



Complaints Policy

Approved by:	Board of Directors	Date: 28/11/2018
Last reviewed:	November 2018	
Next review due by:	November 2019	

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 three months after the event, being complained of, will not be considered.

Raising a concern or complaint

Informal stage

It is normally appropriate to communicate directly with the member of staff concerned. This may be by letter, telephone or in person by appointment, requested via the school office. Many concerns can be resolved by simple clarification or the provision of information, and it is anticipated that most complaints will be resolved at the informal stage.

In the case of serious concerns, it may be appropriate to address them directly to the head teacher (or to the chair of the governing body if the complaint is about the head teacher).

If you are uncertain about who to contact, seek advice from the school office or the clerk to the governing body.

Formal stage

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 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 that 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 you would like the school to take to resolve your concern. Without this, it is much more difficult to proceed.

Pass the completed form, in a sealed envelope, to the school office. The envelope should be addressed to the head teacher or clerk to the governing body, as appropriate.

The head teacher (or chair) may invite you to a meeting to clarify your concerns and explore the possibility of an informal resolution. If you accept that invitation, you may be accompanied by a friend, if you wish, to assist you in explaining the nature of your concerns.

It is possible that your complaint will be resolved through a meeting with the head teacher (or chair). If not, arrangements will be made for the matter to be fully investigated, using the appropriate procedure. In any case, you should learn in writing, usually within five days of the school receiving your formal complaint, of how the school intends to proceed. This notification should include an indication of the anticipated timescale.

Any investigation will begin as soon as possible, and when it has been concluded, you will be informed, in writing, of its conclusion.

If you are not satisfied with the manner in which the process has been followed, you may request that the governing body reviews the process followed by the school, in handling the complaint. Any such request must be made in writing to the clerk to the governing body, within 10 school days of receiving notice of the outcome, and include a statement specifying any perceived failures to follow the procedure. The procedure described below will be followed. A review request form is provided for your convenience.

Review process

Any review of the process followed by the school will be conducted by a panel of three members of the governing body. This will usually take place within 10 school days of receipt of your request.

The review will normally be conducted through a consideration of written submissions, but reasonable requests to make oral representations should be considered sympathetically.

Model forms

[Insert name of school]: Meeting request form

I wish to meet *[insert name of the member of staff]* to discuss the following matter:

Brief details of topic to be discussed:

Dates/times when it would be most convenient for a meeting:

Your name:

Relationship with school (eg parent of a pupil on the school roll):

Pupil's name (if relevant to the matter to be discussed)

Your address:

Telephone numbers

Daytime:

Evening:

Email address:

Signed:

Date:

[Please complete this form and return it to the school office]

School use:

Date form received:

Date response sent:

Received by:

Response sent by:

[Insert name of school]: formal complaint form

Please complete this form, and return it to the school office or to the head teacher who will acknowledge its receipt and inform you of the next stage of the procedure.

Your name:

Relationship with school (eg parent of a pupil on the school roll):

Pupil's name (if relevant to your complaint):

Your address:

Telephone numbers:

Daytime:

Evening:

Email address:

Please give concise details of your complaint (including dates, names of witnesses, etc) to allow the matter to be fully investigated:

You may continue on separate paper, or attach additional documents if you wish.

Number of additional pages attached =

What action, if any, have you already taken to try to resolve your complaint? (ie who have you spoken with or written to, and what was the outcome?)

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

Signature:

Date:

School use:

Date form received:

Received by:

Date acknowledgement sent:

Acknowledgement sent by:

Complaint referred to:			
Date:			

Insert name of school]: Complaint review request form

Please complete this form, and return it to the head teacher (or clerk to the governing body) who will acknowledge its receipt and inform you of the next stage of the procedure.

Your name:

Your address:

Telephone numbers:

Daytime:

Evening:

Email address:

Dear Sir/Madam

I submitted a formal complaint to the school on, and I am dissatisfied by the procedure that has been followed.

My complaint was submitted to and I received a response from on

I have attached copies of my formal complaint and the response(s) from the school.

I am dissatisfied with the way in which the procedure was carried out, because

You may continue on separate paper, or attach additional documents if you wish.

Number of Additional pages attached =

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

Signature:

Date:

School use

Date form received:

Received by:

Date acknowledgement sent:

Acknowledgement sent by:

Request referred to:			
Date:			

Model letters

Response to spurious complainant

Dear [insert name of complainant]

Thank you for submitting your concern in the letter received on [insert date]. After careful consideration, I'm unable to deal with this matter under the governing body's complaints procedure. This is because [we suggest you include one of the following statements:]

The substance of your complaint has been addressed under the complaints procedure already.

