



## What is a complaint?

We will investigate concerns, dissatisfaction or complaints about:

- The conduct or operation of our school
- The conduct, actions or lack of action by a member of school staff, the Governing Body or an individual governor
- An unacceptable delay in dealing with a matter
- The unreasonable treatment of a pupil or other person

Our complaints policy is on our website, and the school office holds a copy of the procedure that our staff follow when dealing with complaints.



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# Complaints procedure



## Information and guidance for parents and carers

*Updated & Approved: January 2018*

## *Introduction*

We are dedicated to providing the best possible education and support for all our pupils. This means having a clear, fair, and efficient procedure for dealing with any complaints to or against the school, so that any issues that arise can be dealt with as swiftly and effectively as possible.

This procedure must be followed by parents and carers whenever an issue arises that causes you concern.

## *When an issue or concern first arises*

We encourage you to approach staff with any concerns you may have. We aim to resolve all issues with open dialogue and mutual understanding.

If you have a concern that you would like to take up with the school you should first tell a member of staff either in person, over the telephone or in writing (this includes email).

## *Who to contact*

In most cases you should **talk to your child's teacher first** as they will be best placed to help you either directly or by finding out which other member of staff you should be speaking to.

If your complaint is **about a member of staff**, you should first raise this with the headteacher either in person or in writing. A meeting can be arranged with the headteacher to discuss the issue.

If your complaint is **about the headteacher**, you should raise your concern in writing with the Chair of the Governing Body. The Chair of Governors may refer complaints that are taken straight to them back to the appropriate member of staff if they do not warrant the governing body's involvement at that point. You can get the contact details for the Chair of the Governing Body from our Bursar.

If your complaint is **about a governor**, you should raise your concern in writing with the Clerk to the Governing Body. You can get the contact details for the Clerk from our Bursar.

You may be asked to give a written explanation of your concern. This is so that it is easy to know what the initial problem was if your complaint is taken further or needs to be reviewed in the future. You will then be invited to an informal meeting with the member of staff most appropriate for dealing with your concern.

It may be useful to reflect on a concern before sending an e-mail as it can sometimes be difficult to judge the tone of an e-mail when it is read. Consequently, an informal word in person may be a more positive approach to sharing a concern. Please do bear in mind that we very much share your wish to see your child thrive at school.

## *Serious issues*

If you are worried about a serious issue that involves the safety of children or fraud **please contact the Headteacher straight away**. We have special processes in place to deal with these significant issues.

## *Our complaints process*

The diagram in this leaflet shows the stages in our complaints process. The vast majority of issues can be resolved by talking through the problem with your child's teacher. All our staff will make every effort to resolve your problem informally. They will make sure that they understand what you feel went wrong or is giving you cause for concern, and they will explain their actions to you. They will ask you what you would like the school to do to sort things out. Of course, this does not mean that in every case they will come round to your point of view; but it will help both you and us to understand both sides of the issue. It may also help to prevent a similar problem arising in future.

## *Unreasonable complaints*

In the very rare instances where, having listened carefully to a concern or complaint or a series of concerns or complaints and having investigated them thoroughly, we conclude that the person raising them is behaving in a way which is unacceptable or is unreasonably persistent, we reserve the right to discontinue contact with that person about their complaint and to discontinue any ongoing investigation into it. This would be a truly exceptional course of action for us, as we would always aim to resolve any difficulties in partnership. It would not prevent that individual from raising a different concern with us or from presenting evidence that is clearly new and significant in relation to the original case.