

## Further Steps (cont)

Complainants may take a complaint to the Local Government Ombudsman at any time, who has to give the council an opportunity to seek a solution within a reasonable time period.

In the case of pre-school provision complaints can also be taken to the Care Commission.

## Principles of the Complaints Procedure

These complaints procedures are built upon the following principles published by The Citizen's Charter Complaints Task Force and should:

- Encourage conciliation rather than confrontation.
- Recognise the benefits of positively receiving complaints.
- Be consistent with the legal rights of the person complaining.
- Be fair and impartial to all parties concerned.
- Respect confidentiality.
- Have a clearly defined scope.
- Be developed in consultation with parents and teacher representatives.
- Be well publicised.
- Be simple to understand and use.
- Be made up of three main stages: informal, formal and appeal.
- Provide for an independent appeal procedure.
- Facilitate outside support, such as advice agencies for special services.
- Set limits for handling complaints.
- Analyse the source or nature of the complaints.
- Have a system for monitoring complaints.

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## Parental Complaints Procedure



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**Depute Head Teacher (Early Years)** - Mr Melvyn Clark  
**Depute Head Teacher (Additional Support Needs)** - Mrs Julia McGinlay

*A copy of the full procedures can be obtained from the school or the school website—[www.bellsbrae.shetland.sch.uk](http://www.bellsbrae.shetland.sch.uk)*

# Shetland Islands Council

## Bell's Brae Primary School



### Procedures for dealing with parental concerns and complaints

## Home and School working together

February 2010

# Parental Complaints Procedure



## Parents'/Carers' Complaints Procedure

### Introduction

Here at Bell's Brae Primary School we constantly strive to provide pupils with a positive experience, which allows them to meet their full potential. However it is recognised that, from time to time, concerns and complaints are raised and action needs to be taken. We strongly believe that local remedy is by far the best. Therefore we will endeavour to deal with any concerns/complaints raised in a prompt and courteous manner and to the satisfaction of all concerned.

### What is a concern/complaint?

A concern may be related to a child's progress, their schoolwork or an incident involving another pupil or a member of staff.

A complaint, however made, is an expression of dissatisfaction, when a parent/carer feels that the school has in some way failed to meet his or her expectations.

## The In-house Answer

### How to raise a concern

Parents/Carers would arrange to communicate directly with the class teacher or a member of the school management. This may be by letter, by telephone or in person by appointment. Simple clarification or the provision of information can resolve many concerns and it is anticipated that most concerns/complaints will be resolved by this informal stage. When calling to arrange to speak with a member of staff it would be extremely useful if you could share the reason for your call.

### Making a complaint

In the case of serious concerns or complaints it may be appropriate to address them directly to the relevant Depute Head Teacher. At this stage you will be invited to attend a meeting in school at a time that suits you and the school staff. You will usually meet with your child's class teacher, a senior member of staff or both. We hope to resolve complaints at this stage.

### Next steps

For a concern which cannot be resolved by the class teacher, a formal meeting with the Depute Head Teacher or Head Teacher will be scheduled.

## The Schools Service—Informal stage

If parents/carers feel that we have been unable to address their concerns they may wish to involve the local Education Officer (Quality Improvement Officer - QIO) with responsibility for the school. The QIO will try to resolve the issue by contacting the parent or carer and the school to investigate the cause for the concern. This approach means that concerns can be dealt with at a reasonably informal level, involving discussion with the QIO, parents/carers and the Head Teacher separately or together, depending on the nature of the concern.

## The Schools Service— Formal stage

If the above approach is unsuccessful, and the complaint remains unresolved, the complainant will be asked if they wish the complaint to become formal. A formal complaint needs to be in writing to the QIO.

The QIO will write a short account of actions taken so far to the Schools Service Senior Management Team. This account, along with the complaint itself will be presented to their Senior Management Team, who will discuss what options are available to achieve a resolution.

### Further Steps

If the complainant is unhappy with the Schools Service response, they can take their complaint to the Executive Director, E for investigation. The complaint will be considered within the Council's overall