



Slingsby Community Primary School

## **Slingsby Community Primary School**

### **Leaflet for Complainants**

Reviewed October 2023

Next Review Autumn 2 2024

## SLINGSBY CP SCHOOL - PARENTS ADVICE LEAFLET

### Overview of Complaints procedure for all complainants

#### What to do if you have a concern or a complaint

We aim to work closely with everyone to ensure that all children can learn and play happily at school.

However, sometimes problems do occur and the best person to talk to first if you have a child in school is usually your child's class teacher. If you do not have a child in school, please contact the Headteacher. The Headteacher will be happy to talk to you at a mutually convenient time. Please contact the school office to make an appointment to talk to the Headteacher or write to the Headteacher explaining your query and what you would like to happen now.

This is part of a full procedure which all schools have in place and has been approved by the Governing Body. If the Headteacher cannot resolve the issue or if the complaint is about the Headteacher, you should then write to the Chair of Governors. If your complaint is about a Governor or Governors, please write to the Clerk of the Governing Body through the school office. All emails should be sent marked 'Private & Confidential FOA The Headteacher/Chair of Governors/The Clerk of the Governing Body, and should be emailed to [admin@slingsby.n-yorks.sch.uk](mailto:admin@slingsby.n-yorks.sch.uk).

Full details of our complaint's procedure can be found in this leaflet or look on the school's website for further information in our Complaints Policy & Procedures.

***We view all complaints in a positive way, as it helps the school improve its practices. However, persistent complainants will be dealt with via the Serial, Persistent and Unreasonable Complaints Policy.***

Please do not hesitate to contact us if you are unsure; we look forward to hearing from you.

## **Slingsby C P School Complaints Information Leaflet**

### **I am a parent or carer of a child in school, how do I let the school know that I have a concern or complaint?**

The first action you need to take is to contact your child's class teacher and let the school know as soon as possible that you have a concern or a complaint and give the school the opportunity to investigate the matter properly. At least two members of staff will always be present at meetings.

Most concerns or complaints can be sorted out this way. Remember, do not leave it too long to report your concern because it can be difficult to investigate something that happened some time ago. It is also helpful if you can provide a short-written statement of your concern or complaint. This will help to avoid any misunderstanding and provides a written record of your concern or complaint. At Slingsby School we insist that a concern or complaint is raised within 30 working days of it arising.

This is known as the "informal" stage and the school will do everything possible to address your concerns at this stage.

### **What if my complaint is about the Headteacher?**

If the complaint is about the Headteacher, your written complaint should be passed via the school office to the Senior Teacher. This should be marked for the attention of the Chair of the Governing Body. The Senior Teacher will pass on your correspondence to the Chair of Governors.

### **If I am making a complaint about a Governor what should I do?**

Write to the Clerk of the Governing Body. Explain the issue and what resolution you are seeking. If the complaint is about an individual governor, the Chair or a designated governor will investigate the issue and write to you with the findings.

If your complaint is about the full Governing Body please write to the Clerk as above. The Clerk will liaise with the Local Authority to resolve the issue.

### **I am not a parent/carer but would like to complain how do I let the school know?**

Please make an appointment to see the Headteacher. Two members of staff or governors will always be present at any meetings.

Most concerns/complaints can be resolved informally in this manner. Remember, do not leave it too long to report your concern/complaint because it can be difficult to investigate something that happened some time ago. It is also helpful if you can provide a short-written statement of your concern or complaint. This will help to avoid any misunderstanding and provides a written record of your concern or complaint. At Slingsby School we insist that a concern or complaint is raised within 30 working days of it arising.

This is known as the "informal" stage and the school will do everything possible to address your concerns at this stage.

## **Informal stage**

It is normally appropriate to communicate directly with the member of staff concerned. This may be by letter, telephone or in person by appointment only, 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 or concerns will be resolved at the informal stage. As per policy, staff members will always be accompanied by another staff member or by a governor in any meeting.

