

LEES BROOK COMMUNITY SPORTS COLLEGE COMPLAINTS PROCEDURE POLICY DOCUMENT

Background

Many matters that come to the attention of teachers and head teachers as 'complaints' are resolved amicably through discussion. It would be wrong to categorise such cases as 'complaints'. However, care must be taken not to obstruct the right of someone to pursue the formal complaints procedure if that is their wish.

Procedures should ensure that problems are sorted out quickly and that the person complaining is given fair treatment and a chance to state their case.

Complaints generally fall into two broad groups:

- ◇ Complaints about the curriculum;
- ◇ General complaints about other matters.

The procedures that Governing Bodies are required to have are the same for both types of complaint. Complaints will either be from a parent of a student at the college or from a member of the public.

Complaints from Parents

At Lees Brook, our aim is to provide a safe and secure environment in which our students will be helped to achieve their potential, both academically and socially. We strongly believe a child will achieve more when the college, its students and their parents work together. The Home-College Agreement sets out the expectations for each of those partners and there is a copy of the Agreement in the Student Planner.

We have a formal programme of consultation meetings each year, including:

- A meeting each term for parents with their child's Form Tutor, when a student's academic progress, behaviour, attitude, and other issues are discussed;
- Subject Clinics at which parents and subject teachers can meet to discuss a student's progress in a specific subject. These are held five times a year.

These meetings provide opportunities for parents to raise matters of concern about the curriculum or other issues. If a concern is not resolved through discussion with the teacher, the parent or teacher can refer it to a member of the leadership team. This includes curriculum leaders, pastoral leaders, assistant heads, deputy head or head teacher.

Curriculum Complaints Procedure

Parents may use this Procedure if they believe the college is failing to:

- ◇ Provide the National Curriculum in the college for a particular child
- ◇ Follow the law on charging for college activities
- ◇ Offer only approved qualifications or syllabuses
- ◇ Provide religious education and daily collective worship
- ◇ Provide the information they have to provide
- ◇ Carry out any statutory duty relating to the curriculum

or if it is acting unreasonably in any of the above cases.

For complaints about a head teacher or a Governing Body, the first formal stage of the procedure is for the Governing Body to consider the complaint. If the parent is still not satisfied after this, he or she can put the complaint to the LEA.

General Complaints

The responsibility for dealing with complaints that do not fall within the definition of curriculum complaints lies with the college's Governing Body. Appeals against Governing Body decisions and procedures can be made to the LEA and to the Secretary of State.

Complaints from members of the public

Complaints from members of the public should be made direct to a member of the senior leadership team of the college. This will be to the head teacher, the deputy headteacher or to an assistant headteacher. Where some issues are concerned (for instance, those involving the college site), the complaint may be made to the Bursar.

PROCEDURE TO BE FOLLOWED WHEN DEALING WITH A COMPLAINT

1 Clarify the exact nature of the complaint

Initially, the member of staff dealing with the complaint will have a discussion, either by telephone or at a meeting, with the person making the complaint. The purpose of the discussion will be to clarify the exact nature of the complaint and to determine what, if any, further action is appropriate. Some action on the part of the college or the complainant may be necessary before the complaint can be resolved. This will be agreed during the initial discussion. Where possible, the college will seek to resolve the complaint to the satisfaction of all parties involved and the outcome will be communicated to the complainant either by telephone or in writing.

2 Complaint made to and considered by the Head teacher

If, at this initial stage, the complaint is not accepted or resolved to the satisfaction of the complainant, the complaint can be made, in writing, to the head teacher. The head teacher will look into the complaint and will respond either in writing or by telephone. Where possible, the head teacher will seek an acceptable outcome that satisfies all parties involved.

3 Complaint made to and considered by the Chair of Governors

If the head teacher does not accept the complaint, or is unable to resolve the complaint within 15 school days, or where the head teacher is the subject of the complaint, the complainant can make the complaint, in writing, to the Chair of Governors. The head teacher may also refer the complaint to the Chair of Governors.

4 Complaint considered by the Governing Body at a Governing Body meeting

The Chair of Governors will arrange for the complaint to be considered at a meeting of the Governing Body.

If the complaint is complex, the Chair of Governors can appoint an investigating officer to gather evidence and conduct preliminary interviews. This evidence will be presented at the Governors' meeting at which the complaint is to be considered.

5 Governing Body's decision communicated to complainant

The Chair of Governors or the Clerk to Governors will communicate the Governors' decision to the complainant, in writing or by telephone. The right of appeal to an external body will be explained in cases where the complaint is not accepted.

6 Appeal to an external body

If the complainant is not satisfied with the outcome of the complaint, he or she may put the complaint to the LEA or the Secretary of State.

Review of Complaints Procedure

The Governing Body will review its Complaints Procedure on an annual basis.