

Graveney Trust Suggestions and Complaints

Your suggestions are a very valuable way of helping us to improve the services that we provide to you and your child. If you can think of a way in which we can improve, we want to hear from you!

We will take all suggestions seriously and consider each on its merits. If we decide not to take up your suggestion, we will explain to you the reason for your decision.

If you want to make a suggestion, you should write to the Principal/Headteacher.

Unfortunately, there are sometimes occasions when things go wrong.

All complaints are important to us – there is always room to improve and as part of our commitment to excellence, we strive to identify areas for improvement and put things right as quickly as we can.

We aim to deal with your suggestions and complaints in an efficient and understanding way. To do this, we will:

- acknowledge your complaint within 24 hours
- take all complaints seriously and deal with them as quickly as possible
- investigate your complaint thoroughly
- treat your complaint in confidence
- make sure you get a letter explaining the outcome of your complaint

If you do have a complaint you want to raise with us, you should follow the following guidelines:

Stage 1 where possible, we try to deal with your complaint as near to its source as possible. This usually means raising your complaint with the relevant Head of Department, Head of Year or Deputy Head depending on the nature of the complaint. We can usually sort out simple mistakes or misunderstandings straight away. You can make your complaint in person, on the phone or in writing.

Stage 2 If you are unhappy with the way your complaint has been dealt with at Stage 1, you should contact the Principal/Headteacher and explain the nature of your complaint. The Principal/Headteacher will look into your complaint and let you know, in writing, the results of his findings. Unless there are exceptional circumstances, a response will be provided within 15 working days of the complaint reaching Stage 2. If there are exceptional circumstances, the complainant will be notified to this effect and told when a substantive response can be expected. A log of all complaints from Stage 2 onwards is maintained and reviewed by the Governing Body.

If your complaint is about the Headteacher or Principal, it will be referred straight on to Stage 3 of this process.

Stage 3 If you are still unhappy, you can write to the Clerk to the Governing Body who will refer your complaint on to the Chair of Governors for further investigation. The Chair of Governors will look at the evidence collected by the Principal/Headteacher and if necessary conduct further investigations to make sure all aspects are thoroughly examined. The Chair will examine both the process and the outcome of your complaint at the earlier stages. He will write to you about his conclusions, Unless there are exceptional circumstances, a response will be provided within 21 working days of the complaint reaching Stage 3. If there are exceptional circumstances, the complainant will be notified to this effect and told when a substantive response can be expected.

Stage 4 If you remain unhappy at this stage, you should write to the Clerk to the Governors who will arrange for a panel of three people, who will be appointed by the Governing Body and who will have had no prior involvement in the issue, to hear your complaint. One member of the panel will be independent of the management and running of the school.

At this meeting, you will be invited to make written and oral representations to the panel and to be accompanied/ represented if you wish. The panel will communicate their findings and recommendations to you in writing. Their findings will be communicated both to the complainant and the person complained about, if relevant.

Vexatious Complaints

We hope that this procedure should limit the number of complaints that become protracted and that it will ensure that all complaints are dealt with efficiently and speedily. However, there will be occasions when, despite all stages of the procedures having been followed, the complainant remains dissatisfied. If the complainant tries to reopen the same issue, the Chair of the Governing Body is able under this policy to inform them in writing that the procedure has been exhausted and that the matter is now closed.

If you continue to feel that your complaint is unresolved, you are entitled to complain to the Secretary of State for Education and Employment if you believe the Governing Body has exercised any of its functions unreasonably. You can do this by writing to: Department for Education, Castle View House, East Lane, Runcorn, Cheshire, WA7 2GJ. You can find out more about how to complain to the DfE by visiting <http://www.education.gov.uk/aboutdfe/complaintsprocedure/b00212240/making-complaint-school/how-to-complain>

Last reviewed: 28th April 2016

Next review date: Summer Term 2017