



## Feedback and Complaints Procedure

		Date
Head Teacher	Fiona MacCorquodale	Jan 2020
Governing Body	Community Engagement	Jan 2021
Next review date	January 2021	

### How we will deal with your concerns and how to comment or complain

The school makes many decisions each day and tries hard to do the best for all the children. Your comments, either positive or negative, help us to evaluate our practice and to make improvements.

Perhaps you just want to talk to us about a particular aspect of the school and centre, though not actually make a complaint; you just want to get something off your chest. Most concerns can be resolved by talking to the member of staff concerned.

If you are unhappy about the way your child is being treated, or about any actions or lack of action by us, please feel free to contact us using any of the following methods:

Prior Weston Primary School and Children's Centre  
101 Whitecross Street, London EC1Y 8JA

Telephone: 020 7786 4800

Email: [office@priorweston.islington.sch.uk](mailto:office@priorweston.islington.sch.uk)

### Our aims

- Your complaint will be dealt with honestly, politely and in confidence
- Your complaint will be looked into thoroughly and fairly
- We will keep you up to date with progress at each stage
- You will receive an apology if we have made a mistake
- You will be told what we are going to do to put things right
- You will get a full and clear written reply to formal complaints within 28 school days

### How to make a complaint:

#### In the first instance - Informal Stage

#### Sharing a concern

1. If you have a concern about anything we do, or if you wish to make a complaint, you can do this by telephone, in person or in writing (by letter or email). We hope



that most complaints can be settled quickly and informally, either by putting matters right or by giving you an explanation. If there is something you are not happy about, or you don't understand why we are doing something in a particular way, please come in and discuss it with the class teacher or another appropriate member of staff, such as the Special Educational Needs Co-ordinator (SENCo) if it is about special needs.

2. If you are still concerned because you feel that the situation has not been resolved, you should make an appointment to speak to the Deputy Head. Every effort is made to resolve the concern at this level.
3. If, for any reason, the concern remains unresolved, then the next stage is to make an appointment with the Head Teacher. The Head Teacher will investigate the concern and agree strategies with you to resolve the situation.
4. You should be able to sort out your worries in one of these informal ways, but sometimes this is not possible. In this case, there is a next step.

### **Formal Process**

The formal complaints process has the following three steps:

Stage 1 – Head Teacher

Stage 2 – Chair of Governors

Stage 3 – Governing Body Complaints Panel

#### Complaints against the Head Teacher

Complaints against the Head Teacher should start at Stage 2 and go to the Chair of Governors.

#### Complaints against the Chair of Governors

Complaints about the Chair of Governors will begin at Stage 3 of the process and should be made to the Clerk of the Governing Body (contact details at the end of this document).

### **Stage 1 – Head Teacher**

1. You must inform the Head Teacher of your complaint, preferably in writing. This complaint will be acknowledged by the Head Teacher within 3 school days of receipt.



2. The Head Teacher may personally carry out the investigation or commission an investigation by another member of staff, governor or independent person. The investigation will be carried out within 10 school days of the complaint being received. If necessary, the timescale for investigating the complaint can be extended by the Head Teacher by notifying you in writing with the reason for the delay.
3. Within three school days of the initial investigation being completed, the Head Teacher will contact you to arrange a meeting. The Head Teacher will meet with you with the aim of resolving the complaint and achieving reconciliation through;
  - Identifying areas of agreement
  - Clarifying any misunderstandings
  - Encouraging you to state what actions you feel might resolve the problem at any stage
  - Offering one or more of the following may result in a resolution of the matter:
    - an acknowledgment that the complaint is valid in whole or in part
    - an apology
    - an explanation
    - an admission that the situation could have been handled differently or better (this is not the same as an admission of negligence)
    - an explanation of the steps that have been taken to ensure that it will not happen again
    - an undertaking to review school policies in light of the complaint
4. Following the meeting the Head Teacher will confirm the following in writing to you;
  - Any agreed outcomes from the meeting;
  - Any action taken or proposed to be taken to resolve the complaint;
  - Your right to submit a written request to have the complaint referred to the Chair of Governors for consideration if you are still dissatisfied.
5. The Head Teacher will record all action taken and ensure appropriate records are stored centrally and if necessary forward them onto the Chair of Governors for Stage 2.
6. Formal complaints should be made within three months of the incident taking place, unless in extreme circumstances where that has not been possible.



