



# Complaints Procedure Policy

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## **Introduction**

The majority of issues raised within school are concerns rather than complaints. Taking informal concerns seriously at the earliest stage will reduce the number that develop into formal complaints. The school is committed to taking concerns seriously and to resolve these issues as fairly and speedily as possible. The following details outline the stages that can be used to resolve complaints.

A written record will be kept of all complaints along with details of whether they were resolved following a formal procedure or progression to a panel hearing. All correspondence, statements and records relating to individual complaints are to be marked confidential. The Secretary of State or a body conducting an inspection under section 109 of the 2008 Act have the right to request access to them. Any action taken as a result of the complaint must be recorded, regardless of whether or not it is upheld.

## **Raising a concern**

Concerns can be raised with the school at any time and will usually result in a speedy response, which will resolve the concern. The school requests that parents make their first contact with a member of Leadership, or the Headteacher directly. They may report serious concerns in writing if appropriate. Sometimes the concern raised will require investigation, or discussion with others, in which case you will receive an initial response within 3 days and, if required, a subsequent substantive response.

## **Dealing with Complaints – Formal procedures**

The formal procedures will need to be invoked when initial attempts to resolve the issue are unsuccessful and the person raising the concern remains dissatisfied and wishes to take the matter further.

## **Formal Complaint**

If you wish to make a formal complaint, please contact the Headteacher stating that you wish to make a formal complaint. Any complaints against the Headteacher should be made to the Chair of Governors, contact details can be obtained from the Clerk to the Governors, c/o the School. All complaints will need to be presented in writing or in the form of a signed record of the meeting (this is to prevent complaints being deemed malicious). Your communication should state details of the complaint and the outcome that you are seeking. The Headteacher will acknowledge receipt of the complaint and will then investigate the matter. The nature of investigation will vary according to the complaint but may involve:

- establishing what has happened so far, and who has been involved;
- clarifying the nature of the complaint and what remains unresolved;
- meeting with the complainant or contacting them (if unsure or further information is necessary);
- speaking to those involved in the matter and/or those complained of, allowing them to be accompanied if they wish.

The Headteacher or Chair of Governors will write to the complainant following the investigation and will outline their findings. If this is deemed an unsuitable solution and you remain dissatisfied with the outcome, you will need to let the school know within 10 school working days of receiving the findings on the complaint. Your complaint will then be considered by a Governing Body Complaints Appeal Panel.

### **Governing Bodies Complaints Appeal Panel**

The final stage will involve a Governing Body Complaints Appeal Panel. This will be comprised of at least three people – the Chair of Governors or Vice Chair of Governors (if complaint is against the Headteacher), a nominated governor and a person independent of the management and running of the school. Panel members must not have been directly involved in the matters detailed in the complaint. The complainant and the Headteacher have the right to attend and present their case to the GB Complaints Appeal Panel if they wish. They also have the right to be accompanied. Both parties may be questioned by the GB Complaints Appeal Panel. The aim of this panel hearing is to impartially resolve the complaint and to achieve reconciliation between the school and the complainant. The hearing will normally take place within 10 school working days of the receipt of the written request from the complainant. The panel will consider the Headteacher's/Chair of Governors investigation and report and will also consider the representations of the complainant. All parties will be notified of the panel's decision in writing within three school working days after the date of the hearing.

If you believe that the Governing Bodies Complaints Board has acted unreasonably or has failed to carry out its statutory duties you may take your complaint to the Secretary of State for Education. The Secretary of State must be satisfied that a decision is unreasonable in the sense that no reasonable authority, acting with due regard to its statutory responsibilities, would have reached that decision.

## Summary of Dealing with complaints

