



## Malvern Way Infant and Nursery School

### Information for Parents/Carers

#### How to comment or complain

At Malvern Way, we believe that diversity is a strength which should be respected and celebrated by all those who learn, teach and visit here.

#### HOW TO COMMENT OR COMPLAIN

##### We care about what you think

Malvern Way School is committed to working in partnership with parents and carers. Each day this school makes many decisions and tries hard to do the best for all the children. Your comments - either positive or negative - are helpful for future planning.

You may want to talk to us about a particular aspect of this school, though not actually make a complaint - you just want to get something 'off your chest'.

If you are dissatisfied about the way your child is being treated, or any actions or lack of action by us, please feel able to contact us via the school office on 01923 773430 or by email to [admin@malvernway.herts.sch.uk](mailto:admin@malvernway.herts.sch.uk).

##### Our aims

- Your complaint will be dealt with honestly, politely and in confidence.
- Your complaint will be looked into thoroughly and fairly.
- If your complaint is urgent we will deal with it more quickly.
- We will keep you up to date with progress at each stage.
- You will get an apology if we have made a mistake and you will be told what we are going to do to put things right.
- You will get a full and clear written reply to formal complaints within **28 school days**.

##### Who can make a complaint?

This complaints process is not limited only to parents or carers of children that are registered on roll at the School. Other people, including members of the public, may make

a complaint to our School, provided that the complaint relates to the provision of facilities or services that we provide. Any issues for which a separate statutory process applies (such as appeals regarding exclusions or admissions) do not fall within the scope of this process. The School will confirm to you upon receipt whether or not your complaint falls under this policy and procedure and what will happen next if it does. For issues that fall outside of this policy and procedure, the School will confirm the correct process that applies instead.

## **The difference between a concern and a complaint**

We define a concern as *'an expression of worry or doubt over an issue considered to be important for which reassurances are sought'*.

We define a complaint as *'an expression of dissatisfaction however made, about actions taken or a lack of action that requires an investigation and formal response in writing'*.

It is in everybody's interest that concerns and complaints are resolved as swiftly as possible. Many issues can be resolved informally, without needing to escalate to the formal stages of the complaints process. We take concerns seriously and we will make every effort to resolve matters as quickly as possible.

If you have difficulty discussing a concern with a particular member of staff, we will respect your views. In such cases, you will be referred to another staff member. Similarly, if the member of staff directly involved feels unable to deal with your concerns, you will be referred to another staff member. The member of staff may be more senior but does not have to be. The ability to consider the concern objectively and impartially is the most important factor.

We understand however, that there are some occasions when people only wish to raise their concerns formally. In such instances, the School will attempt to resolve the issue(s) internally, through the stages outlined within this complaints policy and procedure.

## **How to raise a concern or make a complaint**

A concern or complaint can be made in person, in writing or by telephone. They may also be made by a third party acting on behalf of a complainant, provided that the third party is able to demonstrate to the School that they have the appropriate consent to do so. Concerns should be raised with either the Class Teacher, Key Stage Lead. If the issue remains unresolved, the next step is to make a formal complaint.

Complainants should not approach individual Governors to raise concerns or complaints. They have no power to act on an individual basis and it may also prevent them from considering complaints at Stage 2 of the formal complaints process. In the event that a Governor is approached by a complainant, they should signpost the complainant back to the most appropriate person. This could be the Class Teacher, Year or Key Stage Lead, Deputy Headteacher, Headteacher or Chair of Governors, depending on which stage the complaint has reached.

Complaints against School staff (except the Headteacher) should be made in the first instance, to the Headteacher via the School Office. They should be marked Private and Confidential.

Complaints regarding the Headteacher should be addressed to the Chair of Governors and submitted via the School Office. They should be marked as Private and Confidential. The School Office will ensure that the Chair of Governors receives this promptly.

Complaints about the Chair of Governors, any individual Governor or the whole Governing Body should be addressed to the Clerk to the Governing Body and submitted to the School Office. They should be marked Private and Confidential. The School Office will ensure that the Clerk receives this promptly.

For ease of use, a template complaint form has been included within this complaints policy and procedure (Appendix 2). If you require help to complete the form, you should contact the School Office. You can also ask third party organisations like the Citizens Advice Bureau or an Independent Advocate to help you. Malvern Way Infant and Nursery School will ensure that all formal complaints are documented in writing to ensure that the issues being complained about and the complainant's desired outcomes are clear. Complainants will be asked to submit their complaint in writing, either by sending an email or a letter via the School Office or by completing the School's formal complaint form.

In accordance with equality law, as outlined above, the School will consider making reasonable adjustments if required, to enable complainants to access and complete this complaints process. This includes providing information in alternative formats, assisting complainants in raising a formal complaint or holding meetings in accessible locations.

If a complainant is unable to submit their complaint in writing, the School will ensure that the issues being complained about and the outcomes being requested are documented in writing. The School may do this in either of the following ways:

- Invite the complainant to a meeting with the Headteacher or Chair of Governors (depending on what stage the complaint has reached) and a Notetaker. The Notetaker will document the issues being complained about and the complainant's desired outcomes, as discussed and agreed during the course of the meeting. At the end of the meeting, the complainant will be given a copy of the notes of the meeting containing this information and the School will retain the original copy for the purpose of investigating the complaint(s).
- Signpost the complainant to independent support, including Advocacy. Advocates provide qualified, independent support for people that have difficulty understanding information and advice or who would like support in communicating their views. Advocates can help complainants to formulate their complaint and then submit it on their behalf and support them through the complaints process. POhWER was founded in Hertfordshire in 1996. They deliver services in Hertfordshire as part of the HertsHelp service, in partnership with a wide range of voluntary sector organisations, including Advocacy. It is a free and impartial service. Their contact details are as follows:

POhWER

Telephone: 0300 456 2370

Text: send the word 'pohwer' with your name and number to 81025

Email: [pohwer@pohwer.net](mailto:pohwer@pohwer.net)

Skype: pohwer.advocacy

Post: PO Box 14043, Birmingham, B6 9BL



<b>Have you raised your issue(s) with your child's Class Teacher at the informal stage? If so, when did you do this?</b>	<b>Yes (inc. date)</b>	<b>No</b>
<b>Have you complained to the Headteacher at Stage 1?</b>	<b>Yes (inc. date)</b>	<b>No</b>
<b>What happened when you complained to the Headteacher?</b>		
<b>What are your desired outcomes?</b>		
<b>Signed:</b>		
<b>Date:</b>		

Please return your completed complaint form to the School Office either by email at [admin@malvernway.herts.sch.uk](mailto:admin@malvernway.herts.sch.uk) or in hard copy format and it will be passed to the Headteacher or Chair of Governors, depending on what stage the complaint is at and what it is regarding.