

# Heath Lane Nursery School



## HOW TO COMMENT /COMPLAIN ADVICE FOR PARENTS

Review Date	Date Approved by Personnel	Next Review Date
<b>February 2014</b>		<b>January 2016</b>
June 2016	14 July 2016	Summer Term 2018
Summer 2018	2 July 2018	Summer Term 2020
Summer 2020	July 2020	Summer Term 2022

## Heath Lane Nursery School COMPLAINTS POLICY

### HOW TO COMMENT OR COMPLAIN

#### **We care about what you think**

Each day this school makes many decisions and tries hard to do the best for all the children. Your comments - either positive or negative - are helpful for future planning. You may want to talk to us about a particular aspect of this school, though not actually make a complaint - you just want to get something 'off your chest'.

If you are dissatisfied about the way your child is being treated, or any actions or lack of action by us, please feel free to contact us using the details listed above.

#### **Our aims**

- Your complaint will be dealt with honestly, politely and in confidence.
- Your complaint will be looked into thoroughly and fairly.
- If your complaint is urgent we will deal with it more quickly.
- We will keep you up to date with progress at each stage.
- You will get 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 (5½ weeks)**.

**Heath Lane Nursery School**  
**[www.heathlane.herts.sch.uk](http://www.heathlane.herts.sch.uk)**  
**[admin@Heathlane.herts.sch.uk](mailto:admin@Heathlane.herts.sch.uk)**  
**01442 255418**

## **To Make a Complaint**

### ***In the First Instance – Informal Stage***

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 Headteacher or another appropriate member of staff.

We know that it can feel uncomfortable to question or challenge something, but if you don't tell us what is worrying you we cannot explain what we are doing or try to put it right. If the member of staff you speak to in the first instance is unable to resolve the matter, you should make an appointment with the Headteacher. You should be able to sort out your worries but sometimes this is not possible. In this case there is a next step.

### **First – Formal Stage**

**Request a meeting with the Headteacher** who will investigate your complaint and aim to inform you of the outcome **within 10 school days (2 weeks)**.

If your first contact is with individual Governors, they will advise you to take up your concerns with the appropriate member of staff or Headteacher. A Governor should not be made aware of a potential complaint as they may be required to sit on a Panel in the event of a formal hearing (Stage Two) and should be impartial.

If your complaint is about the Headteacher, you should **write to the Chair of Governors**. If your child has a Statement of Special Educational Needs (SEN) or an Education, Health and Care Plan (EHCP) you might find it helpful to talk to our Special Educational Needs Co-ordinator (SENCo) or your child's named Special Needs Officer at the Local Authority. The SEND Information Advice and Support Service (SENDIASS – formerly Parent Partnership) may also be able to help you.

### **Second – Formal Stage**

If you remain dissatisfied following Stage 1 and wish to take your complaint further, you will be asked to complete a form or write a letter addressed to the Chair of Governors. In the letter you should:

- Make it clear why you are complaining.
- Say who you have spoken to already.
- Explain what you want to happen as a result of your complaint.

The Chair of Governors will arrange for your complaint to be considered and investigated under the arrangements approved by the Governing Body. This is likely to involve a Panel of Governors. If the Chair of Governors or another Governor has been involved in discussions to help settle the disagreement at Stage 1, they should 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.

You should make sure that the Governors' Complaint Panel is provided with any written information or evidence 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.

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 to tell you the findings. These findings will be reported to the Governing Body. The Chair of Governors will then 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 (5½ weeks)**.

### **Further Recourse**

Most complaints are resolved by this process. Should your complaint not be resolved you can complain to the Secretary of State at the Department for Education:

The Secretary of State  
Department for Education  
Sanctuary Buildings  
Great Smith Street  
London  
SW1P 3BT  
Website: [www.education.gov.uk](http://www.education.gov.uk)  
Telephone: 0370 000 2288

In the case of complaints about **Special Educational Needs provision**, you may complain further to the Local Authority. This should be done by writing to the Children's Services Complaints Manager.

It should be noted however that if you wish to pursue this route, you must do so within **20 working days (4 weeks)** of receiving the written outcome of the hearing into your complaint. After **20 working days (4 weeks)**, neither the school nor the Local Authority is under any obligation to investigate or progress your complaint any further.

### **USEFUL CONTACTS**

#### **Chair of Governors – Mrs Judy Davis**

You can communicate with the Chair of Governors by contacting the school office. They will pass on any written correspondence for you or make an appointment.

#### **Local Authority Complaints Team**

Customer Focus Team, CSF, County Hall, Hertford SG13 8DF

**Web:** [www.hertsdirect.org/csfcustomerfocus](http://www.hertsdirect.org/csfcustomerfocus)

**Email:** [cft.csf@hertsscc.gov.uk](mailto:cft.csf@hertsscc.gov.uk)

**Phone:** 01992 588542

#### **County Councillor for your area**

**Web:** [www.hertsdirect.org/yrccouncil/councillors#](http://www.hertsdirect.org/yrccouncil/councillors#)

or Contact the Members Secretariat at County Hall - **01992 556556**

#### **ACE - Advisory Centre for Education**

1C Aberdeen Studios, 22 Highbury Grove, London. N5 2EA

Free Advice Line 2-5pm, Monday to Friday

**Web:** [www.ace-ed.org.uk](http://www.ace-ed.org.uk)

**Email:** [enquiries@ace-ed.org.uk](mailto:enquiries@ace-ed.org.uk)

**Phone:** 0808 800 5793

#### **Children's Legal Centre**

University of Essex, Wivenhoe Park, Colchester, Essex CO4 3SQ

Free Advice Service, 2-5pm

**Web:** [www.childrenslegalcentre.com](http://www.childrenslegalcentre.com)

**Email:** [clc@essex.ac.uk](mailto:clc@essex.ac.uk)

**Phone:** 01206 873820

**Parent Partnership** (Special Educational Needs)

Customer Focus Team, CSF, County Hall, Hertford SG13 8DF **Web:**

[www.hertsdirect.org/parentpartnership](http://www.hertsdirect.org/parentpartnership)

**Email:** [parentpartnership@hertscc.gov.uk](mailto:parentpartnership@hertscc.gov.uk)

**Phone:** Irene Holland 01462 634488

**Family Lives**

520 Highgate Studios, 53-79 Highgate Road, Kentish Town, London NW5 1TL

**Web:** [www.familylives.org.uk](http://www.familylives.org.uk)

**Phone:** 0808 800 2222

**Change History:**

<b>Issue</b>	<b>Date</b>	<b>List of Changes</b>	<b>Approved By</b>	<b>Authorised By</b>
1	July 2018	Remove reference to '& Children's Club' throughout document.	Governing Body	Pauline Kirtley

2.	July 2018	The First Stage – Initial Complaints, Point B: Replaced School Business Manager with School Office.	Governing Body	Pauline Kirtley
3.	June 2020		Governing Body	Hayley Yendell