

THE HARBOUR SCHOOL



CONCERNS OR COMPLAINTS

(Revised May 2018)

Guidance Notes for Parents

If you have a concern or complaint

We would like you to tell us about it. We welcome suggestions for improving our work in school. Be assured that no matter what the nature of your concern or complaint, our support and respect for you and your child in school will not be affected in any way. Please tell us of your concern as soon as possible. It is difficult for us to investigate properly an incident or problem that happened some time ago.

What to do first

Most concerns and complaints can be sorted out quickly by speaking with the staff member who has responsibility for your child.

If you have a complaint that you feel should be looked at by the leadership team in the first instance you can contact them straightaway if you prefer. It is usually best to discuss the problem face to face. It's best to make an appointment to do this and you can make one by ringing 023 92665664. You can bring a friend or relation to the appointment with you if you would like to. The leadership team staff for the Harbour School provisions are as follows:

- Bernard McDonagh @ The Bridge
- Kim Budd @ Fratton
- Catherine Walker @ Medical
- Lisa Caine @ Outreach
- Lynn Power @ Stamshaw
- Lisa Taylor @ Tipner

Alternatively if you a complaint that you feel should be looked at by the Head then you can contact Ian Hunkin (Head of School).

All staff will make every effort to resolve your problem informally. We will make sure that we understand what you feel went wrong, and we will explain our actions to you.

We will ask what you would like the school to do to put things right. Of course, this does not mean that in every case we will come round to your point of view but it will help us both to understand the issues. It may also help to prevent a similar problem arising again.

What to do next

If you are dissatisfied with our initial response you can make a formal complaint to the Head. This should be made in writing.

The Head will ask to meet you to discuss the problem. Again you may take a friend or someone else with you if you wish. The Head will conduct a full investigation of the complaint and may interview any members of staff or pupils involved. You will receive a written response to your complaint.

If your complaint is about an action of the Head personally, then you should refer it to the Chair of the Interim Executive Board, Mr Gordon Duff. You can contact him by writing to the Chair of the Interim Executive Board at The Harbour School @ Tipner, Tipner Lane, Portsmouth, PO2 8RA.

If you are still unhappy

The problem will normally be solved by this stage. However, if you are still not satisfied you may wish to contact the Chair of the Interim Executive Board to ask for a referral of your complaint to a *Governors' Complaints Panel*. It will then be heard by a group of three governors who have no previous knowledge of the problem and so will be given a fresh assessment. You will be invited to attend and speak to the panel at a meeting that the Head will also attend. The *General Complaints Procedures* statement explains how these meetings operate.

Further Action

Complaints about school problems are almost always settled within schools but in exceptional cases it may be possible to refer the problem to an outside body such as the Local Authority (Education Department) or the Secretary of State for Education. Again there is more on this in the *General Complaints Procedure*.