

## **School apologies and addresses procedures after pupil was grabbed by the scruff of the neck**

A parent complained after a teaching assistant grabbed their child by the scruff of the neck during a school trip. The parent believes that their child was also penalised in class because of this matter.

When the parent put a complaint to the school, the principal stated that the parent's child was a liar and intended to cause trouble. The complaint was put to the Board of Governors (BoG) who advised that the incident happened to protect the child. This decision was appealed, but the original conclusion (that the parent believes their child was penalised in class because of this matter) was upheld.

The parent also raised concerns that staff only received Child Protection training in August 2017 and that the school had not complied with policies and procedures.

Having approached this office, the parent sought to address outstanding matters on the case. These included seeking an apology from the school, outlining incompliance with policies and that staff had only received Child Protection training in August 2017. This meant that the BoG were not trained to deal with Child Protection matters at the time of the incident, therefore dealing with our complaint was procedurally incorrect.

Investigators from this office contacted the school to try to resolve the parent's complaint, and to seek an apology for their child. Following our involvement in this case, the Chair of the BoG accepted that the family and their child had been let down, and suffered by events in the school. The Chair also stated that school procedures had been amended to prevent recurrence of such incidents in the future. Finally, the Chair agreed to write to the child with a full and sincere apology.