

Complaints Policy Statement

1. Introduction

At Derrymount we are dedicated to providing a specialist, quality service that cares for and upholds the needs, rights and entitlements of those individuals with special needs and their families.

We recognize that there will be times when we will receive concerns or complaints about our practices, actions or lack of action and believe that it is in everyone's interest to ensure that these are resolved as quickly as possible.

Many issues will be able to be resolved informally, without the need for formal procedures, however at Derrymount all concerns and complaints are taken seriously and we will respond professionally to any concerns raised by any person, including members of the general public about any provision or services that we as a school provide.

2. Policy Aims

This policy statement sets out our approach to dealing with parental concerns and complaints. Further details of how we handle them are contained in our procedures document, **Derrymount School, Procedures for dealing with complaints** which you can obtain on request from the school office.

1. We value good school and community relations and will, therefore, do everything we can to establish and maintain them. This includes seeking to resolve any concerns or complaints promptly, and to the satisfaction of all concerned.
2. We welcome feedback on what parents and other stakeholders feel we do well, or not so well, as a school. We will consider carefully all feedback, whether positive or negative, and will review our policies and practices accordingly.
3. We will treat all concerns and complaints seriously and courteously and will advise parents and others of the school's procedures for dealing with their concerns. In return, we expect parents and other complainants to behave respectfully towards all members of the school community. In particular, any disagreement with the school should not be expressed inappropriately or in front of pupils.
4. All school staff and members of the governing body will receive a copy of this policy statement and will be familiar with the school's procedures for dealing with concerns and complaints, to which they will have access as required. The policy will be available on request to any affected party.
5. The school's procedures will be reviewed regularly and updated as necessary.
6. Staff and governors will receive training in handling concerns and complaints as appropriate. This may be on an individual basis, or as a group activity for all staff, or for specific groups, such as the office staff or members of the governing body.
7. Whilst we will seek to resolve concerns and complaints to the satisfaction of all parties, it may not be possible to achieve this in every case. We will, therefore, use our option to close a complaint before all the stages of the school's procedures have been exhausted, if this appears to be appropriate.
8. The government and the Local Authority (LA) advocate resolution of all concerns and complaints at school level wherever possible, in the interests of maintaining good home/community/school relations. The role of the LA in advising complainants and schools on the handling of concerns and complaints is set out in the school's procedures.

3. Exceptions within this complaints procedure

Exceptions within this complaints procedure, for which there are separate statutory procedures, are shown below:

Exceptions	Who to contact
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Admissions to schools • Statutory assessments of Special Educational Needs (SEN) • School re-organisation proposals • Matters likely to require a Child Protection Investigation 	<p>Concerns should be raised direct with local authorities (LA).</p> <p>For school admissions, it will depend on who is the admission authority (either the school or the LA). Complaints about admission appeals for maintained schools are dealt with by the Local Government Ombudsman.</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Exclusion of children from school 	<p>Further information about raising concerns about exclusion can be found at: www.gov.uk/school-discipline-exclusions/exclusions.</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Whistleblowing 	<p>Schools have an internal whistleblowing procedure for their employees and voluntary staff. Other concerns can be raised direct with Ofsted by telephone on: 0300 123 3155, via email at: whistleblowing@ofsted.gov.uk or by writing to:</p> <p>WBHL, Ofsted Piccadilly Gate Store Street Manchester M1 2WD.</p> <p>The Department for Education is also a prescribed body for whistleblowing in education.</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Staff grievances and disciplinary procedures 	<p>These matters will invoke the school's internal grievance procedures. Complainants will not be informed of the outcome of any investigation.</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Complaints about services provided by other providers who may use school premises or facilities. 	<p>Providers should have their own complaints procedure to deal with complaints about service. They should be contacted direct.</p>

4. Policy Links

- Complaints Procedure
- Harassment Procedure
- Unreasonable Complaints Policy
- Best Practice Advice for School Complaints Procedures 2016 -DfE

5. Review of Policy

This policy will be reviewed annually by both the senior Leadership team and the Governing body.

