



CHANTLERS PRIMARY SCHOOL COMPLAINTS PROCEDURE

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Introduction

We care about what you think

The policy of this School is to work in partnership with Parents/Carers and the wider community. We try hard to do our best for all our pupils/students. Your views help us plan for the future. We like to know when things are going well. We also want Parents/Carers to tell us about their worries, concerns or complaints as soon as possible. It is much easier for the school to sort out a recent problem than something that happened some time ago.

Our Commitment to You

- We will deal with your concern or complaint in a professional manner.
- It will be looked into thoroughly, fairly and as quickly as possible.
- We will keep you up-to-date with what we are doing.
- We will apologise if the school has made a mistake.
- We will tell you what we are going to do to put things right.

1. Aims

Our school aims to meet its statutory obligations when responding to complaints from parents of pupils at the school, and others.

When responding to complaints, we aim to:

- Be impartial and non-adversarial.
- Facilitate a full and fair investigation by an independent person or panel, where necessary.
- Address all the points at issue and provide an effective and prompt response.
- Respect complainants' desire for confidentiality.

- Treat complainants with respect and courtesy.
- Ensure that any decisions we make are lawful, rational, reasonable, fair and proportionate, in line with the principles of administrative law.
- Keep complainants informed of the progress of the complaints process.
- Consider how the complaint can feed into school improvement evaluation processes.
- We try to resolve concerns or complaints by informal means wherever possible. Where this is not possible, formal procedures will be followed.
- The school will aim to allow the complainant to complete the complaints procedure in full.
- To support this, we will ensure we publicise the existence of this policy and make it available on the school website.
- Throughout the process, we will be sensitive to the needs of all parties involved, and make any reasonable adjustments needed to accommodate individuals. We strive to meet our school values of Resilience, Excellence, Pride, Integrity, Relationships and Respect throughout the process.

2. Legislation and Guidance

This document meets the requirements of section 29 of the Education Act 2002, which states that schools must have and make available a procedure to deal with all complaints relating to their school and any community facilities or services that the school provides.

It is also based on guidance for schools on complaints procedures from the Department for Education (DfE), including the model procedure, and model procedure for dealing with unreasonable complaints.

It also refers to good practice guidance on setting up complaints procedures from the Department for Education (DfE).

Also, it addresses duties set out in the Early Years Foundation Stage statutory framework with regard to dealing with complaints about the school's fulfilment of Early Years Foundation Stage requirements.

3. Definitions and Scope

3.1 Definitions

The DfE guidance explains the difference between a concern and a complaint:

- A concern is defined as “an expression of worry or doubts over an issue considered to be important for which reassurances are sought”.
- A complaint is defined as “an expression of dissatisfaction however made, about actions taken or a lack of action”.

3.2 Scope

The school intends to resolve complaints informally where possible, at the earliest possible stage.

There may be occasions when complainants would like to raise their concerns formally. This policy outlines the procedure relating to handling such complaints.

This policy does **not** cover complaints procedures relating to:

- Admissions.
- Statutory assessments of special educational needs (SEN).

- Safeguarding matters.
- Exclusion.
- Whistle-blowing.
- Staff grievances.
- Staff discipline.
- Collective Worship.
- School re-organisation proposals.
- National Curriculum Content.

Please see our separate policies for procedures relating to these types of complaints.

Arrangements for handling complaints from parents of children with special educational needs (SEN) about the school's support are within the scope of this policy. Such complaints should first be made to the class teacher/special educational needs co-ordinator (SENCO)/Headteacher]; they will then be referred to this complaints policy. Our SEN policy and information report include information about the rights of parents of pupils with disabilities who believe that our school has discriminated against their child.

Complaints about services provided by other providers who use school premises or facilities should be directed to the provider concerned.

4. Roles and Responsibilities

4.1 The Complainant

The complainant will get a more effective and timely response to their complaint if they:

- Follow these procedures.
- Co-operate with the school throughout the process, respond to deadlines and communicate promptly.
- Ask for assistance as needed.
- Treat all those involved with respect.
- Not publishing details about the complaint on social media.

