

BRACKLA PRIMARY SCHOOL



COMPLAINTS POLICY

Date Adopted: 28.09.23	Chairperson: Mrs A Williams
Date of Renewal: September 2025	Headteacher: Mrs K John

Complaints Policy Brackla Primary School

Introduction

We believe that Brackla Primary 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, Section 29 of the Education Act 2002 requires the governing bodies of all maintained schools in Wales to establish procedures for dealing with complaints and to publicise such procedures.

A complaints procedure is a way of ensuring that anyone with an interest in the school can raise a concern, with the confidence that it will be considered properly and heard and, if upheld, that the matter will be addressed appropriately and without delay.

Our definition of a complaint is "a written or verbal expression of dissatisfaction in relation to the school or a member of its staff that requires a response from the school."

Aims and Objectives

Brackla Primary 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.

When to use This Process

- When you have a concern or make a complaint we will usually respond in the way we explain below. Sometimes you might be concerned about matters that are not decided by the school, in which case we will tell you who to complain to. At other times you may be concerned about matters that are handled by other procedures, in which case we will explain to you how your concern will be dealt with.
- If your concern or complaint is about another body as well as the school (for example the Local Authority) we will work with them to decide how to handle your concern.

Have You Asked Us Yet?

- If you are approaching us for the first time you should give us a chance to respond. If you are not happy with our response then you may make a complaint using the procedure

we describe below. Most concerns can be settled quickly by speaking to the relevant person in school, without the need to use a formal procedure.

What We Expect From You

We believe that all complainants have a right to be heard, understood and respected. School staff and governors also have the same rights. We expect you to be polite and courteous. We will not tolerate aggressive, abusive or unreasonable behaviour. We will also not tolerate unreasonable demands or unreasonable persistence or vexatious complaining. If the Headteacher and/or governing body receive unreasonable persistence or vexatious complaining, this may be deferred to the Director of Education for further consideration. If the Director of Education determines the complaint to be unreasonable or vexatious, it will be disregarded. If the complaint is determined not to be unreasonable or vexatious, this will be referred back to the governing body, to be dealt with in accordance with this procedure.

An unreasonable or vexatious complaint can be characterised in a number of ways:

- Complaints which are obsessive, persistent, harassing, prolific, repetitious;
- Insistence upon pursuing unrealistic outcomes beyond all reason;
- Insistence upon pursuing complaints in an unreasonable manner;
- Complaints which are designed to cause disruption or annoyance;
- Demands for redress which lack any serious purpose or value.

Our approach to answering your concern or complaint

- We will consider all your concerns and complaints in an open and fair way.
- At all times the school will respect the rights and feelings of those involved and make every effort to protect confidential information.
- Timescales for dealing with your concerns or complaints may need to be extended following discussion with you.
- We may ask for advice from the Local Authority where appropriate.
- Some types of concern or complaint may raise issues that have to be dealt with in another way (other than this complaints policy), in which case we will explain why this is so, and will tell you what steps will be taken.
- The governing body will keep records of document used to investigate your concern or complaint for seven years after it has been dealt with. Records will be kept in school and reviewed by the governing body after seven years to decide if they need to be kept longer.

- Complaints that are made anonymously will be recorded but investigation will be at the discretion of the school depending on the nature of the complaint.
- Where complainants are considered to have been made only to cause harm or offence to individuals or the school, the governing body will ensure that records are kept of the investigations that are made and what actions are taken, including the reasons for “no action”.

Answering Your Concern or Complaint

- The chart in Appendix A shows what may happen when you make a complaint or raise a concern. There are up to three stages: 1, 2 and 3. Most complaints can be resolved at stages 1 or 2. You can bring a relative or companion to support you at any time during the process but you will be expected to speak yourself. However, we recognise that when a complainant is a pupil it is reasonable for the companion to speak on their behalf and/or to advise the pupil.
- As far as possible, your concern or complaint will be dealt with on a confidential basis. However, there could be occasions when the person dealing with your concern or complaint will need to consider whether anyone else within the school needs to know about your concern or complaint, so as to address it appropriately.
- If you are a pupil under 16 and wish to raise a concern or bring a complaint we will ask for your permission before we involve your parent(s) or carer(s). If you are a pupil under 16 and are involved in a complaint in any other way, we may ask your parent(s) or carer(s) to become involved and attend any discussion or interview with you.

STAGE 1

- If you have a concern, you can often resolve it quickly by talking to the **class teacher, Foundation Phase or Key Stage 2 Leader**. You should raise your concern as soon as you can; normally we would expect you to raise your issues within 10 school days of any incident. The longer you leave it the harder it might be for those involved to deal with it effectively.
- If you are a pupil, you can raise your concerns with your school council representative, class teacher or other member of school staff. This will not stop you, at a later date, from raising a complaint if you feel that the issue(s) you have raised have not been dealt with properly.

- We will let you know what we have done or are doing about your concern normally within 10 school days, but if this is not possible, we will talk to you and agree a revised timescale with you.
- The person overseeing your concern or complaint will keep you informed of the progress being made. This person will also keep a log of the concern for future reference.

