**COMPLAINTS POLICY AND PROCEDURE**

**Statement of Intent**

1. It is our aim to:
* Encourage our students to realise their potential in a safe, nurturing environment
* Assess, plan-for and provide individualised, needs-led education
* Build students’ self-esteem and confidence
* Enable students to acquire the best possible outcomes by narrowing the gap academically
* Help students develop skills through a wide-range of experiences, giving them the opportunity to become well-rounded individuals and effective members of society
1. We respect the right of any stakeholder, parent/carer, pupil, staff member, Governor; provision partner/agency or community member to express concern in the form of a complaint if they believe that the school is not doing all that it reasonably can in order to meet the commitment in (1).

**Curriculum/Care and Welfare Complaints Arrangements**

1. The Governors (Management Committee) of Smannell Field School expect that, in the first instance, any concerns expressed by parent/carers about the curriculum, process or care, be addressed in discussion with the deputy Headteacher (informal level).
2. If dissatisfied, the parent/carer concerned may then submit a formal complaint to the Headteacher. This must be done in writing, making clear that it is a formal complaint and specifying its nature and the informal action taken to resolve the issue and its outcome.
3. The Headteacher will consider all complaints and will notify the complainant of the progress within seven school working days and of the timescale involved to consider the complaint.

Where the complaint is made against a member of staff it should be made, initially, to the Headteacher. Where a complaint is made against the Headteacher it should be addressed directly to the chair of the Management Committee in writing in a sealed envelope given the school office marked ‘For the attention of the Clerk to the Management Committee’.

1. If, in the Headteacher’s view, the complaint falls outside the scope of the school’s remit, the Headteacher will advise the complainant of any other recourse he or she may have (formal level).
2. Following that consideration, the Headteacher will inform the complainant:
* Decision reached and the reason for it
* Any action taken or proposed, including details of any request made to those complained against to take particular actions to resolve the complaint.
1. If the complainant is dissatisfied with the Headteacher’s response, the Headteacher must refer the matter to the Clerk to the Management Committee who will inform the Chair of the Management Committee (formal level).

**Concern Raised**

Issue not resolved?

Issue resolved ✓

Chair of Management Committee to hear the complaint and if still unresolved …

Management Committee’s complaints panel meeting arranged

Issue letter inviting complainant to meeting

Issue letter confirming panel decision

Complaint heard by Headteacher

Acknowledge receipt of complaint

Write to complainant with outcome of investigation

Ensure complaints co-ordinator informed of outcome

Issue resolved ✓

Concern/Complaint heard by staff member

Issue not resolved?

**Procedures for Dealing with Complaints**

**13. Receiving the complaint –** *The person receiving the complaint will:*

• Listen empathetically to the complainant

• Offer an immediate acknowledgement verbally or within the specified time scale in writing

• Indicate what action will be taken by whom and when

• Decide, in consultation with, others if necessary, to whom the complaint should be referred

• Ensure that all relevant information is passed on to the person investigating immediately

• This person will be the ‘owner’ of the complaint and will ensure all following steps take place

**14. Dealing with the complaint -** *The person investigating the complaint will:*

• Ensure that a thorough and fair investigation is carried out

• Consult appropriately

• Maintain confidentiality

• Involve other agencies e.g. the police, social services etc. as appropriate

• Keep the complainant informed of the progress of the investigation

• Inform the complainant of the outcome\* of the investigation within the specified time scale

If the complaint concerns a member of staff that person has the right to be informed immediately, be given the opportunity to put their side of the case, be kept informed of progress in the investigation and of the outcome. In any discussions, the member of staff will have the right to be accompanied by a friend or representative of his/her own choosing.

**15. Deciding what action to take**

If the person investigating the complaint finds that there is a case to answer the following methods of redress may be offered:

• An apology

• An explanation

• Action to put things right

The complainant will be informed of the outcome of the investigation as soon as is reasonably possible and within the specified timescale. She/he will also be informed to whom reference can be made if the outcome is not thought to be satisfactory.

If the person investigating is not a member of the Senior Leadership Team (SLT), s/he will ensure the SLT is kept fully informed.

**16. Keeping Records –** *The person investigating will ensure that:*

• Accurate records are kept

• Confidentiality is maintained.

**17. Reviewing and monitoring –** *The Headteacher will:*

• Review complaints and procedures and if necessary raise issues at team meetings

• Inform Management Committee as appropriate

*\*There may be circumstances which for reasons of confidentiality or professional integrity that the complainant can only be informed that action has been taken, rather than the detail of the action*

**Annex A**

**Complaints Appeals Panel Procedure**

(a) A copy of the procedure will be sent to the complainant as being the one that is based upon and modified by the advice received from Governor Support and the modified DfES model.

(b) A complaints appeal panel will be formed of three members of the Management Committee and chaired by the Chair/Vice Chair of the Management Committee (as appropriate).

(c) The complainant will be requested to provide a written submission of complaint together with any and all supporting evidence upon which they rely. This is to be provided to the School addressed for the private attention of the Complaints Appeal Panel. This submission is to be made within 14 days of the Panel being formed and the complainant being notified.

(d) The Panel will sit to consider the complaint within 14 days of the date of receipt of the detailed complaint submitted under (3) above.

(e) The Panel may request further or better particulars from either party and or personal representations within a period of a further 14 days.

(f) The Panel may further sit as required to consider the matter following additional submissions.

(g) The Panel may find to:

(h) Dismiss the complaint in whole or in part and/or

(i) Uphold the complaint in whole or in part and/or

(j) Decide on the appropriate action to be taken to resolve the complaint and/or

(k) Recommend changes to the school’s systems or procedures to ensure that problems of a similar nature do not recur

(l) The Panel will notify the complainant within 7 (working) days of reaching its decision

(m) The *Panel will have at its discretion the power to alter any or all of the timescales set out above.*

(n) Following the decision of the Panel, this is the end of all school based complaints procedures.

The complainant can refer further to the LA at:

Children's Services Complaints Team Children's Services Elizabeth II Court East Winchester Hants SO23 8UG

Email: childrens.services.complaints@hants.gov.uk

Phone: 01962 847484