



Nascot Wood Junior School

Complaints Policy

Reviewed: September 2020

Next Review: September 2022

Review by: The Governing Body

How we will deal with your concerns

The Senior Leadership Team are routinely having to make difficult decisions which could potentially have a significant impact on the welfare and wellbeing of the children. These decisions are not taken lightly and are based on an expertise and experience gained from many years working in the field of education, such decisions are made in the best interests of the children in all cases.

You may want to talk to us about a particular aspect of this school, though not actually make a complaint - you just want to get something 'off your chest'. It is important to recognise that there is a difference between a concern and a complaint.

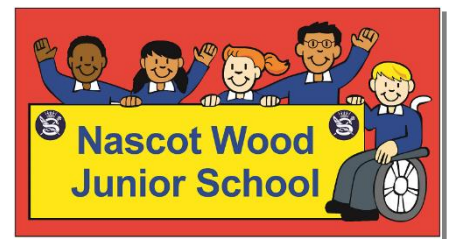
If you feel concerned about an aspect of school life, please book an appointment to see a member of staff. We will always listen and may refer you to a member of staff who is best placed to resolve your concern.

How to comment or complain

This policy covers complaints made by Parents or Carers of children who attend the school. All complaints should be made promptly and in any event the school is under no obligation to consider complaints made **3 months** or more after the events being complained about.

If you are dissatisfied about the way your child is being treated, or any actions or lack of action by us, please feel free to contact us using the details listed below.

Nascot Wood Junior School,
Nascot Wood Road,
Watford
WD17 4YS
01923 238784
www.nascotwoodjm.herts.sch.uk
admin@nascotwoodjm.herts.sch.uk



Our aims upon receipt of a complaint

- Your complaint will be dealt with honestly, politely and in confidence.
- Your complaint will be looked into thoroughly and fairly.
- If your complaint is urgent we will deal with it more quickly.
- We will keep you up to date with progress at each stage.
- You will get an apology if we have made a mistake.
- You will be told what we are going to do to put things right.
- We aim to give you a full and clear written reply to formal complaints within **10 school days (2 weeks) for complaints at the first formal stage and 28 school days (5½ weeks) for complaints at the second formal stage.**

About the procedure

This policy is based upon a graded approach and has three stages. Each part of the process must be completed before progression to the next stage. The responsibility lies with the school to determine and inform which stage of the process the complaint is at.

It is important to note that concerns and complaints can be complicated and that both the informal stage and the first formal stage (step 1 and step 2) may take more time than an initial meeting provides, and further meetings may be required in order to gain meaningful resolution.

For example, a parent may need to meet with a teacher or with the Headteacher on several occasions in order to reach a satisfactory outcome. One meeting at each stage will not automatically trigger progression to the next.

Step 1: In the first instance – informal stage

If you have a concern about anything we do, or if you wish to make a complaint, you can do this by telephone, in person or in writing (by letter or email). We expect that most complaints can be settled quickly and informally, either by putting matters right or by giving you an explanation. If there is something you are not happy about, or you don't understand why we are doing something in a particular way, please make an appointment to come in and discuss it with the class teacher or another appropriate member of staff, such as the Special Educational Needs Co-ordinator (SENCo) if it concerns Special Educational Needs and/or Disability.

If the member of staff you speak to in the first instance is unable to attempt to resolve the matter, you should make an appointment with the Headteacher. In this case there is a next step.

Step 2: First - formal stage (If Step 1 has not resolved your concern or complaint)

Request a meeting with the Headteacher who will investigate your complaint and aim to inform you of the outcome **within 10 school days (2 weeks)**.

If your first contact is with individual Governors, they will advise you to take up your concerns with the appropriate member of staff or Headteacher. A Governor should not be made aware of a potential complaint as they may be required to sit on a Panel in the event of a formal hearing (Step Three) and must be impartial.

If your complaint is about the Headteacher, you should **write to the Chair of Governors**. If your child has a Statement of Special Educational Needs (SEN) or an Education, Health and Care Plan (EHCP) you might find it helpful to talk to our Special Educational Needs Co-ordinator (SENCo) or your child's named Special Needs Officer at the Local Authority. The SEND Information Advice and Support Service (SENDIASS – formerly Parent Partnership) may also be able to help you.

