



PARENTAL COMPLAINTS

PROCEDURE

Policy reviewed by:

HEADTEACHER

GOVERNORS

SLT

Reviewed by SLT	Agreed by Governing Body	Next review
February 2019		Determined by the Governing Body.

Parental Complaints about School Issues Procedures for Parents

As a parent/carer you may feel the need to make a complaint to the school. Issues may include:

- Your child's academic/social progress
- Bullying by other pupils
- Homework (too much or too little)
- Unfair treatment of your child as your child perceives it
- Issues concerning the Health and Safety of your child
- Absence

The information given below takes you through the procedures for making a complaint to the school. Please note that this procedure does not apply to issues concerning the curriculum. Collective worship, admission, exclusion appeals, decisions about your child's special educational needs or grievances by school staff. These are the subject of separate complaints procedures. Parents/carers should contact the school for advice on how to proceed with complaints in these areas.

All other complaints are handled by the school according to the arrangements as set out below.

Aims and objectives

The school will give careful consideration to all complaints and deal with them fairly and honestly. We will provide sufficient opportunity for any complaint to be fully discussed and aim to resolve it through open dialogue and mutual understanding.

Framework of principles

This policy will:

- Be easily accessible and publicised
- Be simple and easy to use and understand
- Be impartial
- Be non- adversarial
- Allow swift handling with established time limits for action and keeping people informed of the progress
- Ensure a full and fair investigation by an independent person where necessary
- Respect peoples' desire for confidentiality, wherever possible (some information sharing may be necessary to carry out a thorough investigation)
- Address all points at issue, providing an effective response and appropriate redress, where necessary
- Provide information to the school's Senior Leadership Team so that services can be improved

The complaints procedure has three stages. At each stage an attempt at mediation will be made as a first step in the process.

Stage One:

Telephone or write to the school via any of the following communication channels:

- Administrative staff
- Your child's Learning Manager
- A member of the Senior Leadership Team
- The Head teacher

What happens next?

- All complaints will be dealt with as quickly and informally as possible
- Your complaint will be logged in the Complaints Register
- You will be advised who is dealing with the complaint and how the person can be contacted
- Every effort will be made to investigate and reach a settlement within 10 school days of the receipt of the complaint. During this time you will be informed of the outcome.

If you do not feel able to accept the outcome of your complaint or feel that it has not been sorted out you may wish to proceed to the next stage.

Stage Two:

- Contact the school office to make an appointment to see the Headteacher
- During the appointment you will be able to put forward your concerns and may be asked questions to seek clarification of the facts
- If necessary the Headteacher will carry out further investigations (collating information may be delegated to another member of staff)
- You will be informed of the outcome of these investigations, in writing, within 10 school days of your appointment

If at this point you are unhappy with the Head teacher's decision, you have **14 days** to write to the Chair of Governors at the school address, this is referred to as Stage Three.

Stage Three:

If the matter is about:

- School policies as determined by the governing body
- The actions or inactions of the governing body
- The actions or inactions of the Headteacher

Then you will be asked to complete a formal complaint form.

In your letter to the Chair of Governors you will need to: -

- Set out your complaint
- State why you are unhappy with the school's response
- Say how you would wish the matter to be resolved

What happens next?

- The Chair or a nominated governor will acknowledge receipt of your letter and will convene a Governing Bodies Complaints Appeal Panel to consider your complaint.
- You will be invited to attend a hearing to put forward your complaint to the Appeal Panel; you may be accompanied by a "friend" if you so wish.

The Appeal 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 to ensure that problems of a similar nature do not recur

After the Appeal Panel has met the Chair has 15 working days to respond in writing with the Panel's decision.

If at this stage you feel that the Governing body is acting “unreasonably” or failing to carry out its statutory duties properly you may write to the Department for Education (DFE) Castle View House, East Lane, Runcorn, Cheshire , WA7 2GJ with the following information:

- A detailed account of your concerns and the reasons why the complaint is being submitted
- All previous correspondence relevant to the case

Monitoring and Review

St Ursula’s Convent School recognises that parents are distressed should they find it necessary to lodge a complaint, but please remember that governors also have a duty of care to all their pupils and staff. The school will try hard to resolve any complaint to the satisfaction of all concerned, but the following points apply:

- It is for the school to discipline pupils appropriately
- Inappropriate language or behaviour towards staff or pupils is unacceptable
- Appointments will be made as quickly as possible, but the first priority of teachers is towards those that they teach
- Governors should always be contacted via the school and never at their home address

Availability

A copy of this procedure is available to all parents on request.