

### **School's apology settles complaint**

The parents of a primary school child complained about an incident between the school's principal and their daughter. They said that during the incident their daughter, who has autism, was physically forced to make eye contact by the principal and that she had made comments which doubted her condition. They also said that she made a statement which questioned their parenting skills.

They said that the incident had left them stunned and shocked, and had left them uncomfortable about their daughter remaining in the school.

The Board of Governors investigated the complaint and recommended autism refresher training for the principal and other staff. However, the complainants believed that the school should have also admitted that the principal's behaviour had been unacceptable and that she should apologise to them.

When the parents brought their case to the Ombudsman's office an investigator asked the Board of Governors for their response. They agreed that the principal's comments and behaviour were not appropriate.

After the investigator proposed an alternative resolution to the complaint instead of a full investigation, the Governors also agreed to give a full apology and to provide a plan for the pupil to support her future progress through the school.

The parents said they were satisfied with this outcome.