

West Park

'A caring school where we put pupils and their achievement first'



Complaints Policy

Reviewed November 2022

Dealing with Complaints

The school will attempt to handle all concerns at the earliest opportunity and therefore avoid the need for formal procedures. Taking informal concerns seriously at the earliest stage will reduce formal complaints. The requirement to have a formal complaints policy does not undermine our efforts to resolve concerns informally as possible.

In most cases, the member of staff working directly with the pupil will receive the first approach and attempt to resolve issues, involving more senior staff if necessary.

The formal procedures will be invoked when initial attempts to resolve the issue are unsuccessful and the person raising the concerns remains dissatisfied and wishes to take the matter further. Complainants will be encouraged to state what actions they feel might resolve the problem at any stage.

Process (see flow chart)

Time scales

You must raise the complaint within three months of the incident or, where a series of associated incidents have occurred, within three months of the last of these incidents. We will consider complaints made outside of this time frame if exceptional circumstances apply. We will consider complaints made outside of term time to have been received on the first school day after the holiday period.

Anonymous Complaints

We will not normally investigate anonymous complaints. However, the Headteacher or Chair of Governors, if appropriate, will determine whether the complaint warrants an investigation.

Informal procedure

The teacher or other relevant member of staff will respond directly to the complainant and resolve the issue. If the complainant is not satisfied, they will be informed of how to proceed to the formal procedure.

Formal procedure – Stage 1

The complaint is submitted on the complaints pro-forma to the Head who will acknowledge receipt, investigate and provide a written response. If unresolved:

Formal procedure – Stage 2

The complaint is submitted to the Chair of Governors who will acknowledge receipt, investigate and provide a written response. If unresolved:

Formal procedure – Stage 3

The complaint is submitted to the Clerk to Governors requesting that the complaint be heard by the Governor's Complaints Panel. The Clerk to Governors will arrange a hearing and confirm the decision in writing. There is no further recourse to internal school procedures.

The Remit of the Complaints Panel

The Complaints panel will be independent and impartial and no governor will sit on the panel if they have had prior involvement in the complaint or in the circumstances surrounding it. The panel will include one member who is independent of the running or management of the school. The remaining members will consist of a cross-section of the categories of governor and be sensitive to the issues of race, gender and religious affiliation. The panel will aim to resolve the complaint and achieve reconciliation between the school and the complainant.

It has to be recognised that the complainant might not be satisfied with the outcome if the panel does not find in their favour. It may only be possible to establish the facts and make recommendations which will satisfy the complainant that his or her complaint has been taken seriously.

The panel can:

- dismiss the complaint in whole or in part;
- uphold the complaint in whole or in part;
- decide on the appropriate action to be taken to resolve the complaint;
- recommend changes to the school's systems or procedures.

Vexatious Complaints

There may be occasions when, despite all stages of the procedure having been followed, the complainant remains dissatisfied. If the complainant tries to re-open the same issue, the Chair of Governors is able to inform them in writing that the procedure has been followed and that the matter is now closed.

Investigating Complaints

The Head or nominated member of staff will:

- establish what has happened so far, and who has been involved;
- clarify the nature of the complaint and what remains unresolved;
- meet with the complainant or contact them to clarify or gain further information;
- interview those involved in the matter and/or those complained of, allowing them to be accompanied if they wish;
- conduct all interviews with an open mind;
- keep notes of the interview and record the outcome;
- provide a written response to the complainant.

Recording Complaints

The Clerk to Governors will record the progress of complaints and the final outcome and ensure that the complainant and the school have the same understanding of what was discussed and agreed.

Governing Body Review of Complaints

The Governing Body will monitor the level and nature of complaints and review the outcomes to ensure the procedure is operating effectively.

Withdrawal of Complaints

If a complainant wants to withdraw their complaint, we will ask them to confirm this in writing.

Publicising the Procedure

This procedure will be available on the school's website.

CONCERN OR COMPLAINT RECEIVED



INFORMAL PROCEDURE	SCHOOL ACTION
Informal discussion with the relevant teacher or other relevant member of staff usually resulting in resolution of the issue If the complaint is about the Head – proceed to Stage 2	The complainant is informed of the action to be taken to resolve the issue. If they are not satisfied they will be provided with a copy of the school's Complaints Procedure and information on how to proceed to stage 1.



FORMAL PROCEDURE – STAGE 1	SCHOOL ACTION
The complaint is submitted in writing to the Head	The Head acknowledges receipt within 5 school days and provides a written response within 15 working days. Information will be provided to the complainant on how to proceed to stage 2 if not satisfied



FORMAL PROCEDURE – STAGE 2	SCHOOL ACTION
The complaint is submitted in writing to the Clerk to Governors requesting that the complaint be heard by the Chair of Governors	The Chair acknowledges receipt within 5 working days and provides a written response within 15 days. Information will be provided to the complainant on how to proceed to stage 3 if not satisfied



FORMAL PROCEDURE – STAGE 3	SCHOOL ACTION
The complaint is submitted in writing to the Clerk to Governors requesting that the complaint be heard by the Governors' Complaints Panel. This panel will have one member who is independent of the running and management of the school.	The Clerk to Governors convenes a meeting of the Complaints Panel to meet within 25 school days from receipt of the written complaint. The Clerk to Governors informs the complainant of the findings, in writing, within 5 school days of the meeting. Information will be provided to the complainant on how to progress the complaint to the Secretary of State if not satisfied.



THE COMPLAINANT HAS NO FURTHER RECOURSE TO INTERNAL SCHOOL PROCEDURES

COMPLAINT FORM

Please complete and return to the Headteacher (stage1) or Clerk to Governors (stage 2) who will acknowledge receipt and explain what action will be taken.

YOUR NAME:	
PUPIL NAME:	
YOUR RELATIONSHIP TO THE PUPIL:	
ADDRESS:	
DAYTIME TELEPHONE NUMBER: EVENING TELEPHONE NUMBER	

PLEASE GIVE DETAILS OF YOUR COMPLAINT:

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WHAT ACTION, IF ANY, HAVE YOU ALREADY TAKEN TO TRY AND RESOLVE YOUR COMPLAINT? (WHO DID YOU SPEAK TO AND WHAT WAS THE RESPONSE?)

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WHAT ACTION DO YOU FEEL MIGHT RESOLVE THE PROBLEM AT THIS STAGE?

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ARE YOU ATTACHING PAPERWORK? IF SO, PLEASE GIVE DETAILS

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SIGNATURE:

DATE:

**SCHOOL USE
ONLY**

**DATE ACKNOWLEDGEMENT
SENT:**

BY WHO:

COMPLAINT REFERRED TO:

DATE:

SCHOOL USE ONLY	

