

All Saints' CE Primary School



Complaint Policy

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All Saints' CE Primary School, Complaint Policy

Complaint Policy

1. This policy statement sets out the school's approach to dealing with concerns and complaints. Further details of how we handle them are contained in our procedures document, which is shown as appendix I to this policy.
A 'concern' may be defined as 'an expression of worry or doubt over an issue considered to be important for which reassurances are sought'. A complaint may be generally defined as 'an expression of dissatisfaction however made, about actions taken or a lack of action'
2. We value good school relations and will, therefore, do everything we can to establish and maintain them. This includes seeking to resolve any concerns or complaints promptly, and to the satisfaction of all concerned.
4. We will treat all concerns and complaints seriously and courteously and will advise parents and others of the school's procedures for dealing with their concerns. In return, we expect parents and other complainants to behave respectfully towards all members of the school community. In particular, any disagreement with the school should not be expressed inappropriately or in front of pupils.
5. All school staff and members of the governing body will receive a copy of this policy statement and will be familiar with the school's procedures for dealing with concerns and complaints, to which they will have access as required. The policy is available on request and is published on our website.
6. The school's procedures will be reviewed regularly and updated as necessary.
7. Staff and governors will receive training in handling concerns and complaints as appropriate. This may be on an individual basis, or as a group activity for all staff, or for specific groups, such as the office staff or members of the governing body.
8. The government and the local authority advocate resolution of concerns and complaints at school level wherever possible, in the interests of maintaining good school relations.
9. In most cases a complaint must be presented within three months of the action or matter complained of.

Complaints Procedure (Appendix 1)

All Saints' C of E Primary School's procedures for dealing with complaints

The majority of concerns from parents, carers and others are handled under the following general procedures.

The procedure is divided into three stages:



All Saints' CE Primary School, Complaint Policy

Stage 1 - Appropriate member of staff

- Complainants should be given the opportunity to discuss their concerns with an appropriate member of staff, such as the class teacher.
- In many cases complainants' concerns and complaints are resolved at this early part of the informal stage.
- If the concern remains unresolved the staff member should advise the complainant that they may complain to the Head Teacher/Deputy.

Stage 2 - Head Teacher/Deputy

A written complaint should be made using All Saints' C of E Primary School's Complaint/ Feedback form, which can be found in Appendix II of these procedures and should be addressed to the Head Teacher or Deputy Head Teacher. If, however, the complaint concerns the Head Teacher personally, it should be sent to the school marked "For the attention of the Chair of Governors" (see Stage 3b for further details). The school will acknowledge the complaint in writing as soon as possible after receiving it. This will be within ten school days.

The Head Teacher/Deputy should:

- Meet with the person making the complaint and discuss full details of the complaint.
- Discuss this with the member of staff involved.
- Where a complaint concerns a pupil that pupil should normally be interviewed.
- Ensure written records are kept of all meetings, telephone discussions, and any other relevant documents.
- Consider all the facts and reach a conclusion.
- Write to the complainant giving a full explanation of the decision, the reasons for it and, where appropriate, what action the school proposes to take. Normally the Head Teacher/Deputy would expect to respond in full within 15 school days but if this is not possible they will write to explain the reason for the delay and let the complainant know when the school hopes to be able to provide a full response.
- The letter should inform the complainant that if they are not satisfied with the outcome they may complain to the Chair of the governing body within 10 school days.

If the complainant is unhappy with the way in which the Head Teacher/Deputy reached their conclusions, they may wish to proceed to stage three, as described below.



All Saints' CE Primary School, Complaint Policy

Stage 3 - Chair of Governors

- a) If a complaint has been through stages 1 and 2, the Chair would normally pass the complaint straight to the Complaints Appeal Committee unless it is clear that the matter can be immediately resolved by the Chair.
- b) A complaint against the Head Teacher/Deputy should be referred straight to the Chair of Governors:
 - This would usually involve the Chair speaking with the person making the complaint and the Head Teacher/Deputy to ascertain whether or not the complaint can be resolved at an informal meeting.
 - If the matter cannot be resolved and the complaint falls within the scope of the procedure the Chair should then refer the complaint straight to the Complaints Appeal Committee.
 - If the Chair has had some prior involvement in the matter which is being complained of he or she should ask the Vice-Chair to participate in the Complaints Appeal Committee in their place.