7. If you are still unhappy, then you can take your complaint to the second formal stage where it will be investigated by the governing body.

## **Stage 2 – Chair of Governors**

1. The person receiving the complaint will acknowledge receipt within 3 school days.
2. If the Chair feels that further investigation is necessary, the Chair may:
  - personally carry out a further investigation; or
  - request that the Head Teacher carry out a further investigation; or
  - commission a further investigation by another person such as a senior member of staff, a governor or an independent person.
3. Any person investigating a complaint will adhere to the following procedure:
  - establish what has happened so far, and who has been involved
  - clarify the nature of the complaint and what remains unresolved
  - meet with you or contact you (if further information is required)
  - clarify what you feel would put things right
  - interview those involved in the matter and/or those complained of, allowing them to be accompanied if they wish
  - conduct the interview with an open mind and be prepared to be persistent
  - keep notes of the interview or arrange for an independent note taker to record minutes of the meeting.
4. The investigation will be carried out within 10 school days of the complaint being received by the Chair of Governors (or clerk, contact details at the end of this document). If necessary, the timescale for investigating the complaint can be extended by the Chair of Governors (or Vice Chair) by notifying you in writing with the reason for the delay.
5. In the case of investigating the Head Teacher it is recommended the Chair of Governors engage an independent person to act as the investigating officer to ensure that a full, fair and impartial investigation is conducted.



6. Following the meeting the Chair of Governors will confirm the following in writing to you:
  - Any agreed outcomes from the meeting;
  - Any action taken or proposed to be taken to resolve the complaint;
  - The parent/carer's right to submit a written request to have the complaint referred to the Governing Body Complaints Panel for consideration if they are still dissatisfied.

### **Stage 3 – Governing Body Complaints Panel**

1. If you are dissatisfied with the Chair's response you can write to the Clerk, Jane Wright [Jane.Wright@islington.gov.uk](mailto:Jane.Wright@islington.gov.uk) to request that the complaint be referred to the Governing Body Complaints Panel. This is likely to involve a panel of governors.
2. If the Chair of Governors or another governor has been involved in discussions to help settle the disagreement at Stage 1, she or he will arrange for another governor to take charge of the investigation. The governor in charge of investigating the complaint may ask to meet you to discuss your concerns.
3. You should make sure that the Governing Body Complaints Panel is provided with any written evidence or information you intend to use in a formal hearing. You may bring a friend, representative or interpreter to any meeting if you wish. The Chair of the Panel may invite any person who may help establish the facts of the complaint. The Chair should tell you who this person is before the meeting. If any member of staff is required by the Governing Body to attend a meeting, they will have the opportunity to be accompanied or represented as they wish. A member of staff named in a complaint may also choose to attend a meeting, even if not required to do so by the governors. They may be represented. If this happens, we will inform you in advance.
4. When the panel has fully investigated your complaint, the Chair of the Panel or the governor in charge of the investigation will write to you confirming the outcome of your complaint and any agreed actions to be taken. Our governing body will aim to deal with your complaint within 28 school days.



### **Complaints not in scope of the procedure**

The complaints procedure covers all complaints about the provision of facilities or services that Prior Weston Primary School and Children's Centre provides with the exceptions listed below, for which there are separate (statutory) procedures. Our website gives further information on how to pursue these.

- Admissions to schools
- Statutory assessments of Special Educational Needs (SEN)
- School re-organisation proposals
- Matters likely to require a Child Protection Investigation
- Whistleblowing
- Staff grievances and disciplinary procedures
- Complaints about services provided by other providers who may use school premises or facilities.