

# Complaints about the Curriculum in Schools

## Guidance Summary for Schools, Governors and Parents

This information sheet is designed to accompany the Local Authority's (LA's) official procedure document headed 'Cambridgeshire County Council: Complaints Procedure (Curriculum and Religious Worship)'

- A **procedure** for dealing with complaints about the school curriculum has been in operation since 1<sup>st</sup> September, 1989. This procedure is required by the Education Reform Act, 1988. It was approved by the secretary of State following consultation with the heads and governors of all Cambridgeshire schools.
- The procedure covers all schools maintained by the LA (except nursery schools and nursery classes in primary schools), and relates to complaints made by parents and others about curriculum matters, including provision of Religious Education and Religious Worship (see the official procedure document paragraph 9 for more detailed information about the types of complaint covered). It is important to note that the arrangements do not cover complaints about the actions of individual teachers or the Headteacher, nor do they apply to pupil discipline or admissions.

The procedure is in **three distinct stages**:

- 1. Informal stage e.g. discussion between parent and teacher/ Headteacher – it is hoped that most complaints can be resolved at this stage.**
- 2. Formal complaint to the Governing Body of the school**
- 3. Formal complaint to the Local Authority.**
  - A complaint will go direct to this stage if it relates to something that is solely the responsibility of the LA.

In addition to the above three stages, complainants will be able to go direct to the Secretary of State if the complaint has not been resolved and the complainant is dissatisfied, provided that the previous stages of the procedure have been followed.

- Complaints concerning Religious Education and Religious Worship will be investigated by the local Standing Advisory Council on Religious Education if unresolved at stage 2 in order that the LA Complaints Panel in stage 3 is better able to make a decision. In the case of Aided schools, Religious Education and Religious Worship complaints will go to the Diocesan Authorities (instead of the LA) for consideration if the complaint has not been resolved by the school's Governing Body at stage 2.

- The aim of the procedure is that all complaints will be investigated fully, fairly and carefully, and complainants will be kept informed of progress during, as well as at the end, of each stage.
- If complainants are in any doubt about where to direct their complaint (the first point of contact would normally be the school) they should write to the Director of Learning, who will then make the necessary arrangements or advise the complainant about what steps to take. The contact address of the Director of Learning is:

Director of Learning  
Box: ELH 1506  
Castle Court  
Shire Hall  
Castle Hill  
Cambridge  
CB3 0AP