Dunnington C of E VA Primary School

Complaints Policy

We Care, We Believe, We Succeed – Together

Christian Vision

'Encourage one another and build each other up' (1 Thessalonians 5: 11)

Our Vision is to place the child at the heart of everything we do. It is to work together, where everyone encourages each other to be a partner in learning.

We aim to provide a safe, happy, caring and stimulating community, where every child is given the opportunity to reach their true potential and to celebrate their successes. Within our learning environment, children will:

- develop a thirst for knowledge, they will be encouraged to raise questions and develop their thinking and learning skills.
- develop physically, emotionally and spiritually, ensuring they are equipped for the ever-changing and demanding world in which we live.

In our school we will:

- respect each other's beliefs
- care for each other and the environment
- connect with the wider community

In learning and teaching we will set high standards and aspire for excellence in everything we do, ensuring that our curriculum is relevant and purposeful. We are determined to create an inclusive culture of learning where all children are challenged in their thinking, discover their talents, achieve to the best of their abilities and become motivated and resilient life-long learners.

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Signed by Chair of Governors (Emma Daniell)	Emma Daniell
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1. Aims

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

It is in everyone's interest that concerns, and complaints are resolved at the earliest possible stage. Many issues can be resolved informally, without the need to use the formal stages of the Complaints Policy.

Our school takes informal concerns seriously and makes every effort to resolve the matter as quickly as possible and provide any reassurances that may be necessary. However, there are occasions when complainants would like to raise their concerns formally. In these cases, school will attempt to resolve the issue internally, through the stages outlined within this Complaints Policy.

Our school aims to foster and maintain positive relationships with parents and carers through a timely response to all concerns.

Our school governors want to ensure that potential complainants feel able to raise concerns with members of staff without formality, either in person by telephone or in writing. This allows staff to establish whether a person is asking a question, expressing an opinion, or making a complaint. The member of staff who deals with the initial contact will:

- clarify the nature of the concern and reassure the complainant that we want to hear about it
- resolve the concern immediately if the member of staff can do so
- record the enquiry and any agreements made and notify the Headteacher

If the complainant has difficulty discussing a concern with a particular member of staff, we will respect their views and, in these cases, the Headteacher will refer them to another staff member. Similarly, if the member of staff directly involved feels unable to deal with a concern, the Headteacher will refer the concern to another staff member. The member of staff may be more senior but does not have to be. The ability to consider the concern objectively and impartially is more important. If the member of staff cannot resolve the concern, they will:

- make a clear note of the name, contact address and telephone number together with details of the nature of the concern and the outcome the complainant is looking for

• refer the concern to a member of the Senior Leadership Team

The staff member dealing with the concern will ensure that the Complainant is kept informed of any action taken. The emphasis at this stage is on resolving the issue quickly and informally for the benefit of pupil, parents/carers, and staff.

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 to 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 serial and unreasonable complaints.

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

3. What qualifies as a school complaint?

3.1 Complaints and concerns

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

- A **concern** is defined as "an expression of worry or doubt 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 What the policy does and does not cover

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
- Suspension and permanent exclusion
- Whistle-blowing
- Staff grievances
- Staff discipline

  Please see our separate policies for procedures relating to these types of complaint.
- School re-organisation proposals
- Curriculum
- Collective worship

  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, and respond to deadlines and communication promptly
- Ask for assistance as needed
- Treat all those involved with respect
- Do not publish 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 The complaints co-ordinator

The complaints co-ordinator can be:

- The Headteacher
- The designated complaints governor
- Any other staff member providing administrative support

The complaints co-ordinator will:

- Keep the complainant up to date at each stage in the procedure
- Make sure the process runs smoothly by liaising with staff members, the Headteacher, Chair of governors, clerk and local authority
- Be aware of issues relating to:
- Sharing third party information
- Additional support needed by complainants, for example interpretation support or where the complainant is a child or young person
- Keep records

4.4 Governance professional (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 complaints hearing
- Record and circulate the minutes and outcome of the hearing

4.5 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, our aim is 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 as quickly as possible, and no later than within one month. For any complaint received after this date will it will be at the Headteacher's discretion on how to proceed.

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 timescales 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 receipt of 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.

6. Stages of complaint

6.1 Informal Stage - School Resolution

This stage does not apply to complaints against the Headteacher, a Governor or the Governing Board.
When parents, pupils or members of the public have concerns they should discuss their concerns with the member of staff most directly involved and, if not satisfied discuss their concerns with a senior member of staff.

