

Bridge Specialist Academy

Complaints Practices & Procedures



We believe that our school provides a good education for all our children, and that the Headteacher and other staff work very hard to build positive relationships with all parents. However, the school is obliged to have procedures in place in case there are complaints by parents. This document sets out the procedure that the school follows in such cases.

If any parent is unhappy with the education that their child is receiving, or has any concern relating to the school, we encourage that person to talk to the child's class teacher immediately. Subsequently complaints would be considered by the Headteacher and finally the Governing Body.

All parents have the right to complain about internal school matters to the Local Government Ombudsman (LGO) under The Apprenticeships, Schools, Children and Learning Act (2009) from April 2010, if they feel their complaint has not been dealt with in a satisfactory way.

Aims and Objectives

Our school aims to be fair, open and honest when dealing with any complaint. We give careful consideration to all complaints and deal with them as swiftly as possible. We aim to resolve any complaint through dialogue and mutual understanding and, in all cases, we put the interests of the child above all other issues. We provide sufficient opportunity for any complaint to be fully discussed, and then resolved.

The Complaints Process

A complaint is an expression of dissatisfaction about the standards of service, actions or lack of action by the School or its staff, affecting an individual pupil, person or groups of pupils or people.

You may want to complain if you think:-

- We have not treated you fairly or politely; or
- We have not done something we should have done; or
- We have done something badly.

When we receive complaints, we will:-

- deal with people courteously and in a sensitive and helpful manner;
- put things right where it is clear that we have not given the service that you have the right to expect;
- analyse complaints so that we can plan for the future by taking your views into account.

Complaints procedure

Initial Stage: If a parent is concerned about anything to do with the education that we are providing at our school, they should, in the first instance, discuss the matter with their child's class teacher. Most matters of concern can be dealt with in this way. All teachers work very hard to ensure that each child is happy at school, and is making good progress;

they always want to know if there is a problem, so that they can take action before the problem seriously affects the child's progress.

Stage One: If things cannot be resolved, or if you are still unhappy with the way we are handling your concerns, you can make a complaint. It is best if the complaint is made to the member of staff with whom you have been dealing. You can do this by writing a letter, sending an e-mail or speaking to the member of staff, either face-to-face or on the telephone.

You should receive a written acknowledgement of your complaint within three working days and a response within ten working days. If your complaint cannot be resolved by then you should get a letter saying why not and giving you a new deadline for a full response.

Stage Two: Where a parent feels that a situation has not been resolved through contact with the class teacher, or that their concern is of a sufficiently serious nature, they should make an appointment to discuss it with the Headteacher. The Headteacher considers any such complaint very seriously and investigates each case thoroughly and will respond within ten working days. Most complaints are normally resolved at this stage.

Stage Three: If you are still unhappy after the Stage Two investigation, you can complain to the Chair of Governors. Your complaint will be fully reviewed and a response will be sent to you within 15 working days. Again, we will let you know if it is going to take any longer. If the Chair of Governors feels that it would help to resolve the complaint he will call a panel of directors together to hear your complaint and decide what actions to take. The hearing will take place within one month, at a time that is mutually convenient.

Stage Four: If the complaint is not resolved, a parent may make representation to the Department of Education (follow the links at <https://www.gov.uk/complain-about-school/state-schools>)

Stage Five: If any parent is still not content that the complaint has been dealt with properly, Ofsted may be able to consider your complaint.

You can complain to Ofsted if you think a school isn't run properly and needs inspecting. They won't look into problems with individual students, such as exclusions or not getting a place at the school and you can only complain to Ofsted if you have already followed the school's complaints procedure.

You can contact the Ofsted helpdesk on 08456 40 40 45 or email: enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk

You should get a response within 30 working days. It will tell you if Ofsted will investigate or not, and why.

For Academies, free schools, university technical colleges or studio schools you can complain to Education Funding Agency (EFA) at

<https://www.gov.uk/government/organisations/education-funding-agency> if:

- there's a problem with the school's complaints procedure
- the school is not following the terms of its funding agreement

Headteacher complaint: If you wish to complain about the Headteacher, this should be done in writing to the Chair of Governors, stating the nature of the complaint and how the school has handled it so far. Letters for the Chair of Governors should be sent to the school where they will be passed on directly.

The governing body must consider all written complaints within three weeks of receipt. It arranges a meeting to discuss the complaint, and invites the person making it to attend the meeting, so that s/he can explain her complaint in more detail. The school gives the complainant at least three days' notice of the meeting.

After hearing all the evidence, the directors consider their decision and inform the parent about it in writing. The directors do all they can at this stage to resolve the complaint to the parent's satisfaction.

Monitoring and review

The directors monitor the complaints procedure, in order to ensure that all complaints are handled properly. The Headteacher logs all complaints received by the school and records how they were resolved. The Headteacher and Chair of Governors discuss this log on an annual basis.

Directors take into account any local or national decisions that affect the complaints process, and make any modifications necessary to this policy. This policy is made available to all parents, so that they can be properly informed about the complaints process.

