



## **Vallis First School Complaints Policy & Procedure**

### **Introduction**

As a school, we believe in creating a partnership with parents to ensure that all the children at Vallis First School are happy and successful in their time at the school. The school will aim to provide as many opportunities as we can to keep you informed about your child's progress and to involve you in the life of the school - with parents' evenings in the Autumn and Spring terms and a written report in the Summer term. Family Learning events will give you opportunities to see your child at work and work alongside them. Parents are invited to our Harvest Assembly and Christmas Performances as well as Sports Days and other school events.

Parents are welcome to meet with teachers informally at the end of the day or to request a meeting or telephone call to discuss a concern through contacting the School Office, emailing or telephoning. We aim to deal with questions and concerns quickly and helpfully.

Sometimes parents and schools do have a misunderstanding, but these can often be sorted out by talking to the right person. Most concerns can be settled without too much trouble by discussing things with the class teacher or a member of the Senior Leadership Team. Whatever the issue, it is always important to try and find an answer, especially if you are seriously concerned about your child's future at the school.

### **The Complaints Process**

#### ***Stage 1 – Informal***

If the complaint is relating to a child or their education, please make the complaint to their class teacher.

If the complaint is about a member of staff, then it should be made to the Headteacher.

If the complaint is about the Headteacher, then it should be made to the Chair of Governors.

If the complaint is about a Governor, then it should be made to the Clerk to Governors.

These complaints can be made in person, over the phone or in writing. There may be a request for an informal meeting to gather more information about the complaint. Hopefully, a solution can be reached and steps forward are agreed upon.

#### ***Stage 2 - Formal***

If you are dissatisfied with the outcome you have received from speaking to a member of staff, then please make a formal complaint in writing to the Headteacher.

If your complaint is about the Headteacher, you may make a formal complaint in writing to the Chair of Governors.

The Headteacher (or Chair of Governors) may call you in for a meeting to discuss the complaint. The Headteacher (or Chair of Governors) will send a written report explaining their decisions, rationale and any further actions as soon as possible after the investigation and any meetings have been completed.

### ***Stage 3 – Appeal***

If you would like to lodge an appeal following the outcome of Stage 2, this will be taken to the appeals panel. You should write to the Clerk to the Governing Body to exercise this right within 10 school days.

You will receive an acknowledgement of your letter from the Clerk. An appeal panel meeting will be convened within 15 days of the acknowledgement being sent. A letter of outcome will be issued within 10 working days of the panel.

### ***Stage 4 – Further Action***

The appeal panel's decision is final. If you are still unhappy with the outcome or process, then you can complain to the Secretary of State for Education.

### **Additional Information**

This document does not apply to complaints about:

- Pupil admissions
- Pupil exclusions
- EHC Plans
- Disciplinary issues relating to members of staff

Each of these follows its own process of complaints and appeals which are outlined in their relevant policies.

If there is an allegation or concern about physical or sexual misconduct towards a child, or there is a belief that a child may be at risk of serious harm, the school will immediately refer the case to child protection and welfare services. If it is decided that there is cause for an official investigation, the decisions by these authorities will supersede those made by the school and outlined in this document.

Where the complaint relates to a safeguarding referral made by a member of staff at the school, any consideration of that complaint by the school will be limited to a review of the reasonableness of the decision to make the referral in light of the evidence available to the member of staff at that time and in light of the school's safeguarding policies.

For more information on our school's provision for protecting our pupils, read our **child protection and safeguarding policy**, and the **whistleblowing** policy.

Anonymous complaints will not be examined under this document.

***March 2023***