

# The Birches Specialist Support School Compliments and Complaints Policy



**Date Reviewed: July 2018**

**Reviewed by: F Shah Deputy Headteacher**

Signed: .....  
On behalf of the Governors

Signed: .....  
Head teacher

**Date of next review: July 2019**

## **THE BIRCHES SPECIALIST SUPPORT SCHOOL**

### **COMPLIMENTS AND COMPLAINTS POLICY**

#### **INTRODUCTION**

Most parents/carers and stakeholders have a positive relationship with us as a school.

We have a number of ways in which compliments can be made to report what has worked well and where positive feedback can be expressed. Compliments can be reported via the school email address as on our 'contact us' page on the website, we capture 'Wow' moments for feedback and we have face to face events where positive engagement from all stakeholders is encouraged.

Sometimes a problem may arise. Governing Bodies are required by law under Education Act 2002 (Section 29) to establish a procedure which deals with complaints. This procedure will be used by the school's Governing Body when dealing with general complaints; it is for parents, carers, our stakeholders and members of the public to use to raise informal and formal complaints with the school and the Governing Body. All Complainants will be treated seriously and courteously and given the time they need to be heard. It is important that complainants have confidence in the procedure and know that their concerns and complaints will be investigated fully and impartially.

All parties need to be clear about the difference between a concern and a complaint. Concerns should be handled if at all possible, without the need for formal procedures. In most cases, the class teacher will receive the first approach and may be able to resolve an issue immediately. The existence of a complaints procedure should not be seen as a way of undermining efforts to resolve a concern informally. The formal complaints procedure will need to be used where initial attempts to resolve the issue have been unsuccessful and the person raising the issue remains dissatisfied and wishes to take the matter

We believe that our school provides a good education for all our children, and that the head teacher and other staff work very hard to build positive relationships with all parents/carers.

A complaint is an expression of dissatisfaction about the policy or actions of the school. The following policy sets out the procedure that the school follows in such cases.

If any parent/carer is unhappy with the education that their child is receiving, or has any concern relating to the school, we encourage that person to talk to the child's class teacher immediately.

We deal with all complaints in accordance with procedures set out by the LA. If the school cannot resolve any complaint itself, those concerned can ask the LA to intervene.

All parents/carers have the right, as a last resort, to appeal to the Secretary of State for Education, if they still feel that their complaint has not been properly addressed.

#### **AIMS AND OBJECTIVES**

Our school aims to be fair, open and honest when dealing with any compliments or complaints. We give careful consideration to all complaints and deal with them as swiftly as possible. We aim to resolve any complaint through dialogue and mutual understanding. In all cases, we put the interests of the child above all other issues. We provide sufficient opportunity for any complaint to be fully discussed, and then resolved.

#### **THE COMPLAINTS PROCESS**

If a parent/carer is concerned about anything to do with the education that we are providing at our school, they should, in the first instance, discuss the matter with their child's class teacher. Most matters of concern can be dealt with in this way. All teachers work very hard to

ensure that each child is happy at school, and is making good progress; they always want to know if there is a problem, so that they can take action before the problem seriously affects the child's progress.

Where a parent/carer feels that a situation has not been resolved through contact with the class teacher, or that their concern is of a sufficiently serious nature, they should make an appointment to discuss it with the head teacher. The head teacher considers any such complaint very seriously and investigates each case thoroughly. Most complaints are normally resolved at this stage.

Should a parent/carer have a complaint about the head teacher, they should first make an informal approach to one of the members of the governing body. If the governor is not the Chair of Governors it should be passed on to the Chair of Governors, who is then obliged to investigate it. The Chair of Governors will do all that he/she can to resolve the issue through a dialogue with the school, but if a parent/carer is unhappy with the outcome, they can make a formal complaint.

Only if an informal complaint fails to resolve the matter should a formal complaint be made to the governing body. This complaint must be made in writing, stating the nature of the complaint and how the school has handled it so far. The parent/carer should send this written complaint to the Chair of Governors.

The governing body must consider all written complaints within three weeks of receipt. It arranges a meeting to discuss the complaint, and invites the person making it to attend the meeting, so that they can explain the complaint in more detail. The school gives the complainant at least three days' notice of the meeting.

After hearing all the evidence, the governors consider their decision and inform the parent/carer about it in writing. The governors do all they can at this stage to resolve the complaint to the parent's satisfaction.

If the complaint is not resolved, a parent/carer may make representation to the LA. Further information about this process is available from the school or from the LA. A further meeting is chaired by an independent person, who considers all the evidence and makes a further judgement in an attempt to resolve the complaint.

If any parent/carer is still not content that the complaint has been dealt with properly, then they are entitled to appeal to the Secretary of State for Education.

