

Barker's Lane Community School

'I have something to say to the school'

Advice and Support for Parents



'LEARN TOGETHER'

Let's learn to enjoy, aspire respect and nurture together

Barker's Lane Community School
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INTRODUCTION

Communication is valued as part of a partnership between home and school—verbal or written.

Collaboration and co-operation between parents, staff and governors leads to a shared sense of purpose and an atmosphere of trust and respect within school.

Often parents and other members of the public would like schools to know their views. Sometimes there are meetings where this is possible or there is the opportunity to respond to questionnaires.

On other occasions a personal comment is more appropriate.

This leaflet intends to support you with matters that you may be concerned about, and how to go about discussing these. A full copy of the Complaints Procedure is available on the school website or on request from the school office.

SHOULD I PAY A COMPLIMENT?

Yes please! We all work together very hard for the benefit of all of the children at school. It is lovely to hear when something has gone well and that the children / parents have particularly enjoyed an aspect of school life / curriculum. We all thrive on praise!

SHOULD I SHARE MY CONCERNS WITH THE SCHOOL?

Definitely. All our members of staff want to know as soon as possible if something concerns you or your child. Things that can start as a small worry can often escalate if not shared / discussed.

Please make a member of staff aware (usually your child's class teacher) if you have any concerns, they can then look into this and give you a response. If necessary they can take steps to remedy a situation, any misunderstandings can be cleared up or an apology can be given if a mistake has been made. *We would normally expect you to raise your issue within 10 school days of any incident.* Everyone concerned benefits from a speedy resolution to any concerns and we all learn from mistakes, and can improve.

We are all here to provide the best possible education for you child / children and only by *working together* will we be able to do this.

Most matters are dealt with and resolved at this stage through discussion with the class teacher.

SHOULD I COMPLAIN?

Yes if you believe something is seriously wrong or has not been resolved. Your view can then be considered and an investigation can establish whether there is something wrong which needs to be corrected.

Our definition of a complaint is 'an expression of dissatisfaction in relation to the school or a member of its staff that requires a response from the school'.

The school's response will be based on the Local Authority policy which has been agreed by the Governing Body. We will always seek to be open and fair with all involved. Writing down your complaint helps to clarify exactly what it is that is being complained about.

As far as possible, your concern or complaint will be dealt with on a confidential basis.

WHAT DO WE EXPECT FROM YOU?

We believe that all complaints have a right to be heard, understood and respected. We expect all concerned to be polite and courteous. We will not tolerate aggressive, abusive or unreasonable behaviour. We will not tolerate unreasonable demands or unreasonable persistent or vexatious complaints.

WHOM DO I CONTACT?

This can depend on the particular situation.

If you have a general concern, the class teacher is the best person to discuss this with. All our teachers are available by telephone / appointment before 8.30am or when they bring children out after school. You can also send a brief message via Seesaw asking to arrange to talk to them.

If you are not satisfied or have a complaint please contact Mrs Edwards, Headteacher who is always available through the school office. Mrs Edwards where possible will always see parents / make an appointment / contact parents as soon as can be arranged. We always aim to have a positive dialogue in the hope of solving any problems / difficulties as informally as possible. Very rarely are issues not solved at this stage.

Sometimes you might be concerned about matters that are not decided by the school (e.g. admissions to school, school meals, etc), in which case we will tell you who to complain to.

WHAT IF THE MATTER IS STILL UNRESOLVED?

Despite following the procedure, if the matter is still not resolved, it will be necessary to **put your complaint in writing to the Headteacher**. We would expect you to aim to do this within five school days as it is in everyone's interest to resolve a complaint as soon as possible. We also have a complaint form available from the school office to help you.
(STAGE A)

The Headteacher will invite you to discuss your complaint at a meeting.
(STAGE B) We will aim to have a meeting with you to explain what will happen, normally within 10 school days of receiving your letter. The Headteacher will complete the investigation and let you know the outcome in writing within 10 school days.

If your complaint is about the Headteacher, you should write to the Chair of Governors who will undertake the investigation or may delegate it to another governor. Stage B onwards of the complaints procedure will apply.

HOW DO I MAKE A FORMAL COMPLAINT TO THE GOVERNING BODY?

It is very rare that a complaint will reach this stage, but if all other avenues have failed, or you feel that your complaint has not been dealt with fairly, you should write to the Chair of Governors setting out reasons for asking the governing body Complaints Committee to consider your complaint. (STAGE C) *You can not introduce new or different complaints at this stage.* You will receive an acknowledgement with five school days. A meeting will follow, with all relevant documentation having been circulated at least five school days in advance to everyone involved. You will be invited to a meeting with the committee usually with 15 school days.

WHAT HAPPENS NEXT?

We will write to you within 10 school days of the meeting explaining the outcome of the governing body Complaints Committee's consideration. We will keep records of all conversations and discussions for the purpose of future reference and review by the full governing body.

The governing body's Complaints Committee is the final arbiter of any complaint.

OUR COMMITMENT TO YOU

We appreciate this can sound like a long process but it exists so that the views of all involved can be heard. You have rights, pupils have rights and staff and governors have rights. The aim is to ensure any complaint is dealt with thoroughly and fairly.

We will take your concerns and complaints seriously and when we have made mistakes, will try to learn from them.

The latter stages of the complaints procedure are used rarely but remain part of the process. Communication is the key and is welcome to try and resolve any issues. All services are improved by a positive response to compliments, concerns and complaints.

If you need help to make your concerns known we will try to assist you. Support for children can be accessed through MEIC, a national advocacy and advice helpline for children.

At Barker's Lane Community School complaints are far and few between. However please don't hesitate to talk to us if you have any concerns or worries. The staff and the Headteacher are always willing to listen and support as much as we can.