OR

The concerns you have raised do not fall within the scope of this procedure [suggest an alternative procedure. For example, admissions policy, exclusion policy, behaviour policy, grievance procedure, etc]

If you wish for my decision to be reviewed, you can follow the school's formal complaint procedure by writing to the Clerk to the Governing Body.

Yours sincerely,

Head teacher
Or Chair of governing body

Acknowledgement of receipt of formal complaint and invitation to meet

Dear [Insert name of complainant]

I have received your formal complaint, dated and I am grateful that you have brought this to my attention.

The school and governing body take any complaint seriously. Therefore, I would like to meet with you, as soon as possible, so that I may understand the details of your concerns more clearly. You are welcome to be accompanied to the meeting by a friend if you would find this helpful.

Please telephone..... to arrange an appointment **OR** I can offer you an appointment at on Please let me know if this is convenient.

I hope we will be able to resolve your concerns through our meeting, but if not, I will ensure the appropriate investigation takes place.

Yours sincerely,

Head teacher
Or Chair of governing body

Acknowledgement of receipt of formal complaint referred by a third party [eg LA, Diocese, MP]

Dear [Insert name of complainant]

I have received a copy of the documentation that you sent in to setting out a complaint about This has been passed to the school because it has responsibility for these matters.

The school and governing body take any complaint seriously. Therefore, I would like to meet with you so that I may understand the details of your concerns more clearly. Please telephone to arrange an appointment **OR** I can offer you an appointment at on Please let me know if this is convenient.

Meanwhile, I'd be grateful if you would complete and return the formal complaint form that is enclosed, along with details of the school's complaints procedure.

I hope we will be able to resolve your concerns through our meeting, but if not, I will ensure the appropriate investigation takes place.

Yours sincerely,

Head teacher
Or Chair of governing body

Acknowledgement of receipt of formal complaint and advising complainant that the matter is being dealt with under a confidential school procedure

Dear

I have received your formal complaint dated and I am grateful you have brought this to my attention.

The school and governing body take any complaint seriously. Therefore, I have initiated an immediate investigation. It is possible that the investigator will wish to meet with you to clarify the evidence that you have provided so far. If so, they will write to you to make suitable arrangements.

Because your concerns relate to the conduct/capability of a member of staff, the investigation will be carried out under the school's personnel procedures. This means the detail of the procedure and its outcome must remain confidential to the school and the member of staff concerned.

OR

Because your concerns relate to the behaviour of a pupil, the investigation will be carried out under the school's pupil conduct and disciplinary procedures. This means the detail of the procedure and its outcome must remain confidential to the school and the parents of the child concerned.

In due course, I may be able to provide you with some information about the outcomes of the investigation and the processes that have been followed, but in any event, I'll let you know when the matter has been concluded.

If I can be of any further assistance, do let me know.

Yours sincerely,

Head teacher
Or Chair of governing body

Notification of decision regarding formal complaint

Dear,

Following receipt of your complaint and careful consideration of all the available relevant evidence, the panel has concluded that:

The concern is not substantiated by the evidence in that

OR

The concern was substantiated in part/full because The school will review its practices/procedures..... with the intention of avoiding any reoccurrence. Parents will be informed in due course of any policy changes.

OR

To address fully the matters investigated, the school has initiated appropriate internal procedures. Due to the nature of these procedures, their outcome must remain strictly confidential. We are confident, however, the circumstances that gave rise to your complaint should not be repeated.

OR

To address fully the matters of concern you identified, the panel recommended that the governing body should review its..... policy as a matter of urgency. We are confident this should prevent similar concerns arising in future.

I hope this will now conclude the matter and we can look to the future working together for the benefit of your child's and the school.

Yours sincerely,

Head teacher/Chair of governing body/Chair of panel

Review outcome notification

Dear,

After careful consideration of your representations in the context of the relevant evidence, the governing body's complaints review panel has concluded the school followed the relevant procedure appropriately in respect of your complaint.

Summary of reasons Therefore, we now consider the matter closed.

OR

After careful consideration of your representations in the context of the relevant evidence, the governing body's complaints review panel has concluded the school followed the relevant procedure appropriately in respect of your complaint except Therefore, the following action will be taken

Once this action has been completed, the school will consider the matter to be closed.

OR

After careful consideration of your representations in the context of the relevant evidence, the governing body's complaints review panel has concluded the school followed the relevant procedure appropriately in respect of your complaint except

However, the panel determined this procedural failure did not affect the outcome of the consideration of your complaint, so while we regret this error, we will now school complaints procedure consider this matter to be closed as far as the school is concerned.

Yours sincerely,

Chair of complaints review panel
c.c. Head teacher
Chair of governors