

Brown Clee C.E. Primary School

School Complaints



Policy and Procedures

Reviewed : September 2023
Review Date: September 2024

For parents and carers

At Brown Clee we strive to provide a good education for all our pupils and feel the partnership between school and home is essential to this. The staff work very hard to build positive relationships with all parents and carers. **Please let us know when you are pleased with any of your child's achievements at school and the progress they are making, so we can celebrate together.**

However, sometimes things may appear not to be working so well. If this is the case, we want to resolve matters as quickly as possible. The interests of the children are paramount. So the governing body has set out the procedures to follow and the responsibilities of both the school and the parent or carer.

The difference between a concern and a complaint

A concern expressed may not go on to become a complaint. The latest guidance from the DfE ¹ says 'A *'concern' may be defined as 'an expression of worry or doubt over an issue considered to be important for which reassurances are sought'*. A *complaint may be generally defined as 'an expression of dissatisfaction however made, about actions taken or a lack of action'*.

We feel it is in everyone's interest, particularly the child that any concern or a complaint is resolved at the earliest possible opportunity. **Please speak to us if you have a concern so that any issues can be resolved informally.** We take informal concerns seriously and will make every effort to resolve the matter as quickly as possible.

There are occasions when this is not possible, so the school has a formal policy and it will be the responsibility of both the school and the parent or carer to follow these procedures outlined below, so matters can be resolved. We aim to deal with any complaints:

- through dialogue and mutual understanding and respect at all times;
- in a fair, open and honest manner taking account of all relevant matters;
- in a timely way by setting out clear timescales; and
- by keeping appropriate and careful records with strict confidentiality for those involved.

We hope that parents or carers will:

- let the school know at an early stage if they have a concern;
- work with the school to find a resolution, and
- follow the procedure, as will the school.

¹ DfE 'Best Practice Advice for School Complaints Procedure January 2016'

Stage 1

- i. We encourage you in the first instance to discuss with your child's class teacher immediately you have a concern. This will be made known to the head teacher. Most concerns can be resolved through discussion at this stage.

Stage 2

If you are not satisfied and wish to make a formal complaint:

- i. ask for a formal meeting with the head teacher to discuss the full details of the complaint. At the meeting the head teacher will seek to establish what has happened and exactly what the complaint is about; who is involved and what the parent or carer feels would put things right. The head teacher will keep confidential notes. Every effort will be made to arrange a date for this meeting **within five school days of the request.**
- ii. following the meeting the head teacher will discuss with others involved, consider matters and how the complaint can be resolved. The parent or carer will be informed by confidential letter what the head teacher has decided **within 10 school days following the meeting.**

Please note if the first approach is made by a parent or carer to a governor directly, the governor will refer them to the head teacher and advise them about the procedure. If the complaint is about the head teacher the chair of governors should be informed, via the school.

Stage 3

If you are still not satisfied:

- i. write a letter to the chair of governors, detailing the complaint and marked confidential, via the school. **Please do this within five school days.**
- ii. the chair of governors will look into the matter and have access to the confidential notes. You will be informed, by letter of the outcome. This will be considered **within eight school days.**
- iii. If you are not satisfied you should then write, via school, to the chair of governors' complaints committee so that the committee can be convened. (Ask school for the name of the chairperson). **Please do this within five school days**
- iv. The chair of the governors' complaints committee will acknowledge the letter **within 10 school days** and arrangements will be made to convene the committee. Every effort will be made to hold the complaints committee **within three weeks** of receiving the written complaint. The parent or carer making the complaint may be accompanied to a hearing.

- v. Following a hearing of the committee the parent or carer will be informed, by letter, of their decision **within seven school days**.

Please note that each governor's committee has terms of reference for operating and are available from the school. For the complaints committee this includes making sure there is not conflict of interest of its members and all records being kept confidential.

If in the final instance, a parent or carer feels that the school has not dealt appropriately with their complaint they can contact the local authority at

The Director
Children Services,
Shirehall
Shrewsbury,
Shropshire.
SY2 6ND

They can appeal to the Secretary of State for Education, Department of Education at
The Secretary of State for Education,

Department for Education,
Department for Education
Piccadilly Gate
Store Street
Manchester
M1 2WD
0370 000 2288

This includes any complaints about the curriculum, sex education and religious worship.