

Concerns and Complaints

Concerns and Complaints: - Guidance notes for parents

As I am sure you are aware, if you have any concerns or complaints the school staff are always ready to listen and will act to deal with the matter. We have a concerns or complaints procedure which is detailed below for your information. We also want to hear from you if you have any good news to share!

If you have a concern or complaint

We would like you to tell us about it. We welcome suggestions for improving our work in the school. Be assured that no matter what you want to tell us, our support and respect for you and your child in the school will not be affected in any way. Please tell us of your concern as soon as possible. It may be difficult for us to investigate properly an incident or problem which has happened some time ago.

What to do first

We can guarantee confidentiality in dealing with concerns unless it involves safeguarding. Most concerns can be sorted out quickly by speaking with your child's Form Tutor or Head of House. Any teacher or the office staff can help you find the right member of staff. If you have a concern which you feel should be looked at by the Headteacher in the first instance you can contact the Headteacher if you prefer. It may be best to discuss the problem face to face. You will usually need an appointment to do this, and can make one by telephoning or calling in to the school office. You can take a friend or relation to the appointment with you if you would like to so that they can support you.

All staff will make every effort to resolve your problem informally. They will make sure that they understand what you feel went wrong, and they will explain their own actions to you. They will ask what you would like the school to do to put things right. Of course, this does not mean that in every case they will come round to your point of view but it will help both you and the school to understand both sides of the question. It may also help to prevent a similar problem arising again.

What to do next

If you are dissatisfied with the response you receive you can make a written complaint to the Headteacher. Contact the school office if you require help with this. If your complaint is about an action of the Headteacher personally, then you should refer it to the Chair of Governors, who can be contacted via the school office.

You may also find it helpful at this stage to have a copy of the full statement of the School Concerns and Complaints Procedure as this explains in detail what procedures are followed. This is available from the school office.

The Headteacher will ask to meet you for a discussion of the problem. Again you may take a friend or someone else with you if you wish. The Headteacher will

conduct a full investigation of the complaint and may interview any members of staff or students involved. You will receive a written response to your complaint.

If you are still unhappy

The problem will normally be solved by this stage. However, if you are still not satisfied you may wish to contact the Chair of the Governing Body to ask for referral of your complaint to the Complaints Committee of the governing body. Letters to the Chair of Governors should be sent to The Clerk to Governors. It will then be heard by a group of three governors who have no previous knowledge of the problem and so will be able to give it a fresh assessment. You will be invited to attend and speak to the committee at a meeting which the Headteacher will also attend. The School Concerns and Complaints Procedure explains how these meetings operate.

Further action

Complaints about school problems are almost always settled within schools but in exceptional cases it may be possible to refer the problem to an outside body such as the Ombudsman (in rare circumstances but particularly in relation to admissions) or the Secretary of State for Education.

More detailed guidance is available from the School Office. Please contact the Office Manager on 0151 327 3213 if you wish to request that information.