

Harewood Junior School – Keeping parents informed and Dealing with Concerns and Complaints

The education of children is a partnership between parents and the school and relies on a strong trust between both parties. We therefore have a number of ways to develop this partnership and keep parents informed:

- In September, we share with parents and carers a link to a Virtual Information Evening which tell parents everything they need to know about their child's new class and yeargroup as well as what they'll be learning through the year.
- Each half-term on a timetable rota basis we have Parent Drop-in on Thursday mornings between 8:35 and 8:50am. This is an opportunity for parents and carers to look at their child's work to see how they are doing and to chat to the class teacher.
- Each week on a Friday, we send out a newsletter by email or if preferred, a paper copy to tell you what's been happening in school and about future events. There's yeargroup news on the back with important information on homework etc.
- Every yeargroup prepare topic overviews each term and homework leaflets to keep parents informed about what their child is learning and how parents can help – these are available in the yeargroup section of the website and on your child's SeeSaw page.
- At Christmas parents will receive a short progress report about how their child is doing in reading, writing and maths, which will also indicate whether they are meeting the targets and achieving at the expected level for their age and what behaviours and attitudes they are displaying. We use a simple system of ticks under headings indicating the frequency of these behaviours or attitudes.
- In February, every parent will be invited to attend a virtual meeting about their child.
- At Easter, parents will receive an updated progress report which will be in the same format as the Christmas report.
- Following the in-school and national assessment process in May and June, teachers will prepare a detailed report about each child's achievements and progress over the whole year.
- In July, we hold an annual exhibition of work for parents and carers to see what fabulous work the children have done over the whole year.
- Throughout the year, we hold parent/child lessons, reading times, library visits and family learning opportunities that parents and carers can get involved in as well as our weekly celebration assembly on Friday mornings and special class or yeargroup assemblies.
- For children with SEND, parents and carers will have a termly Structured Conversation with their child's classteacher and the Assistant Head for Inclusion to review their progress and set new targets.

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Parental views are important to us and so we have a variety of ways for parents to share information with us:

- We hope to be able to return to our regular coffee mornings on Tuesdays between 8:45 and 10am in the school bungalow.
- We have questionnaires and surveys to canvass views.
- Each term, we hold Parent Forum meetings to gather parental views on a range of whole school issues.
- We have drop-in each half-term and the various parent/teacher meetings.
- Through out the year, parents of pupils with SEN will have in-depth meetings called Structured Conversations with their child's class teacher and the Assistant Headteacher for Inclusion, which are the parents' chance to tell us about their child, review progress, set new targets and agree the action we will all take.
- Parents of children with other needs will be invited to regular meetings with school staff and other agencies involved with the family to share information, review progress and update action plans. Some parents meet with me on a weekly, fortnightly or monthly basis.
- All parents are very welcome to contact their child's class teacher to discuss their child's progress or any concern/problem at any point in the year. Teachers may not be able to speak to the parent there and then but will make a mutually convenient appointment. If parents need extra help, they can talk to yeargroup leaders, Mrs Hearfield (Learning Support Mentor) or the Assistant Headteacher for Inclusion. In this way, the right person should be able to help.

Dealing with specific concerns or complaints:

- Occasionally, your child's class teacher, yeargroup leader, my Learning Support Mentor or Assistant Headteacher for Inclusion will not have been able to completely address your concern and at that point, we ask parents to make an appointment to see me. I will listen to your concerns and consider everything we have done so far before agreeing some next steps. We will agree when to review progress on these actions and in this way, your concern should be resolved over a mutually agreed time.
- I will always act in the best interests of the individual, unless by doing so it would be against national or local best practice or the policies and procedures of the school. Nor would I take any steps that would be detrimental to the education of other children.
- If parents are not satisfied with the outcome they can make a formal complaint in writing to me, which will be discussed with the Governors' Strategy Group, and a formal response will be made.
- Once this process has been exhausted, parents can request that a panel of governors hears their complaint. The panel considers the complaint and what the school has done to resolve it. They then determine whether the school has followed this policy document and done everything that is reasonable to address the parents' concern or complaint.
- We are committed to dealing with all complaints fairly and impartially, and to providing a high quality service to those who complain. However, while we understand that your first concern is your own child, it is expected that parents behave courteously towards me, the staff, the children and other

parents and carers at all times. It is unacceptable to shout, swear, or engage in threatening or intimidatory behaviour. If this happens, the conversation will be terminated and, if you are here in person, you will be asked to leave the school site. If necessary, the police will be called.