The complainant should make an appointment to speak to the Class Teacher as soon as possible. The purpose of this meeting should be to establish the nature of the concern and to seek a resolution to the problem. It is good practice for the teacher to make brief written notes of meetings and telephone calls and a copy of any written response should be added to the record. The staff member may need to talk to others before they can respond. The complainant should be given a timescale for a response; no more than 5 school days. It is important to recognise that schools are busy organisations and may not be able to offer an appointment straight away.

Most concerns will be satisfactorily dealt with in this way. However, if the complainant or indeed the staff member, is unhappy with the informal approach, then they may choose to involve a more senior member of staff. If this does not resolve the concern for both parties, then a formal complaint must be made to the Headteacher (*unless they are about the Headteacher*) via the school office, within a timely manner, giving the reasons for the continued concern. Sometimes during the handling of a complaint, communication between the complainant and the school can become difficult. Mediation can be a very useful way of helping people to resolve their differences and find an agreed way forward. Both parties need to agree to mediation. The school (or the complainant) may suggest mediation before it is escalated to a formal complaint.

The school may use a staff member to investigate a complex issue or to facilitate a mediation meeting or it may be a member of the Governing Board. Mediation can be sought at any point during the processes of resolution and investigation. If mediation is not an option, and the complainant considers that the school resolution has not delivered a satisfactory conclusion, they should submit a request in writing to the Headteacher outlining the reasons for a formal investigation.

We expect the majority of concerns will be resolved in this way, and not recorded as a formal complaint. **It is in everyone's interest to resolve concerns at the earliest stage possible.** However, if the complainant remains concerned the following procedure will be followed:

6.2 Stage 1 - Review by the Headteacher

The Headteacher may delegate the investigation to another member of the school's senior leadership team (Investigating Officer)

Formal complaints should be made by the following means:

- In person
- In writing in accordance with the school's Complaints Policy
- By telephone.

They may also be made by a third party acting on behalf of a complainant if they have appropriate consent to do so. This consent to act on behalf of another must be evidenced to the school before any progress is made towards a resolution.

A Complaint Form, Appendix A, is included in this policy. If help is required in completing the form, please contact the school office. Alternatively, help can be sought from third party organisations such as Citizens Advice.

The complainant should set out clearly the nature of their complaint, any unresolved issues, including relevant dates and full names of persons involved, and clarify what action they believe would resolve the issue – any acknowledgement that the school could have handled the situation better is not an admission of unlawful or negligent action. Any documentation should be attached to the complaint.

The complaint will be acknowledged in writing within 5 school days of date of receipt. The acknowledgement letter will confirm the date that the formal complaint was received, the action to be taken and the specified time limit. It will also specify who has been appointed as the Investigator (person appointed by the Headteacher for this purpose). The Investigator will be a senior member of staff who has no prior involvement with the complaint.

The Headteacher or Investigator will consider the complaint and in doing so will:

- Establish the facts
- Meet or contact the complainant if they need further information
- Clarify how the complainant may feel things could be put right (if this has not been set out in their letter or included on the Complaints Form)
- Interview those involved, and any witnesses, allowing them to be accompanied if they wish
- Keep notes of any interview for the record

The complainant will be offered the opportunity to meet with the Investigator and to be accompanied by a friend or relative, not acting in a legal capacity and/or anyone whose involvement may create a conflict of interest, to speak on their behalf or help them make their case. The complainant should inform the school of the identity of their companion in advance of the meeting.
If the complaint involves a pupil, they should also be interviewed, normally with a parent/carer present. In some cases, however, this may not be possible and a member of staff with whom the pupil feels comfortable will attend the interview.
To prevent any later challenge or disagreement over what was said, the investigator will keep brief notes of meetings and telephone conversations and a copy of any written response. These notes will be kept securely.

Outcomes to a complaint may include:

- An apology
- An explanation
- An assurance that the event complained of will not recur
- An explanation of the steps that have been taken, or will be taken, to ensure that it will not happen again and an indication of the timescales within which any changes will be made
- A finding that the complaint requires no further action
- An admission that the situation could have been handled differently or better (this is not the same as an admission of negligence)
- An undertaking to review school policies, practices, and procedures in light of the complaint
- A finding that there is insufficient evidence to reach a conclusion such that the complaint cannot be upheld

It may also be the case that the complaint may not have any substance and is therefore considered to be unfounded or unsubstantiated.

Once all facts are established, within a maximum of 15 school days (excluding those that fall in the school holiday) a written response confirming the outcome of the investigation will be sent to the complainant. This response will detail actions taken to investigate the complaint and, provide a full explanation of the decision made and the reason(s) for it. Where appropriate, it will include details of actions which the school will take to resolve the complaint.

