

**Kesh Primary School
and
Kesh Community Nursery**



**Comments and
Complaints Policy**

Reviewed in: November 2021

Ratified by the Board of Governors on: 18th November 2021

Next Review in: November 2024

Comments and Complaints Policy – Kesh Primary School

Introduction

This school seeks to be a 'Listening School' and will do its best to enable parents/guardians to feel confident to raise issues and concerns with appropriate staff. The policy aims to facilitate the school in helping to provide services to the highest standard and reflect on the values associated in the vision, ethos and aims of the school. The policy provides a mechanism within which issues can be identified quickly and effectively addressed.

Confidentiality

All concerns and complaints will be treated with discretion. It is vital that parents/guardians feel confident that their complaint will not penalise their child. However, a complainant will need to be aware that some information will have to be shared with those involved in order that the complaint can be investigated. We recognise that comments/complaints are useful to the school because they allow it to monitor, evaluate and review its service in pursuit of continuous improvement.

The school will not investigate anonymous complaints, unless deemed by the school to be of a serious nature. Anonymous complaints may be investigated where they relate to alleged Child Protection matters or alleged financial impropriety. This will be at the discretion of the school.

We hope that issues can be addressed by talking to the relevant staff. Open communication and regular engagement between the school, parents/carers and other stakeholders is vital to nurturing positive relationships within the whole school community.

School Information

Here at Kesh Primary School and Community Nursery, we take complaints very seriously. We have the best interests of all our pupils and their families at the centre of all we do. In this regard, we encourage anyone with a concern to speak to us as soon as possible. If concerns are dealt with at an early stage, then they are more likely to be resolved without unnecessary dissatisfaction. Many issues can be addressed simply by talking to the relevant staff in school who will be happy to help. Open communication and regular engagement between the school, parents/carers and other stakeholders is vital to the effective management of our school. We welcome open communication with our staff; parents / carers can communicate with staff by note, telephone or personal meeting. Please contact the school office to arrange a time which is suitable for the staff member to arrange a call back/meeting.

The Principal can be contacted by telephoning the school office 028686 31441 or by email bstewart413@c2ken.net

If you have a concern about your child, you should raise it by speaking to the teacher as soon as possible. If your concern is related to a matter other than in the classroom, you should speak to the Principal. We take all concerns seriously and make every effort to resolve matters as quickly as possible.

A complaint is described as *an expression of dissatisfaction with our work*.

Complaints with Established Procedures

Our school Complaints Procedure sets out how any expression of dissatisfaction relating to the school will be managed. By taking complaints seriously at the earliest possible stage, it is hoped that they can be resolved quickly and effectively.

Some examples of complaints dealt with:

- Not following school policy
- Communication delays / lack of communication
- Difficulties in staff / pupil relationships

This procedure should not be used for complaints with separate established procedures, however if your complaint relates to the school's failure to correctly administer any of these procedures, then you may complain by means of this procedure.

Some examples of statutory procedures and appeal mechanisms, which are not part of the school's complaints procedure, are listed below. The list is not exhaustive. The principal/ Chairperson of the Board of Governors will advise on the appropriate procedure to use when a complaint is raised.

Exceptions

- Admissions / Expulsions / Exclusion of children from school
- Statutory assessments of Special Educational Needs (SEN)
- School Development Proposals
- Child Protection / Safeguarding

Aims of the Complaints Procedure

When dealing with Complaints Kesh Primary School and Community Nursery aims to:

- Facilitate the school in its pursuance of its commitment to provide services to the highest standards.
- Reflect the values associated in the aims and objectives of the school as outlined in the School Prospectus.
- Be simple, speedy, accessible and respect confidentiality.
- Be courteous.
- Treat individuals and groups with openness and honesty.
- Identify and respond to the needs of their customers.
- Provide a mechanism within which any issue identified by customers can be quickly and effectively addressed.
- Ensure that parents/guardians, staff and governors know a Comments/Concern Policy is in place
- Be responsive to learning from outcomes that will inform and improve practice within the school.
- Be impartial;
- Be non-adversarial.

Your rights as a person making a complaint

In dealing with your complaint Kesh Primary School and Community Nursery will ensure that you receive:

- Fair treatment;
- Courtesy;
- A timely response;
- Accurate advice;

- Respect for your privacy – complaints will be treated as confidentially as possible allowing for the possibility that we may have to consult with other appropriate parties about your complaint; and reasons for our decisions.

In making your complaint we would expect that you:

- Raise issues in a timely manner; treat our staff with respect and courtesy;
- Provide accurate and concise information in relation to the issues you raise;
- Use these procedures fully and engage with them at the appropriate levels.

Availability of Procedure

A copy of this Procedure is available on our school's website

www.keshprimary.co.uk or is available from the school on request/In front foyer information area.

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| <p style="text-align: center;"><u>Stage 1</u></p> <p style="text-align: center;">Contact/write to the school/Principal</p> | <p style="text-align: center;"><u>Stage 2</u></p> <p style="text-align: center;">Write to the Chairperson of the Board of Governors</p> | <p style="text-align: center;"><u>Contact details for NIPSO</u></p> <p>Northern Ireland Public Services Ombudsman Office of the Northern Ireland Public Services Ombudsman Progressive House 33 Wellington Place Belfast BT1 6HN Telephone: 02890 233821 Freephone: 0800 34 34 24 Email: nipso@nipso.org.uk Web: www.nipso.org.uk</p> |
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What do I do when I have a Comment/Concern?

Every parent/guardian will have concerns about their child/children at some stage throughout their school life. We want all parents to feel confident that their concerns will be taken seriously and the matter will be addressed.

Stage 1

Parent has a Comment/Concern

They speak to the class teacher and arrange an appointment or telephone the office and arrange an appointment



Formal interview with the class teacher. Comment/Concern discussed, notes taken, Plan of Action agreed. Principal informed/Plan of Action discussed.

Parent/Guardian may also wish to meet/discuss issue with Principal



Class Teacher/Principal monitors situation and report back to Parent/Guardian. When the Parent/Guardian is happy the situation is resolved they inform the school

Stage 2

Parent/Guardian will write to the Chairperson of the Board of Governors via the school office and mark the letter *Private and Confidential* providing all appropriate information.



The Chairperson of the Board of Governors will convene a sub-committee to review the Comment/Concern.



The correspondence will normally be acknowledged within 5 working days and a final response normally made within 20 school working days from date of receipt of the concern.

If following Stage 2 the Parent/Guardian remains dissatisfied with the outcome they can refer the matter to the *Office of the Northern Ireland Public Services Ombudsman (NIPSO)*

Unreasonable Complaints

The school is committed to dealing with all complaints fairly and impartially, and to providing a high quality service to those who complain. There will be occasions when, despite all stages of the complaints procedure having been completed and the complaint has been reviewed by the Ombudsman, the complainant remains dissatisfied. The school must balance the rights of an individual to make a complaint and have it fairly investigated with the rights of staff not to be subjected to unacceptable actions or behaviour.

Any decision to treat a complainant as unreasonable must take into account the need to ensure that the complaints procedure is being fairly applied and every attempt has been made to communicate and address concerns about behaviour/conduct with the complainant. In the event that such a decision has been taken, the complainant will be advised accordingly.

Signed _____ Chairman of Board of Governors

_____ Principal

Date: 18th November 2021

Involved in the consultation of the policy - All members of the teaching staff

Shared with staff – November 2021

Review Date – November 2024