In the case of more serious complaints or concerns, it may be appropriate to address them directly to the Headteacher, or to the Chair of the Governing Body if the concern or complaint is about the Headteacher. (Mr T Storrar - chair@slingsby.n-yorks.sch.uk)

If you are uncertain about who to contact, seek advice from the school office or the Clerk to the Governing Body. (01653 628370/admin@slingsby.n-yorks.sch.uk). Please **do not discuss** the complaint with the Clerk as this will breach the code of confidentiality that Clerks must uphold.

## **FORMAL STAGE**

If you feel that the informal investigation with the class teacher or Headteacher has not resolved the issue, you can now take the complaint through a formal procedure.

All schools have in place a complaints procedure. This is a formal process which enables you and the school to address your concerns. It is very important that you follow the procedures carefully to ensure that the school can do everything possible to resolve the issue. It is particularly important that you do not miss out any stages or try to solve the matter in other ways as this may prevent the school from dealing with your complaint in the correct manner.

To begin this process, you must write to the Headteacher, explaining clearly and briefly what your concern is and what outcome you would like to see to resolve it. You should include details that might assist the investigation, such as names of potential witnesses, dates and times of events, and copies of relevant documents. It is also very important that you include a clear statement of the actions you feel you would like the school to take to resolve your concern. Without this, it is much more difficult to proceed. Please use the form provided if you prefer.

### **Formal Complaint: Timescale**

The designated member of staff/Headteacher will send an acknowledgement letter within 5 working days of receiving the written complaint and will confirm details of the complaint to be investigated and who will be investigating the complaint.

The designated member of staff/Headteacher will write to the complainant within 10 working days of receipt of the complaint and advise him/her of the outcome of the investigations in writing.

## Review process by the Governing Body

In the very rare event that you are dissatisfied with the manner in which the process has been followed, you may request that the Governing Body reviews the process followed by the school, in handling the complaint. Any such request must be made in writing to the Chair of 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. The Chair of Governors will then implement the services of the complaints panel.

Any review of the process followed by the school will be conducted by a panel of two to three members of the Governing Body complaints panel, depending on availability. This will usually take place within 10 school days of receipt of your request.

The review will normally be conducted through a consideration of written submissions, but reasonable requests to make oral representations will be considered sympathetically.

If you still feel dissatisfied, you will need to refer the matter to the Secretary of State using the details as listed below. Please note however, that The Secretary of State's powers are delegated to the school complaints unit (SCU). The SCU will only consider cases where the governing body has acted unlawfully or unreasonably. It will only overturn a decision in extreme circumstances. If, however, it decides that a school has not followed its published procedures, it has the power to direct that the process is re-visited.

Telephone	0370 000 2288
Online	<a href="http://www.education.gov.uk/help/contactus">www.education.gov.uk/help/contactus</a>
Letter	DFE, School Complaints Unit, Second Floor, Piccadilly Gate, Store Street, Manchester. M1 2WD

**Complainant Form**

**Slingsby Community Primary School**

Please use this form to make your complaint. You are welcome to send in an accompanying letter. Do remember that you will need to tell us what you feel could happen to resolve your complaint. When you have filled in the form, send it to The Headteacher or Chair of the Governing Board if the complaint is about the Headteacher. if you need any help completing this form please contact the school. If this is a complaint about a governor, please send it to the Clerk to the Governing Board through the school office.

We will only process your personal data in order to respond to your complaints. In general, it will be used for administrative and statistical purposes.

Your name

Mr  Ms  Mrs  Miss  Other .....

First name (BLOCK CAPITALS) .....

Surname (BLOCK CAPITALS) .....

Your address

Postcode

Daytime tel. no.

Mobile tel. no.

Email address

Do you have any special requirements, for example if English is not your first language, disabilities?

Have you contacted the school about this matter before? Yes  No

If yes, who did you contact, when and how?

Have you received a reply?

Yes  No

If so, when was this?

Please explain your complaint.

What action, if any, have you already taken to try to 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?

Please use additional sheets if required.

If you have any documents to support your complaint, please send them with this form. Please tick the box if you would like them returned to you.

We will send an acknowledgement within 5 working days of receiving your communication and will tell you what is happening. If a further response is required, this should reach you within 20 working days.

**FOR OFFICE USE ONLY**

Complaint reference  Date Received

Acknowledgement sent

Substantive reply sent