Q7. What will happen next?

A panel of governors who haven't been involved with the complaint, will undertake a review.

The Clerk to Governors will contact you to arrange a mutually convenient date, time and place to explain your concerns.

You may bring a friend, if you wish. This could be anyone you think will be able to support you. They will not be invited to take part in any discussions, unless they are speaking instead of you.

You may wish to bring witnesses to support your complaint.

After the meeting, the panel will then review and/or investigate the Head teacher's handling of your complaint and decide if it was appropriate and fair. They may wish to meet with any staff or witnesses who can provide information.

They will write to you within the agreed time scale to explain their decision. This decision will be final.

Q8. What do I do if I am still unhappy?

If you are still unhappy, you may, if you wish, write to the Secretary of State for Education and ask him/her to consider the issue.

Remember: the whole process exists so that everyone's views can be heard. The aim is that a complaint should be properly and fairly dealt with.

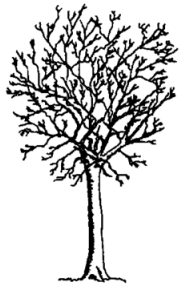
Communications with the school are welcome and the latter stages of this complaints procedure are rarely used, but remain part of the process.

Helpful Websites:

Somerset Parent Partnership
http://www.somersetparentpartnership.org.uk

Advisory Centre for Education
http://www.ace-ed.org.uk

Puriton Primary School



Concerns and Complaints:
A Guide for Parents and Carers

This leaflet aims to help you in approaching the school when you have a concern.



This process has been developed to help the school and parents and carers to work together to resolve issues.

Please do contact the school office if you would like to discuss anything in this leaflet.

Introduction

We aim to provide many opportunities to keep you informed and involved in your child's progress with regular reports, open sessions and visits all helping the process. Cooperation between parents, staff and governors leads to a shared sense of purpose and good atmosphere in the school.

However, sometimes parents and schools have a misunderstanding and these can often be sorted out by speaking to the right person. Your concern can then be looked into and a response given.

Q1. What should I do first?

Be clear what you want to talk to the school about. Remember that although you may want to change a situation, you want it to end on a positive note with no bad feelings. Because of this, you should try to follow the process and not back yourself, or anyone else, into a corner. Talking with the school can help you to understand how they see the situation and give you the chance to say what it looks like to you.

Although staff can sometimes see parents who just 'pop in', this isn't generally possible. If you have a concern, make an appointment so that you have enough time to talk things through.

Q2. Who should I contact?

That depends on the particular situation. Often the teacher is able to deal with the matter. More serious issues will require a senior member of staff or the Head teacher. Mutual courtesy is expected and ensures things go smoothly. There should always be discussion in the hope of solving difficulties informally. Most problems are solved in this way.

Q3. What if I am still unhappy?

Ask for an appointment with the Head teacher.

It may help to give the school some times when you are free, to help them make a suitable appointment as both your time and theirs is busy and valuable. Do try to be patient as every effort will be made to see you as soon as possible.

If your child has special educational needs, you may want to contact Parent Partnership to talk about your concerns. (01823 355578)

Before attending the meeting, it would be useful for you to put your concerns down in writing. Both you and the school can then focus on finding a solution.

If you wish, you may also bring a friend or family member to the meeting.

Q4. What should I expect to happen as a result of the meeting?

After the meeting, the Head teacher may need to undertake further investigations to inform his/her decision and achieve resolution. He/she will write to you outlining the investigation and giving details of any action (if appropriate) to be taken within a mutually agreed timescale.

Q5. What if I feel the Head hasn't answered my question or investigated my query or if my complaint is against the head teacher?

You may, if you wish, write to the Chair of Governors asking him/her to hear your complaint.

Q6. What happens if the Chair of Governors does not resolve my complaint?

Write to the Clerk to the Governors after you have received a response from the Chair of Governors, stating that you wish to make a formal complaint.

Make it clear what it is you are complaining about and what you would like the governors to do. You cannot introduce new or different complaints at this stage.