



## **Concerns and Complaints about the School**

### **Guidance Notes for Parents**

#### **If you have a concern or complaint**

We would like you to tell us about it. We welcome suggestions for improving our work in school. Be assured that no matter what the nature of your concern or complaint, our support and respect for you and your child in school will not be affected in any way. Please tell us of your concern as soon as possible. It is difficult for us to investigate properly an incident or problem that happened some time ago.

#### **What to do first**

Most concerns and complaints can be sorted out quickly by speaking with your child's classteacher.

If you have a complaint that you feel should be looked at by the Headteacher in the first instance you can contact her straightaway if you prefer. It is usually best to discuss the problem face to face. It's usually best to make an appointment to do this and can make one by ringing or calling into the school office **(023) 9285 2330** You can bring a friend or relation to the appointment with you if you would like to.

All staff will make every effort to resolve your problem informally. We will make sure that we understand what you feel went wrong, and we will explain our actions to you. We will ask what you would like the school to do to put things right. Of course, this does not mean that in every case we will come round to your point of view but it will help us both to understand the issues. It may also help to prevent a similar problem arising again.

#### **What to do next**

If you are dissatisfied with the teacher's initial response (or with the senior member of staff's/Headteacher's response) you can make a formal complaint to the Headteacher. This should be made in writing.

The Headteacher will ask to meet you to discuss the problem. Again you may take a friend or someone else with you if you wish. The Headteacher will conduct

a full investigation of the complaint and may interview any members of staff or pupils involved. You will receive a written response to your complaint.

If your complaint is about an action of the Headteacher personally, then you should refer it to the Chair of Governors, Mr Mark Mitchell. You can contact him by writing to the Chair of the Governing Body at the school address. Please mark the envelope ***private and confidential***, it will not be opened by any staff at the school.

### **If you are still unhappy**

The problem will normally be solved by this stage. However, if you are still not satisfied you may wish to contact the Chair of the Governing Body to ask for a referral of your complaint to a Governors' Complaints Panel. It will then be heard by a group of three governors who have no previous knowledge of the problem and so will be given a fresh assessment. You will be invited to attend and speak to the panel at a meeting that the Headteacher will also attend. The General Complaints Procedures statement explains how these meetings operate.

### **Further Action**

Complaints about school problems are almost always settled within schools but in exceptional cases it may be possible to refer the problem to an outside body such as the Local Education Authority (which for our school is often the Special Education Needs Department) or the Secretary of State for Education and Employment. Again there is more on this in the General Complaints Procedure.