- In the event of repeated unacceptable behaviour by parents, carers or their representatives, the governors can formally request that the behaviour stops and that contact with the school must only be by prior arrangement. Should the behaviour be extreme or persistent in nature, then the governors can take the decision not to allow the parents, carers or their representatives onto the school site and if necessary involve the police.
- Parents and carers should try to limit their communication with the school that relates to their complaint, while the complaint is being progressed. It is not helpful if repeated correspondence is sent (either by letter, phone, email or text), as it could delay the outcome being reached. We will not normally limit the contact complainants have with our school, however we will do so if parents or carers engage in unreasonable behaviour as defined below:
 - *refuses to articulate their complaint or specify the grounds of a complaint or the outcomes sought by raising the complaint, despite offers of assistance*
 - *refuses to co-operate with the complaints investigation process*
 - *refuses to accept that certain issues are not within the scope of the complaints procedure*
 - *insists on the complaint being dealt with in ways which are incompatible with the complaints procedure or with good practice*
 - *introduces trivial or irrelevant information which they expect to be taken into account and commented on*
 - *raises large numbers of detailed but unimportant questions, and insists they are fully answered, often immediately and to their own timescales*
 - *makes unjustified complaints about staff who are trying to deal with the issues, and seeks to have them replaced*
 - *changes the basis of the complaint as the investigation proceeds*
 - *repeatedly makes the same complaint (despite previous investigations or responses concluding that the complaint is groundless or has been addressed)*
 - *refuses to accept the findings of the investigation into that complaint where the school's complaint procedure has been fully and properly implemented and completed including referral to the Department for Education*
 - *seeks an unrealistic outcome*
 - *makes excessive demands on school time by frequent, lengthy and complicated contact with staff regarding the complaint in person, in writing, by email and by telephone while the complaint is being dealt with*
 - *uses threats to intimidate*
 - *uses abusive, offensive or discriminatory language or violence*
 - *knowingly provides falsified information*
 - *publishes unacceptable information on social media or other public forums.*
- If parents or carers engage in this behaviour or make multiple complaints over a period of time that in the Headteacher's view are repeated complaints of concerns already investigated and dealt with, or they are unsubstantiated, vexatious or malicious in intent, then, following discussion with the governors' Strategy Group, the Chair of Governors will inform the parents or carers in writing that:
 - ❖ their complaints will no longer be dealt with;
 - ❖ formally request that their vexatious or malicious behaviour stops;
 - ❖ and dictate that contact with the school must only be that which is essential for the effective provision of education of their child and through which channels this should be.

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Harewood Junior School is a member of the Gloucester Schools Partnership (GSP), which is an alliance of primary, infant and junior schools, in the City of Gloucester. Should a Pupil transfer to another school, which is also a member of the GSP, we reserve the right to share with them the details of any complaints that we have deemed to be serial, unreasonable, vexatious or malicious, as part of the 'GSP Standardised School Transfer Notes' process.

vexatious - causing or intending to cause annoyance, frustration or worry

malicious - intending to do harm

Simple flow chart and timeline for dealing with concerns or complaints:

Approach your child's class teacher with your concern. This may be done face-to-face; by telephone; or by e-mail via office@harewoodjunior.co.uk. They are generally the person who knows the most and will be able to deal with the concern straight away.

If they can't see you immediately, they will arrange a mutually convenient time, usually within the same week, unless you approach them on a Friday.

The class teacher will listen to your concern at this meeting and either deal with your concern immediately or agree to investigate further (if this is the case they will agree a time to get back to you with the result, usually within a day or two depending on the concern and who else needs to be involved). They will also agree with you any follow-up action and agree when you can meet again to review progress. This will probably be in 4 to 6 weeks time, depending on the action needed.

Meet the classteacher at the agreed review point and, if necessary, agree any further action and a second review at an appropriate point.

If your concern has not been resolved at this point, your child's classteacher will involve the Yeargroup Teamleader, our Learning Support Mentor or Assistant Head as appropriate. They will contact you within the week to review what has happened so far and agree next steps. They will also set a date for a follow-up meeting.

If they are unable to reach a satisfactory resolution for you, they will refer the matter to me. I will contact you to arrange a meeting as soon as is reasonably possible both for you and for me for the matter to be resolved as quickly and efficiently as possible. The Chair of Governors/Strategy Group is always apprised of complaints that have been passed to me.

If you are not satisfied that we have followed this process to resolve your concern properly, you may make a formal complaint in writing to the Chair of Governors: Mrs Helen Davis c/o the school office. A panel of three governors will hear your complaint within three weeks of receiving your written complaint and I will explain how we have tried to resolve the matter for you. The governors will decide whether we have followed the process correctly: if we have, they will dismiss your complaint; if we have not, they will uphold your complaint, however they will not reinvestigate the original concern. The outcome will be put in writing to you within three days of their decision.