COMPLAINTS POLICY

in line with SMBC Model School Complaints Policy 2016.

This policy should be used in conjunction with the
DfE School Complaints Toolkit 2014 and
the Best Practice Advice for School Complaints Procedures 2016,
alongside our Home/School Agreement.

Issued: February 2016

Due for Review: February 2019
Solihull Metropolitan Borough Council

SCHOOL COMPLAINTS POLICY 2016

This policy should be used in conjunction with the DfE School Complaints Toolkit 2014 and the Best Practice Advice for School Complaints Procedures 2016, alongside the Widney Junior School’s Home/School Agreement.

Introduction:

Since 1 September 2003 governing bodies (GBs) of all maintained schools and maintained nursery schools in England have been required, under Section 29 of the Education Act 2002, summarised in Annex A, to have in place a procedure to deal with all complaints relating to their school and to any community facilities or services that the school provides. This does not limit complainants to parents or carers of pupils registered at a school. A complainant could be a member of the wider community or representing an ex-pupil. The law also requires the procedure to be publicised.

The majority of issues raised by parents, the community or pupils, are concerns rather than complaints. Widney Junior School is committed to taking concerns seriously, at the earliest stage, in the hope of keeping the number of formal complaints to a minimum and without needing formal procedures. However, depending on the nature of the complaint, you may wish or be asked to follow the school’s formal complaints procedure.

The prime aim of Widney Junior School’s policy is to resolve the complaint as fairly and speedily as possible. Formal complaints will be dealt with in a sensitive, impartial and confidential manner.

The following details outline the stages that can be used to resolve complaints.

The Widney Junior School Policy has four main stages.

In summary they are as follows:

- Stage 1 (informal): concern heard by an appropriate staff member
- Stage 2 (formal): complaint heard by Headteacher;
- Stage 3 (formal): complaint heard by Chair of Governors
- Stage 4 (formal): complaint heard by GB’s complaints appeal panel.

Stage 1 – concern heard by staff member

Concerns can be raised with the school at any time and will often generate an immediate response, which will resolve the concern. The school requests that parents make their first contact with their child’s class teacher. On some occasions the concern raised may require investigation, or discussion with others, in which case you will receive an informal but informed response within a day or two. The vast majority of concerns will be satisfactorily dealt with in this way. However, if you are not satisfied with the result at stage 1, please write to or call the school within 10 school working days. The school will then look at your complaint at the next stage.
Stage 2 – complaint heard by Headteacher;

The Headteacher may delegate the task of collating the information to another staff member but not the decision on the action to be taken. The Headteacher will arrange for the complaint to be acknowledged within 5 school working days of receiving it and a meeting may be convened to discuss the matter further. Following the investigation the Headteacher will aim to provide a written response within 10 school working days of sending the acknowledgement. However if a complaint is more complex to review this can be extended to a maximum of 20 school working days. The school will provide you details of the new deadline and an explanation on the delay. If you are not satisfied with the result at stage 2 please write to or call the school within 10 school working days of getting our response. The school will then look at your complaint at the next stage.

Stage 3 – complaint heard by Chair of Governors

If the matter has not been resolved at Stage 2 or the complaint is about the Headteacher, then you will need to write to the Chair of Governors c/o the school. The Chair of Governors will arrange for the complaint to be acknowledged within 5 school working days of receiving it and a meeting may be convened to discuss the matter further. Following an investigation, the Chair of Governors will aim to provide a written response within 10 school working days of sending out the acknowledgement. However if a complaint is more complex to review this can be extended to 20 school working days. The school will provide you details of the new deadline and an explanation on the delay. If you are dissatisfied with the result at stage 3, you will need to let the school know within 10 school working days of getting the response. The school will then look at your complaint at the next stage.

Stage 4 – complaint heard by Governing Bodies Complaints Appeal Panel.

If the matter has still not been resolved at Stage 3, then you will need to write to the Clerk of Governors giving details of the complaint and asking that it is put before the appeal panel. Should the Chair have been involved at any previous stage in the process a nominated Governor, impartial to the complainant, will convene a complaints panel. The complaint will be acknowledged within 5 school working days of receiving it. The hearing will normally take place within 20 school working days of sending the acknowledgment.

The aim of the Appeal panel hearing is to impartially resolve the complaint and to achieve reconciliation between the school and the complainant. All parties will be notified of the Panel’s decision in writing within 5 school working days after the date of the hearing. The letter will also contain what you need to do if you wish to take the matter further.

The Governors appeal hearing is the last school-based stage of the complaints process.

From 1 August 2012 complaints about maintained schools not resolved by the school should be addressed to the School Complaints unit (SCU), Department of Education, 2nd Floor, Piccadilly Gate, Manchester, M1 2WD

For further information and advice regarding this Model School’s Complaints Policy please contact the School’s Information Officer on 0121 704 8536.
HOME-SCHOOL AGREEMENT

Education is a partnership between home and school and it is hoped that through this agreement the excellent partnership that already exists at Widney will be further strengthened.

1. The Parents / Carers
I (We) shall try to:
   a) see that my child goes to School regularly and on time and let the School know as soon as possible of any reason for absence;
   b) see that my child is suitably dressed in accordance with the School’s uniform policy and equipped to take part in all aspects of Physical Education;
   c) let the School know about any concerns or problems that might affect my child’s work or behaviour;
   d) support the School’s policies and guidelines for behaviour;
   e) support my child in homework and other opportunities for learning;
   f) attend parents’ evenings and discussions about my child’s progress;
   g) get to know about my child’s life at school;
   h) encourage my child to keep Widney’s most important rule - ‘Be kind and helpful to others’.

Signed: ................................................................. Parent/Carer  Date: ....................

2. The School will
   a) contact the parents as soon as possible if there is a problem with attendance or punctuality;
   b) let parents know about any concerns or problems relating to their child’s work or behaviour;
   c) arrange Parents’ Evenings during which the child’s progress can be discussed;
   d) provide an annual written report informing parents of their child’s attainment and progress;
   e) provide information concerning the work the School plans to cover with the children during the year;
   f) provide and monitor homework as appropriate to the needs of the child;
   g) keep parents informed about School activities through regular letters home;
   h) make time to discuss parents’ concerns relating to their child’s life at Widney.

Signed: ................................................................. Head Teacher  Date: ....................

Child’s Name: ..........................................................................................  Class: ............

Please sign this form and return it to the school office as soon as possible.
A copy is available on our website www.widneyjuniorschool.co.uk for your reference. Thank you.