4.2 The Investigator

An individual will be appointed to look into the complaint and establish the facts. They will:

- Interview all relevant parties, keeping notes.
- Consider records and any written evidence and keep these securely.
- Prepare a comprehensive report to the Headteacher or complaints committee which includes the facts and potential solutions.

4.3 Clerk to the Governing Board

The clerk will:

- Be the contact point for the complainant and the complaints committee, including circulating the relevant papers and evidence before complaints committee meetings.
- Arrange the hearing of the complaint.

- Record and circulate the minutes and outcome of the hearing.

4.4 Committee Chair

The committee chair will:

- Chair the meeting, ensuring that everyone is treated with respect throughout.
- Make sure all parties see the relevant information, understand the purpose of the committee, and are allowed to present their case.

5. Principles for Investigation

When investigating a complaint, we will try to clarify:

- What has happened?
- Who was involved?
- What the complainant feels would put things right.

5.1 Time Scales

The complainant must raise the complaint within 3 months of the incident. If the complaint is about a series of related incidents, they must raise the complaint within 3 months of the last incident.

We will consider exceptions to this time frame in circumstances where there were valid reasons for not making a complaint at that time and the complaint can still be investigated fairly for all involved.

When complaints are made out of term time, we will consider them to have been received on the first school day after the holiday period.

If at any point we cannot meet the time scales we have set out in this policy, we will:

- Set new time limits with the complainant.
- Send the complainant details of the new deadline and explain the delay.

5.2 Complaints about our fulfilment of Early Years requirements

We will investigate all written complaints relating to the school's fulfilment of the Early Years Foundation Stage requirements, and notify the complainant of the outcome within 28 days of receiving the complaint. The school will keep a record of the complaint (see section 10) and make this available to Ofsted on request.

Parents and carers can notify Ofsted if they believe that the school is not meeting Early Years Foundation Stage requirements, by calling 0300 123 4666, or by emailing enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk. An online contact form is also available at <https://www.gov.uk/government/organisations/ofsted#org-contacts>

We will notify parents and carers if we become aware that the school is to be inspected by Ofsted. We will also supply a copy of the inspection report to parents and carers of children attending the setting regularly.

6. Stages of Complaint (not complaints against the Headteacher or Governors)

6.1 What to do First

If you have a concern about anything we do you can tell us by telephone, in person or in writing. If any of these are difficult for you, a friend or advocate can speak to the school on your behalf. Most concerns or complaints will be sorted out quickly either by putting things right or by explaining the School's actions to you.

Try to go to the member of staff involved or your child's class teacher who will either deal with your issue or pass you on to someone who is more able to help.

Please remember that the beginning or end of the school day can be a very busy time. If you talk to a teacher at these times, for practical reasons, it may not be possible to sort things out there and then. Be prepared for them to make an appointment to see you or contact you at a more convenient time.

In considering concerns or complaints, the School will ensure that they are dealt with effectively and with fairness to all parties. Where possible, complaints will be resolved informally. Where a complaint has not been resolved informally, then the formal procedures set out in section "6(ii)" will be followed. Where your concern or complaint is considered sufficiently complex or serious, the school may choose to investigate formally from the outset.

6.1 Stage 1: Informal

The school will take informal concerns seriously and make every effort to resolve the matter quickly. It may be the case that the provision or clarification of information will resolve the issue.

Most concerns can be resolved informally by speaking to the appropriate member of staff in the school. Anyone who wishes to raise a concern should ask for an appointment to meet with a member of staff at an agreed time. At the meeting, the nature of the concern should be clarified and brief details recorded and the member of staff may be accompanied by a colleague or representative.

The parties involved should discuss and be encouraged to offer their view of what would be a realistic resolution to the problem. If the matter cannot be resolved at this stage, and the person wishes to take the matter further, they should be given clear information about how to proceed with a formal complaint at Stage 2 and be given a copy of the leaflet on how to proceed.

