CASTLE FARM

COUNTRYSIDE CLASSROOM

COMPLAINTS PROCEDURE 09/25

Review date: 0626

Company Number 14937009 Registered in England and Wales

General Guidance

- *Research shows that someone experiencing an unhappy situation with an organisation is likely to tell up to 10 other people about his/her negative experience. In terms of the reputation of Castle Farm Countryside Classroom (CFCC) this will relate to people within the local community, other parents, friends, schools and relatives.*

- *However, someone having a good experience of how an issue is handled will also tell up to 10 people about his/her positive experience.*

- *How an issue is handled gives people a clear idea of how committed The CFCC is to giving the best possible provision.*

- *Staff must always give consideration to their own safety.*

- *Guidance and procedures are available regarding violence at work in Section 8 of the Children's Services Health and Safety Manual.*

- *CFCC may wish to obtain feedback from parents which could allow for some issues to be dealt with before parents feel it necessary to raise concerns.*

- *Concerns and complaints should be viewed positively as data gathered can be used to inform evaluation and future plans and strategy.*

- *Skills that can be used to show understanding of and to resolve the concern or issue are:*
    - *Listening and probing for specifics*
    - *Clarifying ambiguities*
    - *Separating out multiple concerns*
    - *Repeating back to check understanding*
    - *Discussing realistic solutions*

<u>It is important that a written record of any meetings that take place is kept regarding an issue or complaint.</u>

***Allegations of abuse** against a member of staff must be reported to the Directors immediately. In all cases the Children's Services information taken from Safeguarding Children in Education (issued November 2005 ref: DfES/0027/2005) must be followed. Contact must be made by the Directors with the Children's Services Education Officer (Safeguarding).*
This policy is in line with;

- *The contents of 'Keeping Children Safe in Education (Part 4: Allegations of Abuse made about Staff (including supply teachers volunteers and contractors).*
- *The complaints policy and procedures*

Complaints Procedure at Castle Farm Countryside Classroom

CFCC want their students to be healthy, happy and safe, and to achieve. It recognises that Schools, parents, guardians or carers play an important part in making this happen. Cooperation between Schools, parents and staff leads to a shared sense of purpose and a good feeling from each section.

Level 1 – Informal
Schools, Parents, carers or guardians should, in the first instance, make an appointment to speak to the CFCC Directors about the concern. It is best to resolve issues at this point. This ideally should be within 4 working days.

Guidance on informal level 1:

- *Concerns should initially be handled informally in a manner that offers the best way of resolving issues.*
- *A session leader should offer an appointment to discuss the issue as quickly as possible, as this will give both parties time to talk about it calmly and politely without being interrupted. It will also show a commitment to resolving issues. This should ideally be within working 4 days of the School or parent raising the issue.*
- *It is important for Schools and parents to recognise that CFCC is a busy organisation and that it may not be possible to offer an appointment straight away.*
- *The parties involved should be encouraged to offer their view of what would be a realistic resolution to the problem.*

Level 2 - Informal

Schools, parents, carers or guardians dissatisfied with the result of the discussions with CFCC should ask for an appointment to meet with a Director. This should ideally be within 4 working days.

If everyone involved is unable to resolve the issue then it may be necessary to ask for information or support from a specific Director. The issue that is the focus of the complaint will determine the person contacted.

Guidance on informal level 2:

- *It is always best to resolve issues informally at the earliest possible time but if the person is not satisfied with the result of the talk with the session leader, then he can ask for an appointment to meet with the Director.*
- *It is in everyone's interest, particularly the child or children, for concerns and complaints to be sorted out quickly and smoothly.*

- *The aim should be that discussions end on a positive note with no bad feeling.*
- *It is good practice for A Director to contact the School or parents summarising what has been agreed regarding the issue.*

It is hoped that most problems will have been resolved by now.

Level 3 – Formal complaint letter to Directors

An issue that has not been resolved through the informal levels 1 and 2 can become an official complaint.

Schools, Parents, carers or guardians wishing to move to level 3 must write a formal letter of complaint to the Directors. The letter will need to set out clearly the issues which have previously been discussed and why the School, parent, carer or guardian considers the issue to be unresolved.

The Directors should consider the complaint and discuss a resolution with the complainant. The Director should offer a resolution to the complainant in writing within 10 working days of receipt of the letter.

Guidance on Level 3 - Formal:

- *An unresolved issue can now move to a formal complaint. This is a serious step to be taken. In consideration of future relationship everyone concerned will need to negotiate an agreement and concentrate on finding a resolution to the issue.*

Children's COMPLAINTS

General Complaints

At any time, children may raise a complaint with any member of the staff team concerning their treatment by another learner or member of staff. If the child is not satisfied with the outcome of raising the complaint, she/he may ask to see a senior member of staff to consider the complaint. If the child is not satisfied with the outcome of raising the complaint with a senior member of staff, she/he may ask to see the Directors.

At any point an individual child may decide to raise a complaint directly with any member of staff up to the Director without reference to hierarchy. Equally an individual child may decide to raise a complaint directly with the DSL. Children will, however, be encouraged to raise complaints within the structure outlined, as it may well be possible to resolve issues more quickly through this route.

At all stages of complaint whatever their source of content all staff will have due regard to advice in terms of child protection procedures.

OFSTED

CFCC encourages people to follow the complaints procedures as outlined above, however, people have the right to make a complaint directly to OFSTED. (TEL: *0300 123 1231*).

Complaints File

A complaints folder is kept by the Directors that will documents all formal complaints raised by Schools, parents or pupils. An appendix file with associated evidence is also kept.

Monitoring Complaints

The Directors will undertake to report numbers of complaints.