The letter will inform the complainant that, if they are dissatisfied with the outcome of the investigation and they wish to escalate their complaint to Stage 2 (the next stage of the procedure), they should inform the governance professional within 10 school days of the date of the formal written response setting out the outcome of the Stage 1 investigation. If

a written response is received after the 10 school days as requested, the Headteacher will make the decision as to whether to allow the complaint to be escalated to Stage 2.

Where a complaint is received during a school holiday or within 20 days from the start of the Christmas, Easter, or summer holidays, the Headteacher will endeavour to expedite the investigation wherever possible.

Where a time limit cannot be complied with, the school will write to the complainant within the specified time limit setting out the reasons why the time limit cannot be complied with and confirm the new time limit which will apply.

6.3 Stage 2 – Investigation by Chair of Governors or Suitably Skilled Governor

Complaints at this stage are in one of these categories:

1. The complainant is not satisfied with the outcome at Stage 1 - Review by Headteacher or investigator
2. A complaint has been made about the Headteacher or a member of the Governing Board, this may include the Chair or Vice-Chair, or the entire Governing Board.

To escalate the complaint, the complainant will be asked to contact the governance professional either in person, in writing using the school's complaint form, by email, or by telephone. They may also be made by a third party acting on behalf of a complainant if they have appropriate consent to do so. This consent to act on behalf of another must be evidenced by the governance professional before any progress is made towards a resolution.

The complainant should set out clearly:

- the nature of their complaint
- any unresolved issues, including relevant dates and full names of persons involved
- clarify how they feel the previous stage of the procedure has not addressed their complaint sufficiently
- what action they feel would resolve the issue.

Any documentation should be attached to the complaint. The complaint will be acknowledged in writing within 5 school days of date of receipt.

Stage 2 – Complaints against the Headteacher, a Governor or the Governing Board

Any concern or complaint made against the Headteacher, a Governor or the Governing Board should be directed to the governance professional. If the concern or 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 an investigation as outlined in the Informal (School Resolutions) Stage of the Complaints Policy. If the concern or complaint is 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 as mentioned previously.

6.4 Stage 3 – Governing Board Review Committee

This is the Final Stage of the Complaints Procedure.

If the complainant is dissatisfied with the outcome of the complaint under Stage 2 of the Complaints Policy and wishes to take the matter further, they can escalate the complaint to Stage 3 – a Governing Board Review Committee Meeting.

The complainant may write to the governance professional within 15 school days of receiving the letter confirming the outcome of Stage 2 and request a Governing Board Review Committee meeting. Any requests received outside of this time frame will only be considered in exceptional circumstances.

The governance professional will record the date the complaint is received and write to the complainant within 5 school days of receipt to acknowledge receipt of their request for a Governing Board Review Committee Meeting. This acknowledgement letter will confirm the date that the formal request to review the decision was received, the action to be taken and the specified time limit. It will also include the names of the Governing Board Review Committee members. If this is not possible, the governance professional will provide an anticipated date and keep the complainant informed. They will aim to convene a meeting within 20 school days of receipt of the Stage 3 request.

The Governing Board Review Committee will consist of at least 3 Governing Board members who were not directly involved in any matters detailed in the complaint, and with no prior involvement or knowledge of the complaint.

To appoint a governor from another school onto an Independent Complaints Appeal Panel, the Governing Board does not have to enter into, or already be in, a formal arrangement under the School Governance (Collaboration) (England) Regulations 2003.

Prior to the meeting, the Governing Board Review Committee members will decide amongst themselves who will act as Chair of the Governing Board Review Committee Meeting. Alternatively, an entirely independent Governing Board Review Committee may be convened to hear the complaint at this stage of the procedure.

In some circumstances, it may be possible and appropriate for the Chair of the Governing Board Review Committee to resolve the issue with the complainant without the need for a Governing Board Review Meeting.

If the complainant is invited to attend the Governing Board Review Committee Meeting, they may bring someone along to provide support. This can be a friend, relative or colleague but they will not play any part in the proceedings unless invited to do so by the Chair. There may be occasions when legal representation is appropriate such as, a school employee being called as a witness in a complaint meeting. They may wish to be supported by union and/or legal representation.

If attendance of any pupil, under the age of 18 years, is required at the Governing Board Review Committee Meeting, parental permission will be sought. A pupil has the right to be accompanied and extra care will be taken to consider the vulnerability of children where they are present.

Representatives from the media are not permitted to attend.

The Review Meeting

Once the Governing Board Review Committee Meeting has been arranged, the governance professional will write to the complainant to confirm the date, time, and venue of the meeting, ensuring that, if the complainant is invited, the dates are convenient to all parties and that the venue and proceedings are accessible. The complainant will be given reasonable notice of the date of this meeting; however, if they reject the offer of three proposed dates without good reason, the governance professional will decide when to hold the meeting. It may then proceed in the complainant's absence on the basis of written submissions from both parties. The governance professional will also request copies of any further written material to be submitted to the Committee members.