The complainant should raise the complaint as soon as possible with the relevant member of staff or the Headteacher as appropriate, either in person or by letter, telephone or email. If the complainant is unclear who to contact or how to contact them, they should contact the school office on 0161 761 1074 or email chantlers@bury.gov.uk

The school will acknowledge informal complaints within 5 working days, and investigate and provide a response within 20 working days.

The informal stage will involve a meeting between the complainant and the Headteacher as appropriate.

If the complaint is not resolved informally, it will be escalated to a formal complaint.

At this stage, members of the Governing Body should not be approached.

6.2 Stage 2: Formal

All concerns that haven't been resolved at Stage 1 need to be logged as a complaint and put in writing and submitted to the Headteacher. See Appendix A for the model complaints form.

The Headteacher or Chair of Governors will then acknowledge receipt of the complaint in writing within 5 working days of receipt, and provide a target date for responding (normally 20 working days). They will then investigate the complaint and respond to the complainant.

Written records of all the meetings, telephone conversations and other documentation relevant to the investigation must be kept.

The person dealing with the complaint must inform the complainant of the outcome of their investigation in writing.

If the matter cannot be resolved at this stage, and the person wishes to take the matter further, they should be given clear information about how to proceed with a formal complaint at Stage 3.

Formal complaints can be raised:

- By letter or email.
- Over the phone.
- In person.
- By a third party acting on behalf of the complainant.

The complainant should provide details such as relevant dates, times, and the names of witnesses of events, alongside copies of any relevant documents, and what they feel would resolve the complaint.

If complainants need assistance raising a formal complaint, they can contact the school office on 0161 761 1074 or chantlers@bury.gov.uk

The Headteacher (or designated member of the senior leadership team) will call a meeting to clarify concerns, and seek a resolution. The complainant may be accompanied to this meeting and should inform the school of the identity of their companion in advance.

In certain circumstances, the school may need to refuse a request for a particular individual to attend any such meeting – for example, if there is a conflict of interest. If this is the case, the school will notify the complainant as soon as they are aware, so that the complainant has the opportunity to arrange alternative accompaniment.

The Headteacher (or other person appointed by the Headteacher for this purpose) will then conduct their investigation. The written conclusion of this investigation will be sent to the complainant within 20 working days.

If the complainant wishes to proceed to the next stage of the procedure, they should inform the clerk to the governing board within ten working days. Details can be sought from the school office on 1061 761 1074 or by email to chantlers@bury.gov.uk

How to Escalate a Complaint

Complaints can be escalated by contacting the clerk to the governing board:

- By letter or email.
- Over the phone.
- In person.
- Through a third party acting on behalf of the complainant.

The clerk will need the details of the complaint as set out above, as well as details from the complainant on how they feel the previous stage of the procedure has not addressed their complaint sufficiently, and what they feel would resolve the complaint.

The written conclusion of this investigation will be sent to the complainant within 20 working days.

If the complainant wishes to proceed to the next stage of the procedure, they should inform the clerk to the governing board in writing within 5 working days. Requests received outside of this time frame will be considered in exceptional circumstances.

The clerk will acknowledge receipt of the request within 5 working days.

6.3 Stage 3: Formal Complaint investigation by the Chair of Governors

All formal complaints which remain unresolved following an investigation carried out by the Headteacher or are complaints about the Headteacher should be submitted to the Chair of Governors for further consideration.

All written complaints should be formally acknowledged within five school days, and a full written response should be sent within twenty school days. If this is not possible for any reason, i.e. the complaint is complex, the complainant should be notified of the delay, and reason in writing and a new expected response date should be agreed.

If the matter cannot be resolved at this stage, and the complainant wishes to take the matter further, they should be given clear information about how to proceed with a formal complaint at Stage Four

6.4 Stage 4: Submit the Complaint to the Governing Body Complaints Committee

When an issue that has not been resolved through Stages 1, 2 or 3, it will escalate to a full investigation by the Governing Body's Complaints Committee who will be charged with seeing the complaint through. The Education Act 2002 (Section 29) requires Governing Bodies to establish these procedures and hear complaints. This committee will be the last school-based stage of the complaints process.