Formal Stage

The Complaints Appeal Committee of the governing body deals with any complaint which has reached the formal stage.

This involves:

- Receiving the complaint
- Investigating the complaint
- Making a decision on the complaint
- Reporting the decision of the Complaints Appeal Committee to the complainant and governing body.

The Complaints Appeal Committee operates according to the following formal procedures:

1. The governing body will convene a panel of three governors and will aim to arrange for the meeting to take place within **20 school days**.
2. The complainant will be asked whether they wish to provide any further written documentation in support of their appeal.
3. The Chair of the Appeal Committee will give at least ten school days in advance, of the date, time and place of the meeting.
4. With the letter, the complainant will receive any relevant correspondence or reports regarding stage one and two and will be asked whether they wish to submit further written evidence to the panel.



All Saints' CE Primary School, Complaint Policy

5. The letter will explain what will happen at the panel meeting and that the complainant is entitled to be accompanied to the meeting.
6. The Chair of the panel will bear in mind that the formal nature of the meeting can be intimidating and will do his or her best to put everyone at ease.
7. As a general rule, no evidence or witnesses previously undisclosed should be introduced into the meeting by any of the participants. If either party wishes to do so, the meeting will be adjourned so that the other party has a fair opportunity to consider and respond to the new evidence.
8. During the meeting there will be opportunities for:
 - The panel to hear the complainant explain their case and argument for why it should be heard at stage 3;
 - the complainant to raise questions via the Chair;
 - the complainant to be questioned through the Chair;
 - the complainant to be questioned by the panel members;
9. In closing the meeting, the Chair will explain that the panel will now consider its decision and that written notice of the decision will be sent to the complainant and the Head Teacher/Deputy within ten school days. All participants other than the panel will then leave.
10. The panel will then consider the complaint and all the evidence presented in order to:
 - reach a unanimous, or at least a majority, decision on the case;
 - decide on the appropriate action to be taken, if necessary;
 - recommend, where appropriate, to the governing body changes to the school's systems or procedures to ensure that similar problems do not happen again.
11. The Chair of the appeals panel will send the complainant and the Head Teacher/Deputy a letter outlining the decision of the panel. If the complainant is unhappy with the outcome, the letter will also explain that they are entitled to contact the Secretary of State for Education on the grounds that the governing body has failed to discharge its statutory duties.
12. The school will keep a copy of all correspondence and notes on file in the school's records but separate from pupils' personal records.

Whilst the school will seek to resolve concerns and complaints to the satisfaction of all parties, it may not be possible to achieve this in every case. Even if the