A copy of the letter should be sent to the school representatives and the Governing Board Review Committee members.

Any written material that the complainant and school representatives wish to submit in relation to their complaint must be sent to the governance professional at least 10 school days before the Governing Board Review Meeting.

The Governing Board Review Committee Members reserve the right not to consider any written material presented by either the complainant or the school less than 10 working school days prior to the Governing Board Review Meeting or at the meeting itself.

Any written material will be circulated to all parties at least 5 school days before the date of the meeting. The Governing Board Review Committee Members will not accept, any recordings of conversations that were obtained covertly or without the informed consent of all parties concerned.

Any new complaints will not be considered at this stage. New complaints will be dealt with from Stage 1 of the procedure.

Electronic recordings of meetings or conversations are not normally permitted unless a complainant's own disability or special needs require it. Prior knowledge and consent of all parties attending must be sought before meetings or conversations take place. Consent will be recorded in the notes.

The Governing Board Review Committee members are under no obligation to hear oral evidence from witnesses but may do so and/or may take written material into account. The Meeting is not a form of legal proceedings; however, there may be occasions when legal representation is appropriate. For instance, if a school employee is called as a witness in a complaint meeting, they may wish to be supported by union and/or legal representation.

Outcome

The decision of the Governing Board Review Committee is final and will be communicated in writing to the complainant and school representatives within 5 school days. The recommendations and findings will be made available for inspection on the school premises by the Headteacher. If it is not possible to meet this timeline, then the Chair of the Governing Board Review Committee will contact both parties to discuss a mutually convenient date.

The Governing Board Review Committee members will consider the complaint and all the evidence presented. They can make the following decisions:

- Uphold the complaint in whole or in part
- Dismiss the complaint in whole or in part
- Decide on the appropriate action to be taken to resolve the complaint
- Where appropriate, recommend changes to the school's systems or procedures to ensure that problems of a similar nature do not recur.

The governance professional will record the proceedings in the form of minutes. The typed minutes are a summary of the procedure followed and the discussions taking place at the meeting but will not include the deliberations of the panel. Notwithstanding this, full and comprehensive notes of the decision taken by the Governing Board Review Committee should be taken. The minutes are the property of the Governing Board Review Committee and the final approved version can be made available upon request, with release subject to Data Protection rules. The Governing Board Review Committee will ensure that their findings and recommendations are sent by electronic mail or otherwise given to the complainant. Where relevant, the person complained about will receive an approved summary of the panel's findings and recommendations. They will also receive a copy of the minutes, subject to any necessary redactions under Data Protection legislation.

The Governing Board Review Committee will also ensure the findings and recommendations will be available for inspection on the school premises by the Headteacher (and/or proprietor).

A written record will be kept of all complaints, and the stage at which they were resolved or whether they proceeded to a Governing Board Review Committee Meeting, together with the actions taken, regardless of the decision.

All correspondence, documents and records relating to individual complaints will be kept confidential, except where the Secretary of State or a body conducting an inspection under section 109 of the Education and Skills Act (2008) requests access to them.

6.5 Next Steps – Referring Complaints to the DfE

There is no further right of appeal in respect of the decision of the Governing Board Review Committee with regard to the complaint other than to the Department for Education (DfE) on the grounds that that the Governing Board Review Committee has not followed the complaint in accordance with the published complaints procedure, or they acted unlawfully or unreasonably in the exercise of their duties under education law. The DfE will not normally reinvestigate the substance of complaints, or overturn any decisions made by the school or Governing Board Review Committee. They will consider whether the school or Governing Board Review Committee has adhered to education legislation and any statutory policies connected with the complaint.

If the complaints procedure is found to not meet regulations, the school will be asked to correct its procedure accordingly. For further information regarding complaining about a school, see the following webpage:

https://www.gov.uk/complain-about-school

7. Persistent Complaints

7.1 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 complaint before, and it's already been resolved by following the school's complaints procedure
- Makes a complaint that is obsessive, persistent, harassing, prolific, defamatory or repetitive
- Insists on pursuing a complaint that is unfounded, or out of scope of the complaints procedure, beyond all reason
- Pursues a valid complaint, but in an unreasonable manner e.g. refuses to articulate the complaint, refuses to co-operate with this complaints procedure, or insists that the complaint is dealt with in ways that are incompatible with this procedure and the timeframes it sets out
- 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 communications 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 their intention is 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.

7.2 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 individual, we will assess whether there are aspects that we had not previously considered, or any new information we need to take into account.

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 that 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.

7.3 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.

8. Record keeping and confidentiality

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.

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.

9. Learning lessons

The Governing Board will review any underlying issues raised by complaints with the Headteacher where appropriate. Respecting confidentiality, they will determine whether there are any improvements that the school can make to its procedures or practice to help prevent similar events in the future.

10. Monitoring arrangements

The Governing Board will monitor the effectiveness of the Complaints Policy in making sure that complaints are handled properly. The Governing Board will track the number and nature of complaints, and review underlying issues as stated in section 9.

The complaints records are logged and managed by the Headteacher.

This policy will be reviewed by the Headteacher every 2 years.

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

11. Links with other policies

Policies dealing with other forms of complaints include:

- Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy and Procedures
- Admissions Policy
- Suspension and Permanent Exclusion Policy
- Staff Grievance Procedures
- Staff Disciplinary Procedures
- SEND Policy and Information Report

Appendix A
Complaint Form (*two page document*)

Before you make a formal complaint, and to help ensure that you have completed the informal procedure, it is recommended that you ask the following questions:

- Have I communicated my concern or worry to the Class Teacher or Deputy Headteacher?
- Have I followed the guidance provided to me?
- Have I allowed a sufficient period of time for actions and improvements to be implemented?
- Am I dissatisfied with the action taken or the way I have been treated?
- Is my concern unresolved?

If you answer yes to these questions, then you may wish to make a formal complaint.

Please complete and return the Complaint Form in an envelope marked **"For Immediate Attention" and "Private and Confidential"** to the Headteacher/Chair of Governors/ governance professional.

Your name:
Pupil's name (if relevant):
Your relationship to the pupil (if relevant):
Day time telephone number: **Evening telephone number:** **Email address:**
Key points of your complaint *(please summarise the key issues for you)*
Timeline *(please summarise the sequence of events in date/time order)*
Your desired outcome (s) *(what are you hoping to achieve? What actions do you feel might resolve the problem at this stage?)*
Are you attaching any paperwork? *(please give clear references and indications of documents, records, policies and any other documents that will help us to understand your point of view and your complaint.*

Signature: **Date:**
Official Use
Date acknowledgement sent:
By whom:
Complaint referred to:
Date:

Appendix B - Complaints Policy Flowchart

Informal Stage (School Resolution)

A concern or complaint should initially be raised informally with a member of staff or the Deputy Headteacher by letter, email, telephone or in person.

**If the concern relates to the Headteacher, a Governor or the Governing Board this should be forwarded to the governance professional (Clerk to the Governing Board).*

Resolved

Concern or complaint is resolved.

No further action required.

Unresolved

If the concern/complaint cannot be resolved informally through discussion with the member of staff or the Deputy Headteacher then mediation may be considered. If this is not successful or appropriate, then a formal written complaint should be made using the Complaints Form.

Stage 1 – Review by Headteacher

A formal complaint should be made in writing using the school's Complaints Form and forwarded to the Headteacher. The complaint will be **acknowledged with 5 school days of receipt.** The complaint will be investigated by the Headteacher or another member of the leadership team. A written response to the complaint will be given within 15 days detailing the outcome and any action to be taken as a result of the complaint.

**If the concern relates to the Headteacher, a Governor or the Governing Board this should be forwarded to the governance professional (Clerk to the Governing Board).*

Resolved

Complaint is resolved.

No further action required.

Unresolved

If the complaint remains unresolved the complainant can request an investigation by the Chair of Governors or a suitably skilled Governor.

Stage 2 – Investigation by Chair of Governors/Suitably Skilled Governor

If the complaint is not resolved following the Headteacher's response, then the complainant should write to the governance professional using the school's complaints form and enclosing a copy of the Headteacher's response. **The complaint will be acknowledged within 5 days of receipt.** The complaint will be investigated and **a written outcome of this will be made within 15 school days.**

Stage 3 – Governing Board Review Committee

If the complainant is **dissatisfied with the outcome of Stage 2, they must inform the governance professional within 5 school days of the date** of the formal written response. The governance professional will **confirm receipt of this request within 5 school days.** The Committee will undertake a **review of the complaint and convene a meeting within 20 school days of receipt of the Stage 3 request.** The decision of the Committee will be communicated **in writing to the complainant within 7 days of its meeting.** This is the final stage of the Complaints Policy.

If the complainant wishes to complain about the Governing Board Review Committee because they have not followed the published Complaints Policy or that they have acted unlawfully or unreasonably, they can contact the DfE https://www.gov.uk/complain-about-school