

Complaints Procedure Summary Guidance for Parents

General Principles:

- This procedure is intended to allow you to raise a concern or complaint relating to the school, or the services that it provides.
- An anonymous concern or complaint will not be investigated under this procedure, unless there are exceptional circumstances.
- To enable a proper investigation, concerns or complaints should be brought to the attention of the school as soon as possible. In general, any matter raised more than 3 months after the event, being complained of, will not be considered.

When making a complaint it is important you identify your desired outcome, that is what actions you feel might resolve the problem at any stage. If the complaint concerns the Head Teacher or individual governors you should contact the Chair of Governors directly in writing.

Stage One (Informal): Complaint Heard by Staff Member

The vast majority of concerns can be resolved informally. There are many occasions where the class teacher, office staff, or the Head Teacher, can resolve your concerns straight away. It is in everyone's best interests that complaints are resolved at the earliest possible stage.

Once the complaint has been investigated the outcome will be communicated to you. Your complaint will be responded to within 10 working days either verbally or in writing. If you remain dissatisfied with the outcome of the investigation into your complaint you should write to the Head Teacher within 10 days asking for your complaint to be investigated at stage 2.

Stage Two (Formal): Complaint Heard by Head Teacher

If your concern or complaint is not resolved at the informal stage you may choose to put the complaint in writing and pass it to the Head Teacher, who will be responsible for ensuring that it is investigated appropriately. If the complaint is about the Head Teacher, your complaint should be passed to the Clerk to the governing body, for the attention of the Chair of the governing body.

A Complaint Form is provided to assist you.

You should include details which might assist the investigation, such as names of potential witnesses, dates and times of events, and copies of relevant documents.

It is very important that you include a clear statement of the actions that you would like the school to take to resolve your concern. Without this, it is much more difficult to proceed.

Please pass the completed form, in a sealed envelope to the school office. The envelope should be addressed to the Head Teacher, or to the Clerk to the governing body, as appropriate.

When a complaint is received at stage 2 it will be acknowledged within 5 school days. The Head

Teacher will contact you to provide an opportunity to discuss your concerns and find possible solutions. This could be by phone or in a meeting. You may bring a friend, family member or advocate to any meeting if you wish.

The complaint will be investigated and a written response will be provided within 10 school days, unless the complaint is complicated and to allow for a full investigation to be carried out, an extension of 10 days may be granted. Where it is deemed necessary to apply an extension to the investigation period this will be communicated to you. You have the right to take the complaint to stage 3 if you remain dissatisfied.

Stage Three: Complaint Heard by the Chair of Governors

You should write to the Chair of Governors within 10 school days of receipt of the decision of the stage two investigation. Upon receipt of your letter the Chair of Governors will write acknowledging receipt of your complaint. At this point the Chair of Governors will investigate the complaint.

The Chair will write to you within 10 school days of receipt of your letter to advise you of the outcome of their investigations. If you remain dissatisfied with this outcome, you have the right to take the complaint to stage 4, Governing Board Complaints Committee.

Stage Four: Complaint Heard by Governing Board's Complaints Panel

You should write to the Chair of Governors within 10 school days of receipt of the decision of the stage three investigation. Upon receipt of your letter the Chair of Governors will write acknowledging receipt of your wish to progress the complaint. You have the right to submit any further documents or information relevant to your complaint and the deadline for submission of these documents will be at least 5 days before the hearing. You may, if you wish attend and be accompanied at the panel meeting.

The Clerk to the Governors will arrange for the Complaints Panel to be convened which will comprise of 3 or 5 governors who have no previous involvement with the complaint. At least one member of the panel will be independent of the management and running of the school. The review hearing should be heard within 20 school days of receipt of your letter.

The Clerk to the Governors will write to inform you of the date and time of the hearing, giving a minimum of 5 days notice. All documents submitted will be circulated to all parties.

At the end of the meeting, the panel make findings and recommendations. A copy of the findings and recommendations will be provided to the complainant and, where relevant, the person complained about; and will be available for inspection on the school premises by the proprietor and the head teacher. The decision of the Committee is final.

A written record will be kept of all complaints that are made at the formal stage and beyond indicating:

- whether they are resolved following a formal procedure, or proceed to a panel hearing
- action taken by the school as a result of those complaints (regardless of whether they are upheld)

Correspondence, statements and records relating to individual complaints will be kept confidential except where the Secretary of State or a body conducting an inspection under section 109 of the 2008 Act requests access to them.

The following diagram details the stages you should follow in the event of a complaint:

