



School Complaints Procedure

A Guide for Parents

The Orchards Federation of Schools has a complaints procedure to ensure we respond to complaints as quickly and as effectively as possible. (a copy of the full policy can be obtained from the office on either site)

This procedure is to deal with complaints relating to the schools and any community facilities or services that the federation provides. We value all comments about our schools and we will endeavour to address your concerns at the earliest stage possible to prevent escalation to the formal stage and a protracted complaint that can be distressing for all involved.

When making a complaint it is important you identify your desired outcome, that is what actions you feel might resolve the problem at any stage. If the complaint concerns the Executive Head Teacher or Governors you should contact the Chair of Governors directly in writing. If you are not satisfied with the action taken by the Chair of Governors you should contact the Local Authority

Stage One: Complaint Heard by Staff Member

The vast majority of concerns can be resolved informally. There are many occasions where the class teacher, office staff, Head of School or the Executive Head Teacher, can resolve your concerns straight away. It is in everyone's best interests that complaints are resolved at the earliest possible stage.

Once the complaint has been investigated the outcome will be communicated to you. Your complaint will be responded to within 10 working days either verbally or in writing. If you remain dissatisfied with the outcome of the investigation into your complaint you should write to the Executive Head Teacher within 10 days asking for your complaint to be investigated at stage 2.

Stage Two: Complaint Heard by Executive Head Teacher

When a complaint is received at stage 2 it will be acknowledged within 5 school days. The Executive Head Teacher will contact you to provide an opportunity to discuss your concerns and find possible solutions. This could be by phone or in a meeting. You may bring a friend, family member or advocate to any meeting if you wish.

The complaint will be investigated and a written response will be provided within 10 school days, unless the complaint is complicated and to allow for a full investigation to be carried out, an extension of 10 days will be granted. Where it is deemed necessary to apply an extension to the investigation period this will be communicated to you. You have the right to take the complaint to stage 3 if you remain dissatisfied.

Stage Three: Complaint Heard by Governing Body's Complaints Committee

You should write to the Chair of Governors within 10 school days of receipt of the decision of the stage two investigation. Upon receipt of your letter the Chair of Governors will write acknowledging receipt of your complaint. At this point the Chair of Governors may offer mediation as a means of resolving the complaint. Mediation can be facilitated by the Chair of Governors, or if it is felt to be more appropriate an external agency may be used such as Parent Partnership, Bully Free-zone or a professional mediation service. If the matter cannot be resolved through mediation the Chair of Governors should arrange for the Complaints Committee to be convened. You have the right to

submit any further documents or information relevant to your complaint and the deadline for submission of these documents will be at least 5 days before the hearing.

The committee will comprise of 3 or 5 governors who have no previous involvement with the complaint. The review hearing should be heard within 20 school days of receiving the letter.

The Clerk to the Committee will write to inform you of the date and time of the hearing, giving a minimum of 5 days notice. All documents submitted will be circulated to all parties. You may bring a friend, family member or advocate to the meeting if you wish.

At the end of the meeting, the committee will decide whether to dismiss the complaint in whole or part, to uphold the complaint in whole or part, decide on the appropriate action to be taken to resolve the complaint and where appropriate, recommend what action can be taken to prevent similar difficulties in the future. A written response detailing the decisions, recommendations and the basis on which these have been made will be sent to you and the Executive Head Teacher within 5 school days. The decision of the Committee is final.

The following diagram details the stages you should follow in the event of a complaint:

