

# **St. Andrew's C of E (Aided) Primary School, Buckland Monachorum**

## **SCHOOL COMPLAINTS PROCEDURE**

### **Introduction**

1. This document sets out the school's procedure for addressing complaints as required under the Education Act 2002 and is made available to all parents. Please note that this procedure does not apply to issues concerning the curriculum, collective worship, admissions to school, exclusion appeals, decisions about your child's special educational needs or child protection matters. These are the subject of separate complaints procedures and further advice may be obtained from the school. All other concerns or complaints are handled by the school according to the arrangements set out below.

### **Aims and Objectives**

2. There is a difference between a concern and a complaint and we hope that by taking a concern seriously at the earliest stage this will prevent it developing into a formal complaint. The fact that we have a complaints procedure does not in any way undermine efforts to resolve the concern informally. We aim to work in partnership with parents and in the best interests of the children and any concern or complaint will be given careful consideration and dealt with fairly and honestly. We will provide sufficient opportunity for it to be fully discussed, and aim to resolve it through open dialogue and mutual understanding. Be assured that no matter what you raise with us, our support and respect for you and your child in the school will not be affected in any way.

### **The Procedure**

#### **Stage 1 - Informal**

3. Most concerns are best dealt with informally. If you have any concern about the school, the education provided or the child's progress and welfare, please discuss the matter with the child's teacher at the earliest opportunity. If you feel that the issue has not been addressed through such discussion, or that it is of a sufficiently significant or sensitive nature, please make an appointment to discuss it with the Headteacher. The Headteacher considers any such concern very seriously and normally it can be resolved at this stage.

#### **Stage 2 - Formal**

4. If the matter cannot be resolved, or your complaint is about the Headteacher, then you should refer it to the Chair of Governors and make a formal complaint. Please state the nature of the complaint, the steps taken to resolve it and the action you would like to see to remedy your concern. The Chair of Governors will review the way in which the complaint has been handled by the school and ensure that the issues have been dealt with properly and fairly. He will normally write to you with the outcome of this process within 15 working days of receiving the complaint. The problem will usually be solved by this stage but if you are not satisfied with the result you can refer your complaint to Stage 3 of the procedure.

#### **Stage 3 - Formal**

5. You should write to the Clerk to the Governing Body who will arrange for a panel of governors to meet to consider the complaint and make a final decision about it on behalf of the governing body. The panel will consist of three governors who have no detailed prior knowledge of the

complaint, or connection with the complainant. The meeting will normally take place within 15 working days of your request.

6. Prior to this both you and the Headteacher will be invited to submit written evidence on the complaint and the action taken to resolve it. This evidence will then be circulated to all parties. At the hearing, which you will be able to attend and be accompanied if you wish by a friend or representative, you will be invited to make a statement about the complaint and the outcome that is being sought. The Headteacher will also be invited to make a statement and all parties and the panel will have an opportunity to ask questions. The primary function of the complaints panel is to decide on the merits or otherwise of the complaint. However, the panel will also play an important role in attempting to resolve the issue and will reach a decision on whether to uphold or reject it and may call for certain actions to be taken by the school or parents. The panel will write to you with its conclusion within five working days of the hearing.

7. The decision of the panel is final. If you are still not satisfied, you may wish to put your complaint to the Secretary of State for Education and Skills.

**Monitoring and review**

8. The governing body monitors the complaints procedure in order to ensure that all formal complaints are handled properly. The Headteacher logs all formal complaints received by the school and records how they were resolved. Governors examine this log on an annual basis and consider the need for any changes to the procedure.

Approved by the School Governors on 6 July 2009

Signed .....

T G R OSBORN – Chair of Curriculum and Admissions Committee

Date Due for Review – September 2011