



# Complaints Policy

December 2017

**COTTERIDGE PRIMARY SCHOOL**

Cotteridge School is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and young people and expects all staff and volunteers to share this commitment.

## **General Principles:**

- This procedure is intended to allow the raising of concerns or complaints relating to the school. An anonymous concern or complaint will not be investigated under this procedure, unless there are exceptional circumstances. To enable a proper investigation, concerns or complaints should be brought to the attention of the school as soon as possible. In general, any matter raised more than 3 months after the event, will not be considered.

## **Raising a concern or complaint**

### **1) Informal Stage**

It is normally appropriate to communicate directly with the member of staff concerned. This may be by letter, by telephone or in person by appointment, requested via the school office. Many concerns can be resolved by simple clarification or the provision of information, and it is anticipated that most complaints will be resolved by this informal stage.

If the complainant feels that the complaint is unresolved they should then speak to a member of the Senior Leadership Team. These can be contacted through the School Office.

### **2) Formal Stage**

If your concern or complaint is not resolved at the informal stage you may choose to put the **complaint in writing** to the Senior Leadership Team, who will be responsible for ensuring that it is investigated appropriately. If the complaint is about the Head teacher, the **written** complaint should be addressed to the clerk to the Governing Body, for the attention of the Chair of the Governing Body. The Chair will pass the complaint to a member of the Governing Body's Complaints Panel who will review the complaint and seek a resolution. Formal written complaints should include details which might assist the investigation, such as names of potential witnesses, dates and times of events, and copies of any relevant documents.

In some instances, the Senior Leadership Team or Governors Complaints Panel may invite the complainant to a meeting to clarify their concerns and to explore resolution. If the invitation is accepted, the complainant may be accompanied by a friend, to assist them in explaining the nature of their concerns.

The Senior Leadership Team or the Governing Body's Complaints Panel will respond in writing within 5 working days of receiving the formal complaint. This response may inform that the matter has been concluded. In other cases it may inform that a more detailed investigation is needed and provide an anticipated timeline.

If the complainant is not satisfied with the manner in which the process has been followed, they may request that the governing body reviews the process. Any such request must be made in writing to the Clerk to the Governing Body, within 10 school days of receiving notice of the outcome, and include a statement specifying any perceived failures to follow the procedure.

### **3) Review Process**

Any review of the process followed by the school will be conducted by a panel of 3 members of the Governing Body Complaints Panel who have not yet been involved in the complaint. This will usually take place within 10 school days of receipt of the request. The review will normally consider all written evidence, although in some circumstances the Complainant and other involved parties may be granted permission to speak in person.

The complainant (who may be accompanied by a friend if they wish) and representative(s) from the school (who may also be accompanied by workplace colleagues or representatives from their professional associations) may be invited to attend this meeting in order to clarify the matter. As the panel meeting is intended to be investigatory, rather than adversarial, the persons giving evidence or making representations to the panel will normally attend separately.

When the panel has collected sufficient information, it will deliberate and then inform the complainant, the head teacher and the governing body of the outcome, in writing.

The complainant and the school representative(s) will be informed in writing of the outcome, usually within 5 school days of the panel meeting.

The matter will then be closed as far as the school is concerned.

If the Complainant still believes the issue to be unresolved, the Governors will advise them on how the complaint can be referred to the Local Authority.