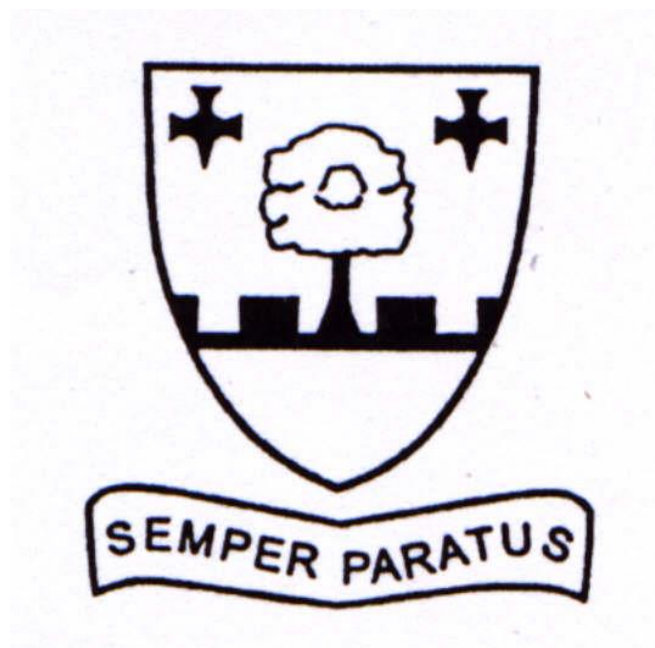


# ELMWOOD JUNIOR SCHOOL



## COMPLAINTS PROCEDURE

Issue 7

## COMPLAINTS PROCEDURE

### **Introduction**

The Governing Body of Elmwood Junior School has approved this policy. It is written with reference to The London Borough of Croydon Education Department Complaints Procedure.

The Governing Body is required to deal with all complaints relating to the School, except for complaints covered by separate arrangements laid down by law which are dealt with by the Local Authority (LA).

The complaints dealt with by the LA are those regarding the following:-

- School curriculum,
- Collective worship,
- Religious education,
- Provision of information required by law,
- Appeals about admission,
- Appeals about exclusion,
- Appeals about assessment and statements of Special Educational Needs.

### **Approach**

At Elmwood Junior School we aim to deal with all worries and complaints in a positive and supportive manner.

We pride ourselves on honest and genuine relationships within our school; such values extend to all relationships with children, parents and members of our wider school community.

All complaints will be investigated with respect and integrity.

The LA will provide advice and guidance to parents, Head Teacher and Governors at any stage of the complaint process. We would also direct you to “Responding to your concerns in relation to schools,” a guide for parents, carers and members of the local community produced by Croydon Council.

In most cases the class teacher is the first point of contact and we try to deal with all concerns quickly and effectively. If the parent/carer is not happy with the way the concern has been dealt with, guidance as to the next action they should take is shown below.

The Governing Body will review complaints regularly to ensure that this procedure is being adhered to.

Elmwood Junior School is a Rights Respecting School. The articles most relevant to this policy are Article 2 – Right not to be discriminated against; Article 3 - Protection of best interests of the child and Article 28 - Every child has the right to an education.

### **Advice and guidance for parents/carers**

#### **Stage 1 - Informal Discussion**

Many concerns will be dealt with informally when you first make them known to the School. In most cases we would expect the class teacher to be the first point of contact, either by telephone or in person and he/she will endeavour to resolve issues on the spot.

If the parent/carer wishes to meet with the class teacher we respectfully ask them to make an appointment to discuss the situation. This ensures that:-

- We allocate sufficient time to listen carefully to your complaint
- Lessons can start on time and are not interrupted.

If for any reason the teacher is unable to meet with the parent/carer, he/she will either:-

- Arrange an alternative appointment
- Arrange for another member of the year group team to speak with the parent/carer
- Ask the head teacher or their representative to informally meet with the parent/carer

If possible we prefer all concerns/complaints to be dealt with as quickly as possible and to everyone's satisfaction. It is preferable for concerns to be handled without the need for formal procedures.