**Confidentiality:** All complaints received will be dealt with confidentially and in accordance with the requirements of the Data Protection Act 1998, subject to the need to disclose information as required by statutory authorities, and/or as a result of statutory, legal or parliamentary obligations placed on the Commission.

## MONITORING AND REVIEW

The governors monitor the compliments and complaints procedure, in order to ensure that all matters are handled properly. The head teacher logs all complaints received by the school and records how they were resolved. Governors examine this log on an annual basis. (The Complaints Log is kept in the head teacher's office).

The Governing Body will check that procedures have been followed, consider the subjects of complaints to see if there are implications for the school, and decide on appropriate action. Governors take into account any local or national decisions that affect the complaints process, and make any modifications necessary to this policy.

A review of complaints will also be used to contribute to school self-evaluation

This policy is made available to all parents, on the school website, so that they can be properly informed about the compliments and complaints process.

Appendix 1 (a)

**School Complaint Form**

Please complete and return this form to the Head Teacher / The Chair of Governors / The Clerk of the Governing Body (relevant stage of the Complaints Process) who will acknowledge receipt and explain what action will be taken.

Your name: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Telephone  
(Daytime): \_\_\_\_\_

(Evening): \_\_\_\_\_

E-mail: \_\_\_\_\_

Your child's name & Year Group (if relevant to your complaint/compliment): \_\_\_\_\_

Please give concise details of your complaint, (including dates, names of witnesses etc.) to allow the matter to be fully investigated:

What action, if any, have you already taken to try and resolve your complaint? (i.e. who have you spoken with or written to and what was the outcome?) Who did you speak to and what was their response?

What actions do you feel might resolve the problem at this stage?

Signature \_\_\_\_\_

Date \_\_\_\_\_

School Use only:  
Date form received:  
Received by:  
Date acknowledgement sent:  
Acknowledgement sent by:  
Complaint referred to:  
Date:  
Date of final response:

Appendix 1 (b)

### **School Compliment Form**

Please complete and return this form to the Head Teacher / The Chair of Governors / The Clerk of the Governing Body ) who will acknowledge receipt

Your name: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Telephone (Daytime): \_\_\_\_\_ (Evening):  
\_\_\_\_\_

E-mail: \_\_\_\_\_

Your child's name & Year Group (if relevant to your compliment): \_\_\_\_\_

Please give concise details:

Signature \_\_\_\_\_

Date \_\_\_\_\_

## Appendix 2

Letter of acknowledgement of Complaint

School Name & Address

Date:

Dear

I acknowledge receipt of your letter/form of complaint dated \*\*\*\*\* Your complaint will be dealt with by the School Business Manager in accordance with School procedures.

The School and Governing Body take any complaint most seriously. Therefore \*\* would like to meet with you, as soon as possible, so that he/she may understand the details of your concerns more clearly.

\*\* will contact you within the next \*\* days to agree with you a mutually convenient date for us to meet.

Yours Faithfully, \*\*

### Appendix 3

#### Complaint Review Request Form

Please complete and return this form to the Chair of the Complaints Committee who will acknowledge receipt and inform you of the next stage in the procedure.

Your name:

Relationship with the School (e.g. Parent, neighbour):

Address:

Telephone (Daytime): (Evening):

E-mail:

Your child's name (if relevant to your complaint): Year group:

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Dear Sir/Madam

I submitted a formal complaint to the School on \_\_\_\_\_ and am dissatisfied by the procedure that has been followed. My complaint was submitted to \_\_\_\_\_ and I received a response from \_\_\_\_\_ on \_\_\_\_\_. I have attached copies of my formal complaint and the responses from the School. I am dissatisfied with the way in which the procedure was carried out, because:

What actions do you feel might resolve this stage?

Signature

Date

## Policy Information and Review

Review frequency: every 3 years

| Date        | Version | Changes made   | By whom<br>(name and role)   | Due date for next review | Reviewed & Ratified by Govs.<br>(sign and date) |
|-------------|---------|--|------------------------------|--------------------------|---|
| Autumn 2013 | 1       | N/A  | A White SBM                  | Autumn 2015              |   |
| Autumn 2015 | 2       | General review   | A White SBM                  | Autumn 2018              |   |
| May 2018    | 3       | Full review, changed from 'Complaints policy' to 'Compliments and Complaints Policy' formatting and appendices added   | F Shah<br>Deputy Headteacher | May 2021                 |   |
| July 2018   |         | <b><i>06/07/18 The Policy Ratification Committee has met and requested that all current statutory policies are ratified for one year only whilst an appropriate cycle of ratification is implemented. Policies will then be approved for their full length of term either through the Full Governing Body or one of the committees following an agreed plan of ratification.</i></b> |                              |                          |   |

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