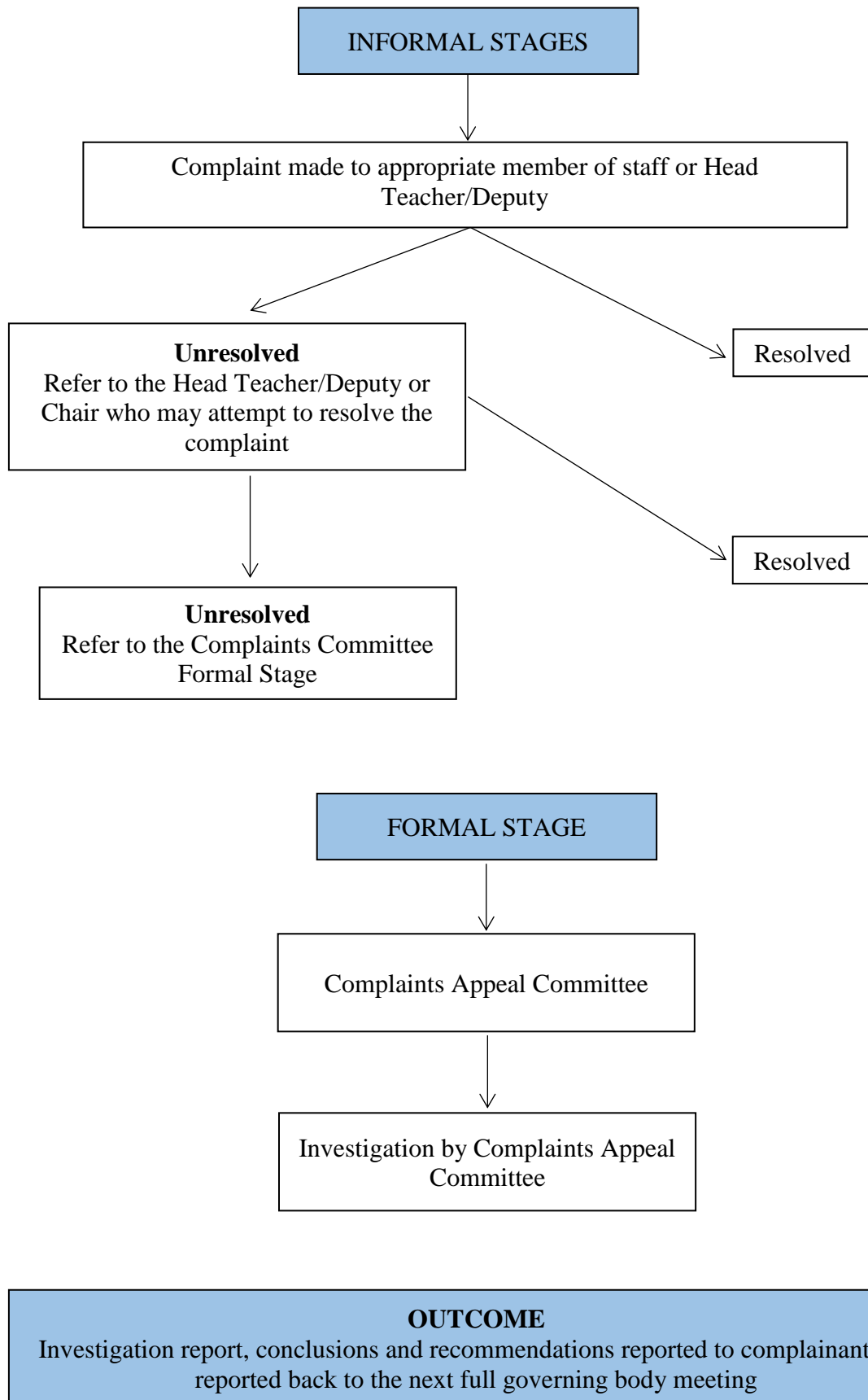
All Saints' CE Primary School, Complaint Policy

complainant remains unhappy, once the complaints procedure has been fully exhausted and school has done everything it can to resolve the complaint, then there is no reason for school to continue to re-visit the complaint and it will be closed.

This does not, of course, prevent the complainant from referring their complaint to the Secretary of State for a review of the way the complaint has been handled.



Appendix I - Complaints Procedure





Appendix II: Complaints / Feedback Form

Personal Details

Name:	
Address:	
Postcode:	
Daytime telephone no.	
Evening telephone no.	
Email:	
If applicable, name of child(ren) and form group/year at school:	
Name	Form Group/Year
Your relationship to the school, eg parent, carer, neighbour, member of the public, student:	
Please give details of your complaint, and attach any paperwork if necessary:	



All Saints' CE Primary School, Complaint Policy

What action, if any, have you already taken to try and resolve your complaint?
Who did you speak to, when and what was the response?

What actions do you feel might resolve the problem at this stage?

Signature: _____

Date: _____

Official Use:

Date of acknowledgement:	
By whom:	
Complaint referred to:	
Date:	