The Complainant should write to the 'The Clerk of Governors' marking it 'private and confidential complaint', within 5 working days, asking for the complaint to be dealt with at Stage 4 and this will be directed to the Complaints Committee.

The Clerk of Governors should advise the complainant of the name of the governor who will chair the complaint through an acknowledging letter, which should be sent out within 5 working days of receipt by them, setting out the timescale for dealing with it.

The Clerk should arrange to convene a meeting of the Complaints Committee normally within 20 working days of receipt of the letter, liaising with and ensuring that all parties are available for the meeting. If there is to be a longer delay (perhaps for the end of term or half term etc.) the complainant needs to be informed and given an estimated date when the committee will be meeting.

It should be made clear who can attend the meeting and advise both the complainant and the person/people subject to the complaint that they may bring someone to support or represent them. The date, time and venue of the hearing, should be agreed to ensure that they are convenient and accessible to all parties.

The Clerk should arrange for copies of all the relevant documentation to be sent to all people invited, ensuring that everyone has copies to read through at least 5 working days before the date of the meeting.

Convening the Panel

The review panel consists of the first 3 members of the governing board available, who don't have direct knowledge of the complaint. These individuals will have access to the existing record of the complaint's progress (see section 10). The governors will select a panel chair from amongst themselves.

If not, enough impartial governors are available, we will seek panel members from other schools or the local authority. We will make sure the governors we source are suitably skilled and can demonstrate that they are independent and impartial.

The complainant must have reasonable notice of the date of the review panel; however, the review panel reserves the right to convene at their convenience rather than that of the complainant. The clerk will aim to find a date within 20 working days of the request, where possible.

If the complainant rejects the offer of 3 proposed dates without good reason, the clerk will set a date. The hearing will go ahead using written submissions from both parties.

Any written material will be circulated to all parties at least 5 working days before the date of the meeting.

At the Meeting

1. The Chair will introduce him/herself and ask people present to introduce themselves. It needs to be made clear at the start who can be present for what part of the meeting. The Chair will then explain the purpose and format of the meeting and advise those present that at any time they can ask for a short break
2. The **complainant** will be asked to give a verbal statement in support of his/her written letter of complaint and why s/he feels that he/she issue has not been resolved. He/she will be permitted to call witnesses and to produce relevant documentation.
3. The **person subject to the complaint** will be allowed to ask questions:
 - (a) of the complainant on the evidence given by him/her and
 - (b) of any witness(es), the **complainant** has called on their evidence.
4. The Chair and other committee members will take the opportunity to ask questions and seek clarification.
5. The **person subject to the complaint** will be given the right of reply, to state his/her case, to call witnesses and to produce relevant documentation.
6. The **complainant** will be allowed to ask questions:
 - (a) of the **person subject to the complaint** on the evidence given by him/her and
 - (b) of any of the witnesses, the **person subject to the complaint** has called on their evidence.
7. The Chair and other committee members will take the opportunity to ask any further questions they may have. When the committee members understand all the issues, the Chair will ask all parties to leave, except the members and the clerk.
8. The panel will then put together its findings and recommendations from the case. The panel will also provide copies of the minutes of the hearing and the findings and recommendations to the complainant and, where relevant, the subject of the complaint, and make a copy of the findings and recommendations available for inspection by the Headteacher.

After the Meeting

9. The Committee members then discuss the issues in private and will need to consider the information come to a decision and suggest a way to resolve the issue considering the best interests of the child or children.
10. When the Committee has reached a decision, the Chair will inform everyone concerned in writing as soon as possible, but in any event, within 10 working days of the meeting.
11. The decision of the Complaints Committee is final and they will report their findings to the Governing Body ensuring that any issues coming out of the investigation are actioned.

The Outcome

The committee can:

- Uphold the complaint, in whole or in part.
- Dismiss the complaint, in whole or in part.

If the complaint is upheld, the committee will:

- Decide the appropriate action to resolve the complaint.
- Where appropriate, recommend changes to the school's systems or procedures to prevent similar issues in the future.

