



COMPLAINTS PROCEDURE

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Procedure for Parents

Introduction

We aim to provide your child with the best possible education and meet his or her needs as well as we can. However, in any school, parents may occasionally feel concerned about something or have a complaint. If this is the case we want to hear from you so that the matter can be resolved informally, as quickly as possible. This leaflet explains how you can voice a concern or complaint, and how we will respond to it.

What is a complaint?

This can be a concern or problem that you have about an aspect of our work. A complaint may be made in person, over the telephone or in writing.

What do I do if I have a complaint about the school?

The first point of contact should be with a member of the teaching staff who will listen to the complaint and try to resolve it as quickly as possible. Your child will not be treated less favourably as a result of your making a complaint.

There are certain specific complaints that are handled differently:

- If your child is refused admission to the school you have a statutory right to appeal to an independent appeals panel. The school will be able to give you details.
- If your child has been excluded for between 5 and 15 school days, you have a right to make representation to the Governing Body. If your child has been permanently excluded you have the right to an independent appeal.
- If your child has Special Educational Needs (SEN) and you have a complaint about her/his SEN provision, the school will be able to give you details of the Local Authority's dispute resolution arrangements, the Parent Partnership service, and the SEN Tribunal for disputes about a Statement of Special Educational Need.

What do I do if I feel my complaint hasn't been resolved?

Contact the school office and ask for an appointment to see the Head Teacher or Deputy. The Headteacher will listen carefully and ask you any questions to help her understand the situation fully. She will then further investigate the matter and contact you as soon as possible.

If I feel unhappy with what the Headteacher says, what can I do then?

You may then write to the Chair of Governors, at the school address, setting out your complaint and why you are unhappy with the school's response. Please write within 14 school days of receiving the Headteacher's response. The Chair will write to you acknowledging your letter and will invite you for an informal meeting to discuss your complaint. The Chair will then write again once the matter has been investigated more fully and will, where possible, interview all concerned. You should receive a full response within 14 school days of the meeting.

*This is referred to as the **informal stage** of the complaints procedure.*

What happens if I am unhappy about the Chair of Governors' response?

You are entitled to ask a panel of governors to meet to consider your complaint. If you want to do this, write to the Chair or Clerk to the Governing Body within 14 school days of receiving the Chair's full response. Say that you have a formal complaint and that you remain unhappy with the way the school and Chair of Governors have responded, and that you would like a panel of governors to consider your complaint. You will be provided with a Complaints Form to complete. The Clerk will contact you and explain what will happen. You may bring someone with you if you wish.

*This part of the procedure is referred to as the **formal stage** of the complaints procedure.*

What happens at the Panel meeting?

A panel member will be appointed as Chair and s/he will explain what will happen. You will be asked to outline your complaint. Panel members and/or the Headteacher will ask you questions. The Headteacher will then explain how the school has responded to the complaint, and then you and the panel may ask the Headteacher questions.

After this, everyone except the panel and the Clerk will leave, so that the panel can consider its findings. The Chair of the Panel will write to you within three school days setting out the panel's findings. They will also write to the Headteacher and Chair of Governors. Their findings are binding upon the school.

The panel's findings are the school's final response to you about your complaint. Schools are responsible for their own activities, and the Local Authority cannot get involved. The Local Authority cannot tell a school or Governing Body what to do. If you are still unhappy you can refer the matter to the Secretary of State for Education, but again there is no power to intervene unless the Governing Body has failed to fulfil its statutory responsibilities.

Please be assured that we will take your complaint seriously and treat you fairly. If something has gone wrong we want to put it right.

Complaint Form

Please complete and return to the Chair of Governors (via the school office) who will acknowledge receipt and explain what action will be taken.

Your name:

Pupil's name:

Your relationship to the pupil:

Address:

Postcode:

Day time telephone number:

Evening telephone number:

Please give details of your complaint.

What action, if any, have you already taken to try to resolve your complaint?

(Who did you speak to and what was the response?)

What actions do you feel might resolve the problems at this stage?

Are you attaching any paperwork? If so, please give details.

Signature:

Date:

Official use

Date acknowledgement sent:

By whom:

Complaint referred to:

Date: