

Complaints Policy

Complaints from Parents/Carers

The procedures below will be followed in the event of a complaint being made by parents or carers against the school.

1. If parents or carers have a complaint against the school they may initially wish to contact the school informally either by telephone, by note or personally after making an appointment. The school will investigate the complaint and will respond with the outcome within five working days.
2. If parents or carers are not satisfied with the response they should write formally to the Headteacher. The Headteacher will investigate the complaint further and respond in writing within five working days. If the complaint is against the Headteacher the complaint should be addressed to the Assistant Director for Education by sending it for his/her attention to the school address. The complaint will be investigated by an appropriate person and they will respond within five working days.
3. If the parents or carers are still not satisfied with the response they should inform Acorn Care and Education who will arrange a panel to hear the complaint. The panel will comprise three people not directly involved in the matters detailed in the complaint. At Least one member of the panel will be independent of the running and management of the school. The date of the panel meeting will be arranged to take account of the convenience of the parents or carers as well as the school and will take place within a time limit of fifteen working days.
4. Parents or carers will be invited to bring with them another person or persons to support them at the panel hearing if they wish.
5. The panel will hear the complaint and will hear the outcome of the school's investigations and its response to these. The panel will then make findings and recommendations which will be communicated in writing, by electronic mail or otherwise, within five working days to the Headteacher, the parents or carers and, where appropriate, the person complained about.
6. A written record of all complaints indicating whether they were resolved at the preliminary stage, or whether they proceeded to a panel hearing will be kept. The school will implement actions taken as a result of these complaints regardless of whether they are upheld. These records and any correspondence or statements relating to a complaint will remain confidential except where the Secretary of State or a body conducting an inspection under section 109 of the Education Act 2008 requests access to the records.

Complaints from Pupils

The procedures below will be followed in the event of a pupil making a complaint against a member of staff, a fellow pupil or any other person or situation either in school or outside.

Pupils may wish to talk to an adult they trust about a situation relating to school or to a situation outside school. Pupils are reminded that, although they may speak to any member of staff, there may be occasions where information will have to be referred to other agencies such as Social Services.

Within school, pupils may talk to any member of Education Staff.

A pupil may merely need a trusted adult to talk a situation through with and may not be making a formal complaint. However all actual complaints made by pupils will be recorded by the member of staff in the Complaints Log. *Where the complaint suggests a Child Protection issue a formal referral will be made to the local Safe Guarding board in line with the school's Safeguarding Policy.

The school's response to the complaint will also be recorded. If the complaint is serious the pupil's parents/carers will be informed of both the complaint and the outcome. Some complaints will be referred to other agencies or to the Local Authority. If necessary a meeting will be called to discuss the issues further.

If a complaint is upheld the school undertakes to respond to all recommendations and with appropriate actions. The school will regularly review this policy and undertakes to evaluate and to respond to recommendations in an ongoing attempt to improve practice. .

A pupil may ask to speak to an adult from an outside agency. The school will wherever possible put the pupil in contact with a representative of the appropriate agency. The referral will be noted in the pupil's file.

*See School **Safeguarding Policy** for further guidance.