The school will inform those involved of the decision in writing within 10 working days.

7. Complaints against the Headteacher, a Governor or the Governing Board

7.1 Stage 1: Informal

Complaints made against the Headteacher or any member of the governing board should be directed to the clerk of the governing board in the first instance.

If the complaint is about the Headteacher or one member of the governing board (including the chair or vice-chair), a suitably skilled and impartial governor will carry out the steps at stage 1 (set out in section 6 above).

7.2 Stage 2: Formal

If the complaint is jointly about the chair and vice-chair, the entire governing board or the majority of the governing board, an independent investigator will carry out the steps in stage 2 (set out in section 6 above). They will be appointed by the governing body, and will write a formal response at the end of their investigation.

7.3 Stage 3: Review Panel

If the complaint is jointly about the chair and vice-chair, the entire governing board or the majority of the governing board, a committee of independent governors will hear the complaint. They will be sourced from local schools, and the local authority and will carry out the steps at stage 3 (set out in section 6 above).

8. Referring complaints on completion of the school's procedure

If the complainant is unsatisfied with the outcome of the school's complaints procedure, they can refer their complaint to the DfE.

The DfE will not re-investigate the matter of the complaint. It will look at whether the school's complaints policy and any other relevant statutory policies that the school holds were adhered to. The DfE also looks at whether the school's statutory policies adhere to education legislation. It may direct the school to re-investigate the complaint where it is clear the school has acted unlawfully or unreasonably.

For more information or to refer a complaint, see the following webpage:

[click here](#) or

The School Complaints Unit (SCU) Sanctuary Buildings Department for Education 2nd Floor,
Piccadilly Gate Manchester M1 2WD

We will include this information in the outcome letter to complainants.

9. Vexatious, Serial, Persistent and Unreasonable complaints

While the vast majority of complainants are reasonable, a small minority may remain dissatisfied despite all the procedures having been followed. They are sometimes referred to as 'vexatious', 'persistent', 'habitual' or 'serial' complainants. Sometimes it is simply a case of 'agreeing to disagree' and moving on. Schools do not expect their staff to tolerate unacceptable behaviour and will act to protect their staff from abusive, offensive or threatening behaviour. Unreasonable complaints are those that hinder the consideration of a complaint because of the frequency or nature of the complainant's contact with the school.

9.1 Unreasonably persistent complaints

Most complaints raised will be valid, and therefore we will treat them seriously. However, a complaint may become unreasonable if the person:

- Has made the same or substantially similar complaint before, and it's already been resolved by following the school's complaints procedure. If there are significant new aspects which have not been previously considered, we will follow this procedure again.
- Makes a complaint that is obsessive, persistent, harassing, prolific, defamatory or repetitive
- Knowingly provides false information.
- Insists on pursuing an unfounded complaint, or out of the scope of the complaint's procedure.
- Pursues a valid complaint, but unreasonably e.g. refuses to articulate the complaint, refuses to co-operate with this complaint's procedure, or insists that the complaint is dealt with in ways that are incompatible with this procedure and the time frames it sets out.
- Changes the basis of the complaint as the investigation goes on.
- Makes a complaint designed to cause disruption, annoyance or excessive demands on school time.
- Seeks unrealistic outcomes, or a solution that lacks any serious purpose or value.

Steps we will take

We will take every reasonable step to address the complainant's concerns and give them a clear statement of our position and their options. We will maintain our role as an objective arbiter throughout the process, including when we meet with individuals. We will follow our complaints procedure as normal (as outlined above) wherever possible.

If the complainant continues to contact the school in a disruptive way, we may put communication strategies in place. We may:

- Give the complainant a single point of contact via an email address
- Limit the number of times the complainant can make contact, such as a fixed number per term
- Ask the complainant to engage a third party to act on their behalf, such as [Citizens Advice](#)
- Put any other strategy in place as necessary

Stopping Responding

We may stop responding to the complainant when all of these factors are met:

- We believe we have taken all reasonable steps to help address their concerns
- We have provided a clear statement of our position and their options
- The complainant contacts us repeatedly, and we believe they intend to cause disruption or inconvenience

Where we stop responding, we will inform the individual that we intend to do so. We will also explain that we will still consider any new complaints they make.

