Morley Primary School

Child Friendly Complaints Policy

'This policy has been reviewed on … and has been impact assessed in the light of all other school policies and the Equality Act 2010.'

Headteacher: Tony Taylor

Chair of Governors: Sam Jackson

Last reviewed: October 2022 (New Policy)

Policy Review Sheet

Morley Primary School

	Version	Date	Minute No.
Approved by Governors	1	Oct 22	10/04.27
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Child-Friendly Complaints Policy

Feeling safe and happy at school

At Morley Primary School, we promise to listen to our pupils' concerns and complaints.

We want to make sure any problem you have is sorted as quickly as possible, so you can be happy and feel safe at school.

This policy has been created to show you how you can make a complaint if you need to, who you can talk to and what will happen once you have complained.

It is important to remember that you won't get told off if you complain and we will take your complaint seriously.

If you need to make a complaint, read this policy and talk to a member of staff as soon as possible.



What does it mean?

A "complaint" is something you make when you are unhappy about something or someone.

A "concern" is when you have a worry or doubt about something or someone.

In this policy, complaint has been used to mean both a complaint and a concern.

Both a complaint and a concern can be told to anyone, e.g. your parents, teacher or friend. If you tell a teacher or another member of staff at school about a complaint, it will be taken seriously and we will listen to what you have to say.



What do I have to do?

You might be thinking "what sort of thing would I complain about?". Below is a list of examples. If you are unsure whether you need to complain about something, talk to your teacher to check.

You may need to complain about:

- An event – such as a school trip.
- Anything about your school life – such as homework, school uniform.
- The behaviour of an individual(s) – for example, another pupil or member of staff.
- Something that affects you as a pupil – such as bullying.
- Something that has happened outside school but is connected to the school – such as the behaviour of pupils on transport or in the street.

If you ever need to complain about something like the examples above, you need to talk to somebody you trust. This could be anyone from the list below:

- The headteacher
- A teacher
- Your parents
- Another member of staff

You can always talk to your friends about a problem, but if you want something done about it, it is important to tell an adult as well.

Of course, you should only make a complaint when you need to. When choosing whether to complain or not, ask yourself:

- Is my complaint about something which affects the whole school or a group of pupils?
- Could I solve the problem by talking to my class teacher, a teaching assistant, or someone else in school?
- Am I happy to ask an individual member of staff to sort the issue or do I want to use the steps in this policy?

Once you have thought about the questions above, you can make your complaint. When the complaint has been made, you should:

- Cooperate with the school to help with understanding and finding a solution to the complaint.
- Tell someone about the problem in lots of detail.
- Respond quickly to any questions the adult you told has asked.
- Ask for help when needed.
- Be respectful of the people involved.

As a result of your help, the headteacher will:

- Ensure you are involved in fixing the problem you are complaining about.
- Talk to you about the progress of the complaints process.
- Ensure your privacy and confidentiality is protected.
- Treat you with equality and fairness throughout.
- Tell you any information you need to know about what you have said or what will happen.



When should I complain?

Any pupil can complain if they need to. We will consider all complaints made.

When making a complaint, we ask that you make it as soon as possible so we can properly investigate it and resolve any problems you have. If you make a complaint three months after a problem happens, we may not be able to look into your complaint. If this timescale changes, we will let you know.

When you make a complaint, you will be asked to complete a complaints form. You can find one at the end of this policy or you can ask your teacher and they will give you a copy. You will always be given the chance to complete this form and hand it in to your teacher.

If you are making a complaint about the headteacher you shouldn't complain directly to them – talk to your parents or another teacher. The governing board of the school will be also be told.



What will happen when I complain?

Stage one – meeting with a teacher to explain the problem

In this stage, you will meet with a teacher and you will be asked to complete a complaints form – you can fill it in by yourself or with a parent or teacher. Once you have finished the form, you should hand it in to your teacher or the headteacher.

During the meeting, the teacher will take notes of what has been talked about, and notes of any additional discussions about the complaint will also be noted down.

If the complaint is about the headteacher, the governing board will sort the complaint out.

Within 15 school days of you first talking to an adult about a complaint, you and the adult dealing with the complaint will meet and discuss what will happen next. You will be asked your opinion on the resolution.

Stage two – formal complaint made to the headteacher

If the complaint is too complicated to be sorted out in 15 days then stage two will begin. It will take another 15 days to try and resolve the complaint – you will be told by the headteacher if this needs to happen.

You will meet with the headteacher again, or, if the complaint is about the headteacher, the chair of the governing board. This meeting will be used to talk about the problem and you will be told what has happened so far to help fix the problem.

During the meeting, notes will be taken of what has been talked about, as well as notes of any additional discussions that you have had with an adult about the complaint.