Step 3: Second - formal stage (If Step 1 or 2 have not resolved your concern or complaint)

If you remain dissatisfied following Step 2 and wish to take your complaint further, you will be asked to complete a form addressed (pages 7 & 8) to the Chair of Governors. On the form, you should:

- Make it clear why you are complaining.
- Say who you have spoken to already and what was done as a result.
- Explain what you want to happen as a result of your complaint.

The Chair of Governors will arrange for your complaint to be considered and investigated under the arrangements approved by the Governing Body. This will involve a Panel of impartial Governors, unless your child no longer attends the school and their name has been removed from the school roll. If the Chair of Governors or another Governor has been involved in discussions to try and help settle the disagreement previously, s/he will arrange for another Governor to take charge of the investigation. The Governor in charge of investigating the complaint may arrange to meet with you to discuss your concerns.

You should make sure that the Governors' Complaint Panel is provided with any written information or evidence you intend to use in a formal hearing. You may bring a friend, representative or interpreter to any meeting to support you, if you wish. You will need to inform the Chair of the Panel of the person's name ahead of the meeting or hearing and the capacity in which they will be attending with you. Timescales will be given if this part of the process is reached. The Chair of the Panel may invite any person who may help establish the facts of the complaint. The Chair should tell you who this person is before the meeting if this is the case.

If any member of staff is required by the Governing Body to attend a meeting they will have the opportunity to be accompanied or represented as they wish, this would may be a Union Representative. A member of staff named in a complaint may also choose to attend a meeting, even if not required to do so by the Governors. They may also be represented. If this happens, we will inform you in advance.

When the Panel has fully investigated your complaint, the Chair of the Panel or the Governor in charge of the investigation will write to you to tell you the findings, **within 5 school days**. These findings will be reported to the Governing Body. The Chair of Governors will then write to you confirming the outcome of your complaint and any agreed actions to be taken. Our Governing Body will aim to deal with your complaint **within 28 school days (5½ weeks)**.

Further recourse

Most complaints are resolved by this process. Should your complaint not be resolved, your further options are as follows:

- You can complain to the Secretary of State at the Department for Education:

The Secretary of State
Department for Education
Sanctuary Buildings
Great Smith Street
London
SW1P 3BT
Website: www.education.gov.uk
Telephone: 0370 000 2288

Please note that The Secretary of State will only consider complaints that have already been through and exhausted the school's complaints process, as laid out in this document.

In the case of complaints about **Special Educational Needs provision**, for a child with a Statement or Education Health and Care Plan, you may complain further to the Local Authority. This should be done by writing to the Children's Services Complaints Manager.

It should be noted however that if you wish to pursue this route, you must do so within **20 working days (4 weeks)** of receiving the written outcome of the hearing into your complaint. After **20 working days (4 weeks)**, neither the school nor the Local Authority is under any obligation to investigate or progress your complaint any further.

Useful contacts

Advisory Centre for Education

Education Advice & Training
72 Durnsford Road
London
N11 2EJ
Web: www.ace-ed.org.uk
Phone: **0300 0115 142**

POhWER

Hertlands House
Primett Road
Stevenage
SG1 3EE
Web: www.pohwer.net
Phone: **0300 456 2370**

Children's Legal Centre

Riverside Office Centre
Century House North
North Station Road
Colchester
Essex
CO1 1RE
Web: www.childrenslegalcentre.com
Phone: **0345 345 4345**

National Youth Advocacy Service

(NYAS)
Egerton House
Tower Road
Birkenhead
Wirral
CH41 1FN
Web: www.nyas.net
Phone: **0345 345 4345**

SENDIASS (Special Educational Needs & Disability Information Advice Support Service – formerly Parent Partnership)

Registry Office Block
CHR102
County Hall
Hertford
SG13 8DF
Web: www.hertfordshire.gov.uk/sendias
Email: sendias@hertfordshire.gov.uk
Phone: **01992 555847**

Family Lives

(Formerly Parentline Plus)

15-17 The Broadway
Hatfield
Hertfordshire
AL9 5HZ
Web: www.familylives.org.uk
Phone: **0808 800 2222**

Have you complained to the Headteacher (Step2)?	YES (inc. date)	NO
What happened when you complained to the Headteacher?		
What would you like us to do to put things right?		
Signed		
Date		

Please return this form to the Chair of the Governing Body
Please note that further clarifying questions may be asked of you, after the panel receive this form, in order to reach a meaningful resolution.