In response to any serious incident of aggression or violence, we will immediately inform the police and communicate our actions in writing. This may include barring an individual from our school site.

9.2 Duplicate Complaints

If we have resolved a complaint under this procedure and receive a duplicate complaint on the same subject from a partner, family member or other individuals, we will assess whether there are aspects that we hadn't previously considered or any new information we need to consider.

If we are satisfied that there are no new aspects, we will:

- Tell the new complainant that we have already investigated and responded to this issue, and the local process is complete.
- Direct them to the DfE if they are dissatisfied with our original handling of the complaint.

If there are new aspects, we will follow this procedure again.

9.3 Complaint Campaigns

Where the school receives a large volume of complaints about the same topic or subject, especially if these come from complainants unconnected with the school, the school may respond to these complaints by:

- Publishing a single response on the school website.
- Sending a template response to all of the complainants.

If complainants are not satisfied with the school's response or wish to pursue the complaint further, the normal procedures will apply.

9.4 Anonymous Complaints

The School will always give serious consideration to concerns and complaints that are brought to its attention. However, anonymous complaints will not normally be considered.

9.5 Unreasonable Complaints

There is a right to raise a complaint against a school and an expectation that the individual will exhaust the School's procedures. If the individual contacts the school again with the same issue, this could be seen as unreasonable and the school may choose not to respond.

10 Responding to threats of legal action

Schools are sometimes threatened with legal action by parents and others, or even receive letters from lawyers representing the complainants. Threats involving the media and/or legal action should be treated respectfully, whilst reassuring the person that the school will respond to any letters or approaches from the media or solicitors in the normal way. These may be 'empty' threats made out of frustration in the heat of the moment and are without substance. However, Headteachers should contact Bury Council's press office for advice if they are concerned about statements being made to the media. Once a formal lawyer's letter has been received you should do two things:

- you should acknowledge the letter and tell the sender that you are taking advice and will respond fully in due course, and
- you should take legal advice from the council's legal advisers (if you have bought back the service from the council's legal services) or your legal advisers if appointed. If the matter appears to relate to a claim of negligence or a wish for compensation then you should inform your designated finance officer at the Local Authority.

The Education Act 1996 (Section 154) states:

1. The articles of government for a county, voluntary or maintained special school shall make provision for the matters set out in subsections (2) to (6)
2. The standard of behaviour which is to be regarded as acceptable at the school shall be determined by the Headteacher, so far as it is not determined by the governing body.
3. The Headteacher shall determine measures (which may include the making of rules and provisions for enforcing them) to be taken with a view to:
 - a) promoting, among pupils, self-discipline and proper regard for authority,
 - b) encouraging good behaviour and respect for others on the part of pupils,
 - c) securing that the standard of behaviour of pupils is acceptable, and otherwise regulating the conduct of pupils.
4. The Headteacher shall, in determining any such measures –
 - a) Act following any written statement of general principles provided for him by the governing body
 - b) Have regards to any guidance that they may offer concerning particular matters.
5. The Headteacher shall make any such measures generally known within the school.
6. The Governing Body and the Headteacher shall, before any such measures are determined, consult the Local Education Authority on any matter arising from the proposed measures which can reasonably be expected:
 - a) to lead to increased expenditure by the Authority, or
 - b) to affect the responsibilities of the authority as an employer.

Occasionally, the behaviour of a complainant can pose a threat to the school community. If this occurs, a warning letter to the person threatening to exclude them for a period of time from the premises should be sufficient to stop any unwelcome behaviour. Schools should take further advice from their legal representative.

If an exclusion is to be applied, the Chair of Governors should write to the complainant and inform them that their implied license to be on school premises has been temporarily revoked. The letter should explain the reasons for the exclusion and the length of time that it is to remain in place. At the end of the period, it is recommended that it be reviewed, considering any representations made by that person and a letter should be sent either lifting or extending the exclusion with reasons. Anyone wishing to complain about exclusion can do so to the Headteacher or Chair of Governors. The advice can be sought from the Council about exclusions and how to appeal to the school governors.

