Founded 1888

MANSHEAD SCHOOL

A Dunstable Ashton Foundation C of E Upper School
Voluntary Aided

A Specialist Science and Maths College

"In search of personal excellence"

Headteacher: Jim Parker

Our Common Purpose : To work together with a common purpose '**in search of personal excellence**'
Our shared values : The values of Respect, Responsibility, Faith and Compassion help us to work together to form a relationship that allows each individual in our community to be in search of personal excellence.

COMPLAINTS POLICY

Schools are legally obliged to have a policy which indicates how parental complaints are handled.

January 2008

G: /admin/SUE/Governors/Policies/Complaints/January 2008 **Adopted by Full Governing Body 12/03/08**

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Manshead School Policy for resolving complaints

Introduction

From time to time, parents may naturally have concerns about an aspect of their child's education. Often, these concerns will resolve themselves but on occasions parents may feel that the issue will need the School's help to be resolved.

As partners in your children's education, the School wishes to work with you in the resolution of problems and this policy is designed to show what steps may be taken. The resolution of a concern can take the three steps which are described in detail below.

An Informal Concern

On most occasions these can be resolved immediately by speaking to your child's Learning Guide. It may be necessary for you to make an appointment at a time which is convenient to both of you.

Please let the Learning Guide know the nature of your concern when making an appointment so that they may investigate further on your behalf if necessary.

The purpose of the meeting should be to establish a solution or to agree a plan of action to resolve the concern. If the meeting fails to do so then you should make an appointment to see the Head of College or member of the Leadership Team.

The member of staff will normally make further investigations on your behalf and meet with you to suggest a workable solution. If you feel that the matter is not satisfactorily resolved, you may request a meeting with the Head Teacher or consider making the matter the subject of a formal complaint.

It is important that due procedure is followed with a view to seeking resolution to a concern or complaint. A failure to follow the procedure may result in the procedure being terminated by the Governing Body.

A Formal Complaint

If the concern is not resolved a the informal stage it must be put in writing and passed to the Head Teacher who will either investigate the matter or delegate this responsibility to a senior colleague. The complaint should include details which might assist the investigation such as names of potential witnesses, dates and times of events and copies of relevant documents. The Head Teacher may meet with the complainant with the outcome of the investigation. If the outcome of the

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investigation results in the implementation of staff disciplinary procedures such procedures will remain strictly confidential.

If the complainant is not satisfied with the manner in which the process has been followed or if the complaint is about the Head Teacher then a full written complaint should be made to the Chair of Governors at the School's address. The Chair of Governors will write to you to confirm receipt of your letter within five working days and will investigate the matter. In some circumstances the Chair may ask another governor to carry out the investigation on their behalf.

The Chair will collect such other evidence as is deemed necessary and may interview other witnesses. The Head Teacher will be provided with a copy of the complaint and any additional evidence presented by the complainant or collected by the Chair.

Once there has been an opportunity for the Head Teacher to consider this he/she will meet separately with the Chair to present a response. A friend or representative may accompany the Head Teacher at this meeting. On the conclusion of this meeting the complainant and Head Teacher will be informed in writing of the outcome. The complainant will not be informed of any disciplinary or capability action which might ensue.

This will now bring the Chair's investigation to a close. If the complainant is not satisfied with the manner in which the complaint has been investigated, a request may be made for the Governing Body to hold a formal review of the process which will take the form of a hearing. Any such request must be made in writing to the Chair within two weeks of receiving notice of the outcome of the Chair's investigation and must state the reasons for the implementation of the next stage. Please note, the complainant is not entitled to access any details of the investigation except for any statements that may have been provided by their child.

A Formal Review

On receiving a formal request for the complaint to be taken to the next stage the Chair of Governors will write to the complainant within five working days to inform you of the date and time of the hearing and of the composition of the panel who will hear the complaint.

The hearing may take one of two forms at the discretion of the governing body. You may be invited to attend the meeting, given the opportunity to inform the Governing Body of the details of your concern. The Panel of Governors may question you to seek further clarification of the detail of your concern. You may bring a friend with you to the hearing. The governors will then ask you to leave

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and will meet with the Head Teacher and Chair of Governors to seek their view of the issue. The Head Teacher may be accompanied by a friend or representative. Once the governors have clarified any issues, the Head Teacher and Chair of Governors will be asked to leave while the Panel consider their response to the complaint.

Alternatively, the meeting may follow the same course described above with both parties in attendance for the duration of the hearing. In this case after both parties have stated their case and responded to questions, the complainant and the Head Teacher and/or Chair of Governors will be requested to sum up their positions before being asked to leave. No further questioning will be allowed at this point. The Panel of Governors will then consider their response.

The Chair of the Panel of Governors will write to the complainant and the Head Teacher or Chair of Governors as appropriate, within forty-eight hours of the hearing with their findings. The complainant will not be informed of any disciplinary or capability action which might follow. However, if the investigation does result in a change to the School's policies being implemented, the complainant will be informed of the detail of this. This will bring the involvement of the Governing Body to a close and any further correspondence cannot be entered into.

If a complainant believes that the Governing Body has acted illegally or arbitrarily in handling the complaint, then the complainant may make representation to the Secretary of State for Education and Skills. Where a complaint is judged by the Governing Body to be vexatious, the complainant will be informed that their complaint will not be accepted and will not be investigated.

Please note that complaints regarding: Admissions; National Curriculum; Child Protection; School Exclusions and some aspects of Special Educational Needs have different procedures.

For further guidance on these matters parents are advised to contact the Local Authority.

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