



Alice Model Nursery School

COMPLAINTS PROCEDURE

From 1 September 2003 Governing Bodies of all maintained schools and maintained nursery schools in England are required, under Section 29 of the Education Act 2002, to have in place a procedure to deal with complaints relating to the school, and to any community facilities or services that the school provides. The law also requires the procedures to be publicised. This procedure is based on the Tower Hamlets Council model School Complaints Procedure. Some complaints fall outside the Governing Body complaints procedure, for example staff grievance or disciplinary procedures. These are dealt with by separate procedures which are available to staff. *If a complaint concerns the welfare, safeguarding or protection of a child this will immediately trigger child protection procedures The Governing Body of Alice Model Nursery School recommends that any third party providers offering community facilities or services through the school premises, or using school facilities, have their own complaints procedure in place.

WE WANT TO HEAR FROM YOU

We want to give you and your child the best possible experience of your time here at Alice Model Nursery School. It is only by listening to your views that we can find out what we are doing well and what we may need to do better or differently. We are committed to continuously improving the school for the benefit of your child and we welcome any feedback in order that we can do this. This policy explains how we will deal with your comments, complaints and compliments.

At Alice Model Nursery School, whenever you contact us, we will always:

- be polite, helpful and honest, as we hope you will be
- treat you with respect, as we would like to be treated
- treat you fairly
- not pass you from one person to another
- listen to your views
- make it clear what we can and cannot do
- admit when things go wrong and do our best to put them right

IF YOU ARE MAKING A COMPLAINT, WE WILL ALSO:

- carry out enquiries independently and fairly
- deal with your complaint as quickly and effectively as we can
- keep you informed of our progress

TELLING US YOUR VIEWS

COMMENTS

If you have an idea for improving the school, or want to comment on what we do, we would like to hear from you.

COMPLIMENTS

We are always delighted to hear that we are doing a great job. We make sure that our staff know that someone is pleased, as this motivates them and makes their work even more satisfying.

COMPLAINTS

We aim to provide the best service and education for your child but we know that sometimes things can go wrong.

OUR COMPLAINTS PROCEDURE HAS THREE STAGES

Stage 1: Complaint Taken to Member of Staff

This first stage is to speak to your child's key person. Tell them the problem and they will try and sort it out. In many cases they will deal with your complaint on the spot or refer it to a member of the SLT.

Stage 2: Complaint Taken to Executive Head

If you are not happy with the answer you received at stage 1, you can ask to speak to the Executive Head. A member of the office staff will give you a form to fill (they will be happy to help you fill this in).

Stage 3: Complaint Taken to Governing Body Complaints Appeal Panel

If you are still not happy with the response at stage 2, you can make a complaint to the school's governing body. You can get the details of the chair of governors from the school office. The chair of governors will ask for an independent enquiry to be carried out. Details of what will happen will be communicated to you by writing.

The governors' appeal hearing is the last school-based stage of the complaints process, and is not convened to merely rubber-stamp previous decisions. The governing body will nominate a number of members with delegated powers to hear complaints. These include:

- drawing up its procedures
- hearing individual appeals
- making recommendations on policy as a result of complaints

The procedure adopted by the panel for hearing appeals is part of the school's complaints procedure. The panel can be drawn from the nominated members and may consist of three to five people. The panel will choose their own chair.

THE REMIT OF THE COMPLAINTS APPEAL PANEL

The Panel can:

- dismiss the complaint in whole or in part
- uphold the complaint in whole or in part
- decide on the appropriate action to be taken to resolve the complaint; or
- recommend changes to the school's systems or procedures to ensure that problems of a similar nature do not recur

The appeal hearing is independent and impartial and must be seen to be so.

No governor may sit on the panel if they have had prior involvement in the complaint or in the circumstances surrounding it. In deciding the make-up of the panel, the Governing Body will try and ensure that it is a cross-section of the categories of governor and are sensitive to the issues of race, gender and religious affiliation. The aim of the hearing, which needs to be held in private to maintain confidentiality, will always be to resolve the complaint and achieve reconciliation between the school and the complainant. However, it has to be recognised that the complainant might not be satisfied with the outcome if the hearing does not find in their favour. It may be possible to establish the facts and make recommendations that will satisfy the complainant that his or her

complaint has been taken seriously. The Governing Body accepts that an effective panel will acknowledge that many complainants feel nervous and inhibited in a formal setting. Parents/carers often feel emotional when discussing an issue that affects their child. The panel chair will ensure that the proceedings are as welcoming as possible. The layout of the room will set the tone to be informal and not adversarial.

ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

THE ROLE OF THE CLERK

Any panel or group of governors considering complaints will be clerked. The clerk will be the contact point for the complainant and be required to:

- set the date, time and venue of the hearing, ensuring that the dates are convenient to all parties and that the venue and proceedings are accessible
- collate any written material and send it to the parties in advance of the hearing
- meet and welcome the parties as they arrive at the hearing
- record the proceedings and notify all parties of the panel's decision

THE ROLE OF THE CHAIR OF THE GOVERNING BODY OR THE NOMINATED GOVERNOR

- check that the correct procedure has been followed; and
- if a hearing is appropriate, notify the clerk to arrange a panel

THE ROLE OF THE CHAIR TO THE PANEL

The Chair of the Panel has a key role, ensuring that:

- the remit of the panel is explained to the parties and each party has the opportunity of putting their case without undue interruption
- the issues are addressed
- the complainant feels at ease
- the hearing is conducted in an informal manner with each party treating the other with respect and courtesy
- the panel is open minded and acting independently
- no member of the panel has a vested interest in the outcome of the proceedings, or any involvement in an earlier stage of the procedure
- each side is given the opportunity to state their case and ask questions; and written material is seen by all parties

NOTIFICATION OF THE PANEL'S DECISION

The chair of the panel needs to ensure that the complainant is notified of the panel's decision, in writing, with the panel's response; usually within 5 working days. The letter needs to explain if there are any further rights of appeal, and, if so, to whom they need to be addressed.

EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES

Treating people fairly is at the heart of everything we do, and we are committed to achieving the highest standards in the services we provide to you and your child. If you think we have treated you unfairly for any reason, please tell us.

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Parent/Carer Name:

Child's Name (if applicable):

Address:

Contact Number:

Email:

Please give a brief summary of your comment, compliment or complaint, including the name of the staff member(s) you have been in contact with:

What actions do you feel would resolve the matter at this stage?

Signature:

Date: