening again where appropriate;
- Be responsive to learning from outcomes which will inform and improve practice within the school.

A copy of this procedure is available on the school's website or is available from the school on request.

Complaints Procedure at a Glance



Time Limit

To help us resolve your complaint, please contact us as soon as possible. Unless there are exceptional circumstances, we will normally only consider a complaint within 6 months of its origin.

Stage One

When making a complaint, contact the school Principal who will arrange for the complaint to be investigated. If the complaint is about the Principal, proceed to Stage Two. The school requires complaints to be made in writing. However, where this is not possible the school will make arrangements to support you.

Please provide as much information as possible including:

- Your name and contact details
- What the complaint is about
- What has already been done to try to resolve it and
- What you would like the school to do.

The complaint will normally be acknowledged within 5 school working days and a response normally made within 20 school working days of receipt of the complaint. This response will be issued to you by the Principal.

These timeframes may need to be reviewed if complaints are ongoing during school holiday periods.

If you are unhappy with the outcome of Stage 1, your complaint may be progressed to Stage 2 which is overseen by the Board of Governors.

Stage Two

If the complaint is unresolved after Stage One, write to the Chairperson of the Board of Governors (care of the school marked "Private and Confidential"), who will convene a sub-committee to review the complaint. Please provide as much detail as possible as indicated above.

The complaint will normally be acknowledged within 5 school working days and a final response normally made within 20 school working days from date of receipt of the complaint. The response will be issued to you by the Chairperson of the sub-committee.

These timeframes may need to be reviewed if complaints are ongoing during school holiday periods.

Northern Ireland Public Services Ombudsman (NIPSO)

If following Stage Two you remain dissatisfied with the outcome of your complaint, you can refer the matter to the Office of the Northern Ireland Public Services Ombudsman (NIPSO).

The Ombudsman provides a free, independent and impartial service for handling complaints about schools in Northern Ireland. You have the right to complain to the Ombudsman if you feel that you have been treated unfairly or have received a poor service from a school and your complaint has not been resolved to your satisfaction.

A complaint should normally be referred to NIPSO within six months of the final response from the school. The school must advise in its concluding letter that the complaint may be referred to the NIPSO if you remain dissatisfied.

Contact details for NIPSO are:

Northern Ireland Public Service Ombudsman

Office of the Northern Ireland Public Services Ombudsman
Progressive House
33 Wellington Place
Belfast
BT1 6HN

Freepost: FREEPOST NIPSO

Telephone: 02890 233821

Freephone: 0800 34 34 24

Email: nipso@nipso.org.uk

Web: www.nipso.org.uk

1. SCOPE OF COMPLAINTS PROCEDURE

1.1 The Complaints Handling Procedure sets out how any expression of dissatisfaction relating to the school will be managed. By taking concerns raised by parents or others seriously at the earliest possible stage, we hope to resolve issues quickly and effectively.

Some examples of complaints dealt with:

- Not following school policy
- Communication delays/lack of communication
- Difficulties in staff/pupil relationships

1.2 Complaints with separate established procedures

Some examples of statutory procedures and appeal mechanisms are listed below. The list is not exhaustive. Your Principal/Chair of Governors will advise you on the appropriate procedure to use when you first raise your complaint.

Matters may still be referred to NIPSO, if it is felt that maladministration has occurred.

Exceptions	Contact
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Admissions/Expulsions/Exclusion of children from school	Contact www.eani.org.uk Director of Operations and Estates Sara Long
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Statutory assessments of Special Educational Needs (SEN)	Contact www.eani.org.uk Director of Children and Young People's Services Claire Mangan
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• School Development Proposals	
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Child Protection/Safeguarding	Contact www.eani.org.uk Director of Education John Collings

1.3 The school will not normally investigate anonymous complaints, unless deemed by the Chair of the Board of Governors to be of a serious nature. The decision of dealing with such complaints will be at the discretion of the Board of Governors.

2. WHAT TO EXPECT UNDER THIS PROCEDURE

2.1 Your rights as a person making a complaint

In dealing with your complaint we will ensure that you receive:

- Fair treatment;
- Courtesy;
- A timely response;
- Accurate advice;
- Respect for your privacy – complaints will be treated as confidentially as possible allowing for the possibility that we may have to consult with other appropriate parties about your complaint; and
- Clear reasons for our decisions.

2.2 Your responsibilities as a person making a complaint

In making your complaint you should:

- Raise issues in a timely manner;
- Treat our staff with respect and courtesy;
- Provide accurate and concise information in relation to the issues you raise;
- Use these procedures fully and engage with them at the appropriate levels.

2.3 Rights of parties involved during the investigation

Where a meeting is arranged the complainant may be accompanied but not represented by another person.

This procedure does not take away from the statutory rights of any of the participants.

2.4 Timeframes

Where concerns are raised with the relevant teacher or Principal, a response will normally be provided during the meeting or within an agreed timeframe.

Stage 1 – Normally acknowledge within 5 school working days, response normally within 20 school working days.

Stage 2 – Normally acknowledge within 5 school working days, response normally within 20 school working days.

If, for any reason, the review of your complaint takes longer to complete, you will be informed of revised time limits and kept updated on progress.

These timeframes may need to be reviewed if complaints are ongoing during school holiday periods.

2.5 Equality

The school requires complaints to be made in writing. However, where this is not possible, please contact the Principal who will make reasonable arrangements.

2.6 Unreasonable Complaints

The school is committed to dealing with all complaints fairly and impartially, and to providing a high quality service to those who complain.

There will be occasions when, despite all stages of the complaints procedure having been completed and the complaint has been reviewed by the Ombudsman, the complainant remains dissatisfied. If they try to re-open the same issue, the Chair of Governors will inform them that the procedure has been completed and that the matter is now closed. If the complainant repeatedly continues to contact the school with the same issue we may choose not to respond.

3. Monitoring and Review

This procedure was ratified by the Board of Governors on 27th June 2017.

This Procedure will be reviewed in line with Education Authority guidance.

Signed: _____ Principal

Signed: _____ Chair, Board of Governors

Date: _____