

Complaints Policy & Procedures

Last Review: July 2017

Next Review: July 2020

Updated: November 2018

Committee: Inclusion

This policy should be read in conjunction with the DfE Guidance (School Complaints Procedure – 22 May 2003) and alongside the JCoSS Home/School Agreement.

Introduction

The majority of issues raised by parents, the community or students, are concerns rather than complaints. JCoSS is committed to taking concerns seriously, at the earliest stage, in the hope of keeping the number of formal complaints to a minimum and without needing formal procedures. However, depending on the nature of the complaint, complainants may wish or be asked to follow the school's formal complaints procedure. We work closely with parents of children with special educational needs (SEN) and are able to address the majority of concerns that are raised through our existing processes for communication and liaison. However, parents of children with SEN are able to raise concerns in accordance with this policy. For the school to be able to investigate a complaint, it needs to be made within six school weeks of the incident or concern arising. If a complaint is made after six weeks then it may not be investigated.

The prime aim of the JCoSS policy is to resolve the complaint as fairly and speedily as possible. Formal complaints will be dealt with in a sensitive, impartial and confidential manner. Malicious complaints may incur appropriate action by the school.

Procedure for making a complaint

The JCoSS complaints procedure has four stages:

- Stage 1a: a concern is raised informally with a member of staff
- Stage 1b: the concern is heard informally by a member of the middle or senior Leadership Team
- Stage 2: the complaint is formally heard by the Headteacher (who may delegate investigation to a member of the senior leadership team)
- Stage 3: the complaint is formally heard by the Governing Body

Stage 1: Concern raised with a member of staff

Concerns can be raised with the school at any time and will often be resolved by a quick response. You should make the first contact with the relevant member of staff (**stage 1a**) e.g. a pastoral matter would be raised with the form tutor or Year Learning Co-ordinator; an academic matter would be raised with the subject teacher or Head of Department. The attached diagram (see appendix) will help identify the correct route, but if you are unsure to whom a complaint should be directed, please contact the School Office.

The vast majority of concerns are satisfactorily dealt with in this informal way. If the concern raised requires investigation or discussion with others, the response may take a little longer but the school will normally acknowledge complaints within 48 hours

However, if you are not satisfied with the result at stage 1a, please ask to speak with the member of staff's line manager (**stage 1b**), who will attempt to address your concerns. The name of the line manager is obtainable from the school office. If you are not satisfied at the end of stage 1b then please write to or call

the school within 10 school working days and state what you would like the school to do. The school will then look at your complaint at the next stage.

Stage 2: Complaint heard by the Headteacher

Formal complaints should be put in writing and addressed to the Headteacher at the school. The complaint will be logged with the date it was received. The school will normally acknowledge receipt of the complaint within 7 school working days. In many cases this response will also report on the action the school has taken to resolve the issue.

Alternatively, a meeting may be convened to discuss the matter further. This meeting will normally take place within 10 school working days. The aim will be to resolve the matter as speedily as possible. However, if you are not satisfied with the result at stage 2 please write to or call the school within 10 school working days of receiving our response. You will need to explain to the school why you are still not satisfied and what you would like the school to do.

Stage 3: Complaint heard by the Governing Body's Complaints Appeal Panel

If the matter has still not been resolved at Stage 2, then you may write to the Chair of Governors giving details of the complaint. The Chair or a nominated Governor will investigate the complaint and may request a meeting with the complainant. The Chair or nominated Governor will respond in writing to the complainant.

Please note: in cases where the matter concerns the conduct of the Headteacher, the Headteacher and Chair of Governors will always be informed of the complaint. The Chair of Governors will arrange for the matter to be investigated. In cases where the matter concerns the conduct of a member of the Governing Body the member will be informed of the complaint.

The Governors appeal hearing is the last stage of the complaints process.