

CHILD FRIENDLY COMPLAINTS POLICY & PROCEDURE - School Website

Copy

At our school we promise to listen to our students' concerns and complaints. We want to make sure any concerns or worries you have are addressed as soon as possible, so you can be happy and feel safe at school. This policy has been made so that you know what to do if you have a concern or a complaint, who you can talk to and what will happen once you have complained.

It is important to know that you will not get in trouble if you complain, and we will take your complaint seriously.

What does it mean?

A **"complaint"** is something you make when you are unhappy about something or someone.

A **"concern"** is when you have a worry or doubt about something or someone.

Both a complaint and a concern can be told to anyone, e.g., your parents / carers, teacher, or friend. If you tell a teacher or another member of staff at school about a complaint, it will be taken seriously, and we will listen to what you have to say.

Things to think about when making a complaint

- Is my complaint about something which affects the whole school or a group of pupils?
- Could I solve the problem by talking to my parents / carers, form / class teacher, Head of Year, or someone else in school?
- If you are making a complaint about someone you should not complain directly to them: talk to your parents / carers, another teacher, Head of Year or Senior staff.

When should I complain?

- Any student / pupil can complain if they need to. We will consider all complaints made.
- When making a complaint, we ask that you make it as soon as possible so we can properly investigate it and resolve any problems you have. If you make a complaint three months after a problem happens, we may not be able to look into your complaint. If this timescale changes, we will let you know.
- When you make a complaint, you will be asked to complete a Complaint Form. You can find one at the end of this policy or you can ask your teacher and they will give you a copy. You will always be given the chance to complete this form and hand it in to your teacher.

- If you are making a complaint about the Headteacher you should not complain directly to them – talk to your parents or another teacher. The Governing Board of the school will also be told.

What will happen when I complain?

Stage One – Meeting with a teacher to explain the problem

- In this stage, you will be meet with a member of staff and you will be asked to complete a Complaint Form – you can fill it in by yourself or with a parent or teacher. Once you have finished the form, you should hand it in to your teacher or the Headteacher.

During the meeting, the member of staff will take notes of what has been talked about, and notes of any additional discussions about the complaint will also be noted down.

- Within 15 school days of you first talking to an adult about a complaint, you and the adult dealing with the complaint will meet and discuss what will happen next. You will be asked your opinion on the resolution.

Stage Two – Formal complaint made to the Headteacher

- If the complaint is too complicated to be sorted out in 15 school days, then Stage 2 will begin. It will take another 15 school days to try and resolve the complaint – you will be told by the Headteacher if this needs to happen.
- You will meet with the Headteacher again, or, if the complaint is about the Headteacher, the Chair of the Governing Board. This meeting will be used to talk about the problem, and you will be told what has happened so far to help fix the problem.
- During the meeting, notes will be taken of what has been talked about, as well as notes of any additional discussions that you have had with an adult about the complaint.
- If, after an additional 15 school days, the problem has not been sorted out, Stage 3 will begin.

Stage Three – A meeting with the Governing Board

- If the issue has not been resolved after Stage 1 and 2, the complaint will be given to the Governing Board.
- The Governing Board will think about the complaint, talk about what has already been done to try and fix the problem and try and find a solution.
- The problem will be looked at thoroughly and a solution will be found within 20 school days.
- If a solution has not been found in 20 days, or the solution found does not fix the problem, your parents can then appeal the decision. You will not be involved in this process, but you will be told about the outcomes of the appeal.

Who will talk to me about my complaint?

- Once you have made a complaint, the adult you told will think of the best way to deal with it. This may include telling a more senior member of staff.
- If it is really serious, someone from the Local Authority or the Police might ask to talk to you.
- You do not have to worry if somebody else is told about your complaint; you are not in trouble, it just means that the person you told thinks it is best to tell them to keep you safe and happy in school. If one of the adults mentioned above wants to talk to you, you will have another adult with you at all times – this will likely be one of your parents, unless you want someone else there.
- You will be told what will happen during the interview before it starts and what you are allowed to do, e.g., have a parent there.
- When the interview has finished, a transcript will be made. A transcript is a piece of paper with everything that was said on it (a bit like a filmscript).
- You will be asked to read it, and if you are happy that it reflects what you said then you will be asked to sign it.

What will the school ask me?

When you make a complaint, the adult you tell will talk to you about the following things:

- The main problems you have, your options and how it might be dealt with.
- if the complaint will be resolved informally or by using the school's official complaints procedure.
- If any actions will be taken by the school as a result of the complaint, (even if the complaint was followed through or not).
- When you make a complaint, the adult you talk to may record the conversation using a microphone so that the full details of the complaint can be listened to at a later date. You will be told before being recorded and anything you say will only be listened to by the adult(s) dealing with the complaint.
- Your identity and personal details will be protected by law. If you want to hear what you said at a later date, you can ask school for a copy of the recording.

What if someone is complaining about me?

- If a complaint is being made about you, you will be asked to talk to the adult responsible for the complaint, so you have the chance to tell your side of the problem.
- You will always be treated fairly by the school when looking into the seriousness of the complaint.
- If the school finds that you are responsible for the problem being complained about, you will be disciplined in line with the school rules.

- If you think you have been treated unfairly, you can talk to the school's Governing Board or the Citizens Advice.

Serious complaints

- If you have ever been physically or emotionally hurt by an adult or peer, it is important that you tell a responsible adult. They will ask you what has happened and if they think your safety is at risk, they might tell Social Services.
- If this happens, the Social Services will take over the investigation of the complaint – you will be told what is happening at all times.
- If this happens, you can talk to your teacher if you have any worries.

Complaining about the same thing

- Because we want to take every complaint seriously, it is important that you only tell us things you have not complained about before unless the problem has not been resolved.
- If we have found a solution to your complaint and told you what will happen to fix your problem, then the complaint is closed. If you complain about the same thing over and over again after we have fixed the problem, we do not have to discuss the issue anymore.
- We do not want this to happen. So, to avoid any repeated requests, we will:
 - Make sure we have done all we can to fix the problem.
 - Make sure we have told you what we have done to fix the problem.
 - Tell you when you are repeating a complaint and why we will not be responding to you.
- If you feel you have not been listened to by the school, you and your parents can contact the Citizen's Advice.

Reviewing the Procedure

The Governing Board will determine how often the procedure is reviewed.

Responsibility for reviewing the procedure may be delegated to a committee of the Governing Board, an individual governor or the Headteacher

Complaint Form

This Complaint Form can be used to send a complaint to the Headteacher, or the Governing board if the complaint is about the Headteacher. You can ask a parent or teacher to help you to complete this form. Please hand it in to your class teacher once it has been finished.

Name:	Home address:
Teacher's name:	
Year group:	
Pupil's date of birth:	
Parent's telephone number:	
Parent's email:	Postcode:
What is the complaint about, and what would you like the Headteacher to do to fix it?	
When did you talk to your teacher about the problem you have?	
What happened after the talk? Was your problem solved?	
Signed (student):	Date: