

Responding to your  
concerns in relation  
to schools



A guide for parents, carers, pupils  
and members of the local community

### **Stage 1: The informal Stage!**

Many concerns can be resolved quickly with goodwill, often by making early contact with the class teacher or head of year.

### **Stage 2: If concerns become complaints!**

The vast majority of concerns can be resolved informally through discussion and good communication. However, if you are not satisfied with the outcome, a formal procedure would then need to be followed when attempts to resolve the issue are unsuccessful.

Schools have their own Complaints Policies that have been agreed by their governing body. This is available to view in the policies section of the school website.

For complaints to be investigated fully you need to give full information and not make them anonymously.

They should be made in writing following the School's Complaint's Procedure accurately.

- Cover all the relevant points, but be as brief as you can.
- Avoid writing long letters or emails.
- Make it easy to read by using bullet points or headings.
- Include dates, times, names etc and explain clearly:
  - What your complaint is.
  - What effect the issue is having on your child or you
  - What you would like to see happen.
- Keep it factual and avoid making judgements or hearsay.

If more information is needed from you the person investigating your complaint will contact you and set up a meeting.

- Try to keep calm!
- Avoid confrontation – it will cloud the issue.
- Remember to ask “what happens next?”

Once the school have investigated thoroughly you will receive a report presenting any findings, together with resolutions/suggestion/recommendations.

### **Stage 3: Continued dissatisfaction.**

Complaints rarely reach this level but should you need to, you can make a formal complaint to the governing body complaints panel.

The School's Complaint's Procedure will outline how you must do this.

Again this must be made in writing and you must set out:

- Why you remain dissatisfied
- What outcomes you are seeking.

A governing body complaints panel will normally consist of three people, none of whom will have been previously involved in your complaint.

They will let you know when your complaint is to be considered.

If a meeting with you and others involved is considered appropriate, you should be given notice.

The complaints panel will make their decision in private and write to you with their findings and any recommendations.

#### **Stage 4: Still Unhappy!**

If all attempts to resolve the complaint have been unsuccessful then for most schools you may refer your complaint to the Secretary of State for Education at the Department for Education (DfE), Sanctuary Buildings, Great Smith Street, London, SW1P 3BT. For more information, please visit: [www.education.gov.uk](http://www.education.gov.uk)

The Secretary of State is unlikely to investigate individual issues but can inspect the school's policies and procedures and make sure these have been followed.

Any complaint regarding an academy should be made to the Education Funding Agency (an executive agency of the DfE) at 53-55 Butts Road, Earlesdon Park, Coventry, CV1 3BH or visit: [www.education.gov.uk](http://www.education.gov.uk)