If, after an additional 15 days, the problem has not been sorted out, stage three will begin.

Stage three – a meeting with the governing board

If the issue hasn't been resolved after stage one and two, the complaint will be given to the governing board. The governing board will think about the complaint, talk about what has already been done to try and fix the problem and try and find a solution.

The problem will be looked at thoroughly and a solution will be found within 20 school days.

If a solution hasn't been found in 20 days, or the solution found doesn't fix the problem, your parents can then appeal the decision. You will not be involved in this process but you will be told about the outcomes of the appeal.



Who will talk to me about my complaint?

Once you have made a complaint, the adult you told will think of the best way to deal with it. This may include telling a more senior member of staff.

If it is really serious, someone from the local authority or the police might ask to talk to you.

You don't have to worry if somebody else is told about your complaint; you are not in trouble, it just means that the person you told thinks it is best to tell them to keep you safe and happy in school.

If one of the adults mentioned above wants to talk to you, you will have another adult with you at all times – this will likely be one of your parents, unless you want someone else there.

You will be told what will happen during the interview before it starts and what you're allowed to do, e.g. have a parent there.

When the interview has finished, a transcript will be made. A transcript is a piece of paper with everything that was said on it (a bit like a filmscript). You will be asked to read it, and if you are happy that that reflects what you said then you will be asked to sign it.



What will the school ask me?

When you make a complaint, the adult you tell will talk to you about the following things:

- The main problems you have, your options and how it might be dealt with
- If the complaint will be resolved informally or by using the school's official complaints
- procedure
- If any actions will be taken by the school as a result of the complaint (even if the complaint was followed through or not)

When you make a complaint, the adult you talk to may record the conversation using a microphone so that the full details of the complaint can be listened to at a later date. You will be told before being recorded and anything you say will only be listened to by the adult(s) dealing with the complaint.

Your identity and personal details will be protected by law. If you want to hear what you said at a later date, you can ask school for a copy of the recording.



What if someone is complaining about me?

If a complaint is being made about you, you will be asked to talk to the adult responsible for the complaint so you have the chance to tell your side of the problem. You will always be treated fairly by the school when looking into the seriousness of the complaint.

If the school finds that you are responsible for the problem being complained about, you will be disciplined in line with the school rules.

If you think you have been treated unfairly, you can talk to the school's governing board or the Citizens Advice Bureau.



Serious complaints

If you have ever been physically or emotionally hurt by an adult or peer, it is important that you tell a responsible adult. They will ask you what has happened and if they think your safety is at risk, they might tell social services.

If this happens, the social services will take over the investigation of the complaint – you will be told what is happening at all times. If this happens, you can talk to your teacher if you have any worries.



Complaining about the same thing

Because we want to take every complaint seriously, it is important that you only tell us things you haven't complained about before unless the problem has not been resolved.

If we have found a solution to your complaint and told you what will happen to fix your problem,then the complaint is closed. If you complain about the same thing over and over again after we have fixed the problem, we don't have to discuss the issue anymore.

We don't want this to happen. So, to avoid any repeated requests, we will:

- Make sure we have done all we can to fix the problem.
- Make sure we have told you what we have done to fix the problem.
- Tell you when you are repeating a complaint and why we won't be responding to you.

If you feel you have not been listened to by the school, you and your parents can contact the Citizen's Advice Bureau.

Independent advocacy:
If you would like an independent advocate to help you with your complaint you can ask for one. An independent advocate is someone who works for you to help you understand about making a complaint, can help you to write it, support you in meetings and to understand the actions from your complaint.
You, your parents carers or someone from school can help you ask for an independent advocate by emailing childrens.rights@derbyhire.gov.uk Your parents carers will be asked if it's ok for you to have an independent advocate.

Under law, we will let you see any information we have about you and the complaint

Complaints Form

This complaints form can be used to submit a complaint to the headteacher, or the governing board if your complaint is against the headteacher. You can ask a parent or teacher to help you complete this form. Please hand it in to your teacher once it has been finished.

<table>
<tr><td>Name:</td><td rowspan="6">Home address:</td></tr>
<tr><td>Teacher's name:</td></tr>
<tr><td>Year group:</td></tr>
<tr><td>Pupil's date of birth:</td></tr>
<tr><td>Parent's telephone number:</td></tr>
<tr><td>Parent's email:</td><td>Postcode:</td></tr>
<tr><td colspan="2">What is your complaint about, and what would you like done to fix it?</td></tr>
<tr><td colspan="2">When did you talk to your teacher about the problem that you have?</td></tr>
<tr><td colspan="2">What happened after the talk? Was your problem solved?</td></tr>
<tr><td>Signed (pupil)</td><td>Date:</td></tr>
</table>