

## Barley Lane School

*Hard work, humility, kindness*

### **Making a complaint 2019-20**

Children and parents and carers must feel free to express their concerns and criticisms particularly those that are difficult to share because they are the most serious and in need of prompt and appropriate attention.

Many of the daily niggles and gripes and wrinkles of school life can be ironed out through the informal networks between children, parents and staff.

Open trusting relationships enable this dialogue and can often prevent concerns becoming complaints however their needs to be a way to formally address more complex, contentious and serious issues.

We are committed to the following:

- The humility to accept things will go wrong and that we will get things wrong
- A willingness to offer help and advice about the process as well as the issue as far as is practicable and reasonable
- No criticism or recriminations as a result of expressing a criticism or complaint
- A willingness to listen fully and openly and avoiding knee-jerk defensiveness
- A genuine willingness to investigate complaints and openly and fully sharing what is discovered promptly and engaging in a dialogue about possible response and outcomes
- If the issue can be managed in-house and we are not subject to the protocols and systems of outside agencies we will respond within 24 hours of any complaint.
- Accepting suitable third-party intervention to pursue issues and agree and implement outcomes

The important thing is parents and children can find a route or means to express their worries and concerns and criticisms easily and comfortably.

We suggest the following: meeting face to face and that includes us visiting you, phoning, texting, e-mail all these are legitimate and children and parents and carers must be listened to and their concerns addressed with the necessary and appropriate formality and seriousness regardless of how their complaint is shared or expressed: a young person might simply tell a trusted teacher, a parent make an urgent phone call or send a text.

There is a range of people to contact and whilst there are no hard and fast rules what could be described as up to moderate concerns, for example you are not happy with your child's progress in Maths, could reasonably be shared with the headteacher and then the concern escalated if you are not happy with their response; any concern about the headteacher could be addressed with the chair of governors.

More serious concerns, for example about a child's safety, could go straight to social care (see MASH details below) or profound concerns about the quality and safety of our work to Ofsted.

There are people to help you navigate all this; the Devon, Information, Advice & Support Service provide help for young people aged 0 – 25 years, with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND) and their parents and carers <https://www.devonias.org.uk> TEL: 01392 383080 EMAIL: [devonias@devon.gov.uk](mailto:devonias@devon.gov.uk)

### The people you could and can complain to

- 1 The head-teacher Michael MacCourt [mmaccourt@barleylane.devon.sch.uk](mailto:mmaccourt@barleylane.devon.sch.uk)
- 2 The chair of governors Damian Furniss [admin@barleylane.devon.sch.uk](mailto:admin@barleylane.devon.sch.uk)
- 3 Nominated safeguarding governor Jo Davey [admin@barleylane.devon.sch.uk](mailto:admin@barleylane.devon.sch.uk)
- 4 Ofsted <https://contact.ofsted.gov.uk/online-complaints-schools>

### Other people you could make contact with

- 5 Any governor [admin@barleylane.devon.sch.uk](mailto:admin@barleylane.devon.sch.uk)
- 6 The school's attached officer within the local education authority [simon.bisset@babcockinternational.com](mailto:simon.bisset@babcockinternational.com)
- 7 The nominated child protection officers within the local education authority (these are called LADOs and deal with serious concerns about teachers and staff including head-teachers) [ladosecure-mailbox@devon.gcsx.gov.uk](mailto:ladosecure-mailbox@devon.gcsx.gov.uk)
- 8 The senior local government officer responsible for special schools [velda.woodruff@devon.gov.uk](mailto:velda.woodruff@devon.gov.uk)
- 9 The strategic manager responsible for schools within the County Council [dawn.stabb@devon.gov.uk](mailto:dawn.stabb@devon.gov.uk)
- 10 The elected councillor with responsibility for education [james.mcinnis@devon.gov.uk](mailto:james.mcinnis@devon.gov.uk)
- 11 The elected local councillor in your area <http://democracy.devon.gov.uk/mgFindMember.aspx>
- 12 Your local member of Parliament <http://www.parliament.uk/get-involved/contact-your-mp/>
- 13 The Secretary of State for Education [damian.hinds.mp@parliament.uk](mailto:damian.hinds.mp@parliament.uk)

The school office holds or will get and provide you with current numbers and addresses for all these promptly on the telephone or in writing. In an emergency I can be contacted on my mobile 07848 028341 and will provide you with the necessary details.

Please note any formal, existing and prescribed county council / national protocols and procedures will be followed around both child protection and staff disciplinary matters.

If you believe **a child is at risk of serious harm** please call the police on their 101 number or if harm is immediate 999 .

Social care can be contacted at the MASH (multi-agency safeguarding hub) [mashsecure@devon.gcsx.gov.uk](mailto:mashsecure@devon.gcsx.gov.uk) If you have concerns about a child or young person call 0345 155 1071 out of hours please call 0845 6000 388

The Devon safeguarding Board website is a good source of advice and guidance <http://www.devonsafeguardingchildren.org/>

NSPCC [help@nspcc.org.uk](mailto:help@nspcc.org.uk) [0808 800 5000](tel:08088005000)