11. Record Keeping

The school will record the progress of all complaints, including information about actions taken at all stages, the stage at which the complaint was resolved, and the final outcome. The records will also include copies of letters and emails, and notes relating to meetings and phone calls.

This material will be treated as confidential and held centrally and will be viewed only by those involved in investigating the complaint or on the review panel.

This is except where the secretary of state (or someone acting on their behalf) or the complainant requests access to records of a complaint through a freedom of information (FOI) request or through a subject access request under the terms of the Data Protection Act, or where the material must be made available during a school inspection.

Records of complaints will be kept securely, only for as long as necessary and in line with data protection law, our privacy notices and records management policy.

The details of the complaint, including the names of individuals involved, will not be shared with the whole governing board in case a review panel needs to be organised at a later point.

Where the governing board is aware of the substance of the complaint before the review panel stage, the school will (where reasonably practicable) arrange for an independent panel to hear the complaint.

Complainants also have the right to request an independent panel if they believe there is likely to be bias in the proceedings. The decision to approve this request is made by the governing board, who will not unreasonably withhold consent.

12. Learning Lessons

The Complaints Committee will review any underlying issues raised by complaints with the Headteacher and senior leadership team/where appropriate, and respecting confidentiality, to determine whether there are any improvements that the school can make to its procedures or practice to help prevent similar events in the future.

13. Monitoring Arrangements

The Governing Body will monitor the effectiveness of the complaints procedure to ensure that complaints are handled properly. Mr Robert Lees will track the number and nature of complaints, and review underlying issues as stated in section 11.

The complaints records are logged and managed by Mrs Joanne Windows – School Business Manager.

This policy will be reviewed by the Headteacher and Governing Body annually.

At each review, the policy will be approved by the full Governing Body.

14. Social Media

Whilst the school accepts that complainants have a right to an opinion and make it public through the use of social media, complainants are reminded that they are not entitled to use social media to defame or harass individual staff, governors and/or bring the school into disrepute.

15. Closing complaints

Very occasionally, a school will feel it needs to close a complaint where the complainant is still dissatisfied. Sometimes it is simply not possible to meet all of the complainant's wishes and the complaint remains irresolvable.

If a complainant persists in making representations to the school – to the Headteacher, designated Governor, Chair of Governors or anyone else – or to the LA, this can be extremely time-consuming and can detract from the school's responsibility to look after the interests of all the children in its care. For this reason, **schools are entitled to close correspondence (including personal approaches, letters and telephone calls) on a complaint where they feel that they have taken all reasonable action to resolve the complaint.** All the reasons as to why a complaint is being closed should be recorded.

Correspondence received from the complainant after closure should be kept on file indefinitely, as should notes of telephone calls and any further personal calls referring to the matter.

This will be important if the DfE asks for copies later. It is even more important where the case is particularly sensitive, for example, if it involves child protection or hate incident issues.

16. Calculation of Time

All references in this Policy to 'days' should be taken to mean school working days and therefore will not include weekends, school holidays or INSET days.

17. Withdrawal of a Complaint

If the complainant wishes to withdraw their complaint at any time, they will be asked to confirm this in writing.

18. Links with other Policies

Policies dealing with other forms of complaints include:

- Child protection and safeguarding policy and procedures
- Admissions policy
- Exclusions policy
- Staff grievance procedures
- Staff disciplinary procedures
- SEN policy and information report
- Privacy notices

APPENDIX A

Model complaint form Please complete and return this form to the Chair of the Complaints Committee who will acknowledge receipt and explain what action will be taken.	
Your name:	
Address:	
Telephone:	Mobile:
E-mail:	
Your child's name:	Class:
Please give details of your complaint:	
What action, if any, have you already taken to try and resolve your complaint?	
Who did you speak to and what was their response?	
What actions do you feel might resolve the problem?	
Signature:	Date:

Appendix B