If the complaint is about a class teacher, other member of staff, or a governor, the parent/carer should make an appointment to see the Assistant Head Teacher or Deputy Head Teacher or, in their absence, the Head Teacher.

For complaints against the Head Teacher approaches should be made to the Chair of Governors.

## **Stage 2 - Formal Complaint**

If you are not satisfied after the informal approach you may make a formal complaint to the Assistant Head Teacher, Deputy Head Teacher or the Head Teacher.

You should put your concern/issue into writing and this will be acknowledged by the school within 3 school days. A School Complaints Form (see Appendix A) can be downloaded from the school's website or obtained from the Complaints Co-ordinator, Mr Beck, if you wish to use it, to give details of your complaint.

As part of the school's consideration of your complaint, you may be invited to a meeting to discuss your concern/issue and your reasons for making a formal complaint. If you wish, you can ask someone to accompany you, to help you explain the reasons for your complaint.

The Assistant Head Teacher, Deputy Head Teacher or Head Teacher (the Investigating Official) will carry out a full investigation of all matters relating to your complaint. He/she where necessary will talk to witnesses and take statements from others involved.

If the complaint centres on a pupil the School will talk to the pupil concerned and, where appropriate, others present at the time of the incident in question.

If the complaint is against a member of staff, it will be dealt with under the school's internal, confidential procedures. The Investigating Official will keep typed, signed and dated records of all meetings and telephone conversations and other related documents.

Once the School has established all the relevant facts, they will send you a written response to your complaint. This will give you a full explanation of the Investigating Official's decision and the reason for it. If follow-up action is needed, the school will indicate what we are proposing to do.

The outcome of the investigation will be communicated to you within 20 school days (if a longer time is required this will be explained to you). Once a decision has been reached a representative of the school will ensure that you are clear about what action has been taken or if you remain dissatisfied what to do next.

## **Stage 3 – Governing Body Complaints Committee**

Complaints rarely reach this formal level, but should you need to, you should make a formal complaint to the Governing Body Complaints Committee within 10 school days of the decision from the School.

A Governing Body Complaints Committee will normally consist of three people none of whom will have been previously involved in your complaint.

They will let you know when your complaint is to be considered. If a meeting with you and others involved is considered appropriate, you should be given 7 days' notice.

The committee will make their decision in private and the Chair of the Committee will let you know their decision within 7 working days of the meeting.

Your letter to the Governing Body needs to set out why you remain dissatisfied and what you wish to see happen.

#### **Stage 4- Final Complaint Stage**

If all attempts to resolve the complaint have been unsuccessful you may refer your complaint to the Department for Education, via their website at [www.gov.uk/complain-about-school](http://www.gov.uk/complain-about-school)

#### **Data Protection**

Elmwood Junior School will collect and process all personal data and sensitive personal data in accordance with the legal obligations as set out in the General Data Protection Regulations 2018. Please see the school's GDPR Data Protection Policy for further information.

Issue No: 7

Date Approved: November 2018

Review Date: November 2019

## **Appendix A**

### **SCHOOL COMPLAINTS FORM**

**Please complete and return to Mr Beck (Complaints Co-ordinator) who will acknowledge receipt and explain what action will be taken.**

**Your name:**

**Pupil's name:**

**Your relationship to the pupil:**

**Address:**

**Postcode:**

**Day time telephone number:**

**Evening telephone number:**

**Please give details of your complaint.**

**What action, if any, have you already taken to try and resolve your complaint.**

**(Who did you speak to and what was the response)?**

**What actions do you feel might resolve the problem at this stage?**

**Are you attaching any paperwork? If so, please give details.**

**Signature:**

**Date:**

**Official use**

**Date acknowledgement sent:**

**By who:**

**Complaint referred to:**

**Date:**