



**Complaints Policy for Parents and  
Carers of Children at Motcombe  
School  
Reviewed annually in Term 6  
Last Review: July 2019**

### **Introduction**

Most concerns and complaints can be dealt with informally, by talking to the relevant person, usually your child's class teacher. Staff at Motcombe are always willing to talk to you and take your concerns seriously.

The Head Teacher has an open door policy, and you can always talk to her, either by dropping in or by making an appointment. If you are not satisfied with the outcome of your discussion with a member of staff, try talking to the Head Teacher.

Motcombe's aim is always to resolve any concerns or complaints as quickly and sensibly as possible without the need for formal procedure.

As it is difficult for anyone to investigate matters that are out of date, please raise issues promptly.

If you have not been able to resolve an issue informally, you may wish to use the formal complaints procedure.

### **Formal Complaints Procedure**

The aim of the formal procedure is to resolve complaints swiftly and fairly within a set time table. The school will record all formal complaints and their outcomes.

#### **Stage 1**

You make a formal complaint to the Head Teacher. Wherever possible, please make this in writing on a standard school complaints form, obtained from reception. You may just talk to the Head Teacher if you wish, making it clear that you are now making a formal complaint.

The Head Teacher will acknowledge your complaint by writing to you within 5 school days. She will send you a written response within 15 school days except in exceptional circumstances, by which time she will have fully investigated your complaint.

#### **Stage 2**

If you are not satisfied with the Head Teacher's response, or if your complaint is about the Head Teacher, you can make a written complaint to the Chair of the Governors (via the School Office and marked 'Confidential'). You should explain your complaint in detail, detail who you have already spoken to and the date, explain why you are not satisfied with the Head Teacher's response, and set out what you want to achieve from your complaint.

The Chair of Governors will acknowledge receipt of your written complaint within 5 school days. They will interview the Head Teacher and possibly others and fully review your complaint. They will then provide a written response within 15 school days.

### **Stage 3**

If you are not happy with the response of the Chair of Governors, you may have to accept that you will not achieve the outcome you want, but that your complaint has been carefully considered. However, if you have grounds to believe that your complaint has not been properly investigated by the Chair of Governors, or that the Chair has not properly followed this Complaints Procedure, you may write again to the Chair of Governors requesting that your complaint be investigated by a 'Complaints Panel'.

The Complaints Panel will comprise three governors, and will not include the Chair of Governors. The Panel will not fully reinvestigate your complaint, but will consider whether or not the Chair has properly investigated the complaint.

To initiate Stage 3 you should write to the Chair of Governors (via the School Office and marked 'Confidential') setting out why you are dissatisfied with their investigation and again stating what you want to achieve from your complaint. The Chair will acknowledge your further complaint within 5 days. The Panel will meet between 12 and 20 days from receipt of your letter. They will consider all the Chair's paperwork and will interview relevant people. You will be offered the opportunity to meet the Panel. The Panel will write to you with their decision within 5 school days of the hearing.

If the Panel decides the complaint has not been properly investigated, it may come to a different conclusion from the Chair, or it may appoint a separate governor to investigate the complaint afresh.

### **Further recourse**

If you are dissatisfied with the outcome of the Panel hearing, you can complain further, but only on limited grounds. You can write to the Secretary of State for Children, Schools and Families, who may intervene if they feel the governing body has acted unreasonably.

Secretary of State for Children, Schools and Families  
Sanctuary Buildings  
Great Smith Street  
London  
SW1P 3BT

You can also write to the Local Government Ombudsman who will only investigate if they believe there is an issue of maladministration.

Local Government Ombudsman  
PO Box 4771  
Coventry  
CV4 0EH

Phone: 0845 602 1983  
Email: [advice@lgo.org.uk](mailto:advice@lgo.org.uk)

The Complaints Panel decision letter will give you details of how to contact these bodies.

Although the school will make every attempt to resolve every concern and complaint, and will apologise where appropriate and take necessary action where appropriate, there will be rare occasions where you will not be able to reach agreement.

In carrying out this complaints procedure the staff and governors of Motcombe School will have regard to, but not be bound by, the relevant parts of the East Sussex Guidance on Complaints.

**COMPLAINTS FLOWCHART**

**CONCERN OR COMPLAINT RECEIVED**

<p>Informal discussion with the relevant class teacher or other relevant member of staff usually resulting in resolution of the issue.</p> <p><b>If the complaint is about the Head Teacher - proceed to Stage 2</b></p>	<p>The person is informed of the action to be taken to resolve the issue. If they are not satisfied they should be provided with a copy of the school's complaints procedure and information on how to proceed to stage 1.</p>
--	--



<b>FORMAL PROCEDURE - STAGE 1</b>	<b>SCHOOL ACTION</b>
<p>The complaint is submitted, either verbally or in writing, to the Head Teacher.</p>	<p>The Head Teacher acknowledges receipt within 5 school days and provides a full written response within 15 school days. Information is provided to the complainant on how to progress the complaint to stage 2.</p>



<b>FORMAL PROCEDURE - STAGE 2</b>	<b>SCHOOL ACTION</b>
<p>A written complaint is submitted to the chair of governors.</p>	<p>The chair acknowledges receipt within 5 school days and provides a full written response within 15 school days. Information is provided to the complainant on how to progress the complaint to stage 3.</p>



<b>FORMAL PROCEDURE - STAGE 3</b>	<b>SCHOOL ACTION</b>
<p>Complainant writes to the clerk to the governors requesting that the complaints panel hear the complaint.</p>	<p>Clerk arranges for complaints panel to meet between 12 and 20 school days from receipt of letter and informs the complainant of findings within 5 school days of hearing.</p> <p>Information is provided to the complainant on how to progress the complaint to the Secretary of for Children, Schools and Families and Local Government Ombudsman</p>



<b>FURTHER RECOURSE</b>	
<p>Complainant writes to the Secretary of State for Children, Schools and Families, or the Local Government Ombudsman.</p>	<p>The Secretary of State may intervene if a governing body or the Children's Services Department has acted unreasonably.</p> <p>The Ombudsman only investigates issues of maladministration.</p>