STAGE 2

- In most cases, we would expect that your concern is resolved informally. If you feel your initial concern has not been dealt with appropriately you should put your complaint in writing to the Headteacher. We would expect you to aim to do this within the five school days of receiving a response to your concern as it is in everyone's interest to resolve a complaint as soon as possible. A Complaint Form is provided to assist you (see Appendix C).
- You should include details which might assist the investigation, such as names of potential witnesses, dates and times of events, and copies of relevant documents. It is very important that you include a clear statement of the actions that you would like the school to take to resolve your concern. Without this, it is much more difficult to proceed. Please pass the completed form, in a sealed envelope to the school office. The envelope should be addressed to the Headteacher, or to the Clerk to the governing body, as appropriate.
- If your complaint is about the Headteacher, you should put your complaint in writing to the Chairperson of the governing body, addressed to the school, to ask for your complaint to be investigated.

The Headteacher (or Chair) may invite you to discuss your complaint at a meeting. Timescales for dealing with your complaint will be agreed with you. We will aim to have a meeting with you and to explain what will happen, normally within 10 school days of receiving your letter. If you accept that invitation, you may be accompanied by a friend, if you wish, to assist you in explaining the nature of your concerns. The school's designated person will complete the investigation and will let you know the outcome in writing within 10 school days of completion.

STAGE 3

- It is rare that a complaint will progress any further. However, if you still feel that your complaint has not been dealt with fairly, you should write, through the school's address to

the Chairperson of the governing body setting out your reasons for asking the governing body's Complaints Committee to consider your complaint. You do not have to write down details of your whole complaint again.

- If you prefer, instead of sending a letter or e-mail, you can talk to the Chairperson of the governing body or **the Headteacher** who will write down what is discussed and what, in your own words, would resolve the problem. We would normally expect you to do this within five school days of receiving the school's response. You will be asked to read the notes or will have the notes read back to you and then be asked to sign them as a true record of what was said. We will let you know how the complaint will be dealt with and will send a letter to confirm this. The complaints committee will have a meeting with you within 15 school days of receiving your letter.
- The letter will also tell you when all the evidence and documentation to be considered by the complaints committee must be received. Everyone involved will see the evidence and documentation before the meeting, whilst ensuring that people's rights to privacy of information are protected. The letter will also record what we have agreed with you about when and where the meeting will take place and what will happen. The timescale may need to be changed, to allow for the availability of people, the gathering of evidence or seeking advice. In this case, the person dealing with the complaint will agree a new meeting date with you.
- Normally, in order to deal with the complaint as quickly as possible, the complaints committee will not reschedule the meeting more than once. If you ask to reschedule the meeting more than once, the committee may think it is reasonable to make a decision on the complaint in your absence to avoid necessary delays.
- We will write to you within 10 school days of the meeting explaining the outcome of the governing body's complaints committee's consideration.
- We will keep records of all conversations and discussions for the purpose of future reference and review by the full governing body. These records will be kept for a minimum of seven years.

- There is no Complaints Appeal process within the remit of the governing body. If a complaint is not resolved by the governing body, you may make representation to the Local Authority.

Special Circumstances

Exceptions	Whom to contact
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Admissions to school • Statutory assessments of Special Educational Needs • School re-organisation proposals • Matters likely to require a Child Protection investigation 	Local authority.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Exclusion from school 	Parents and carers may use procedures to challenge permanent exclusions and fixed term exclusions of more than 5 days in a given term. Concerns about the process followed can be raised via the complaints procedure.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Whistleblowing 	Schools should have an internal procedure for employees and volunteers.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Staff grievances and disciplinary procedures 	See the staff grievances, discipline and conduct policy. Complainants are not informed of the outcomes of actions under this procedure.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Complaints about services provided by external bodies using a school's premises or facilities (e.g. Scouts, Brownies etc.) 	Providers should be contacted directly and have their own procedures for such eventualities.

Where a complaint is made about any of the following the complaints procedure will be applied differently.

A Governor or Group of Governors

The concern or complaint will be referred to the Chairperson of the governing body for investigation. The Chairperson may alternatively delegate the matter to another governor for investigation. Stage 2 onwards of the complaints procedure will apply.

The Chairperson of the Governing Body or Headteacher and Chairperson of the Governing Body

The Vice-Chairperson will be informed and will investigate it or may delegate it to another governor. Stage 2 onwards of the complaints procedure will apply.

Both the Chairperson and Vice-Chairperson of the Governing Body

The complaint will be referred to the clerk of the governing body who will inform the Chairperson of the complaints committee. Stage 3 of the complaints procedure will then apply.

The Whole Governing Body

The complaint will be referred to the clerk of the governing body who will inform the Headteacher, Chairperson of the governing body and Local Authority. The Local Authority will usually agree arrangements with the governing body for independent investigation of the complaint.

The Headteacher

The concern or complaint will be referred to the Chairperson of the governing body who will undertake an investigation or may delegate it to another governor.

Stage 2 onwards of the complaint procedure will apply.

In all cases the school and governing body will ensure that complaints are dealt with in an unbiased, open and fair way.

Our commitment to you

- We will take your concerns and complaints seriously and, where we have made mistakes, will try to learn from them.
- If you need help to make your concerns known we will try and assist you. If you are a young person and need extra assistance the Welsh Government has established MEIC, which is a national advocacy and advice helpline for children and young people. Advice and support can also be accessed from the Children's Commissioner for Wales.

MEIC may be contacted by freephone: 0808 802 3456 or text: 84001 This service is operated 24 hours a day and also on www.meic.cymru.org

The Children's Commissioner for Wales can be contacted by freephone: 0808 801 1000 (Monday - Friday 9.00a.m. to 5.00p.m.), text: 80 800 (start your message with COM) or e-mail: advice@childcomwales.org.uk

Monitoring and Review

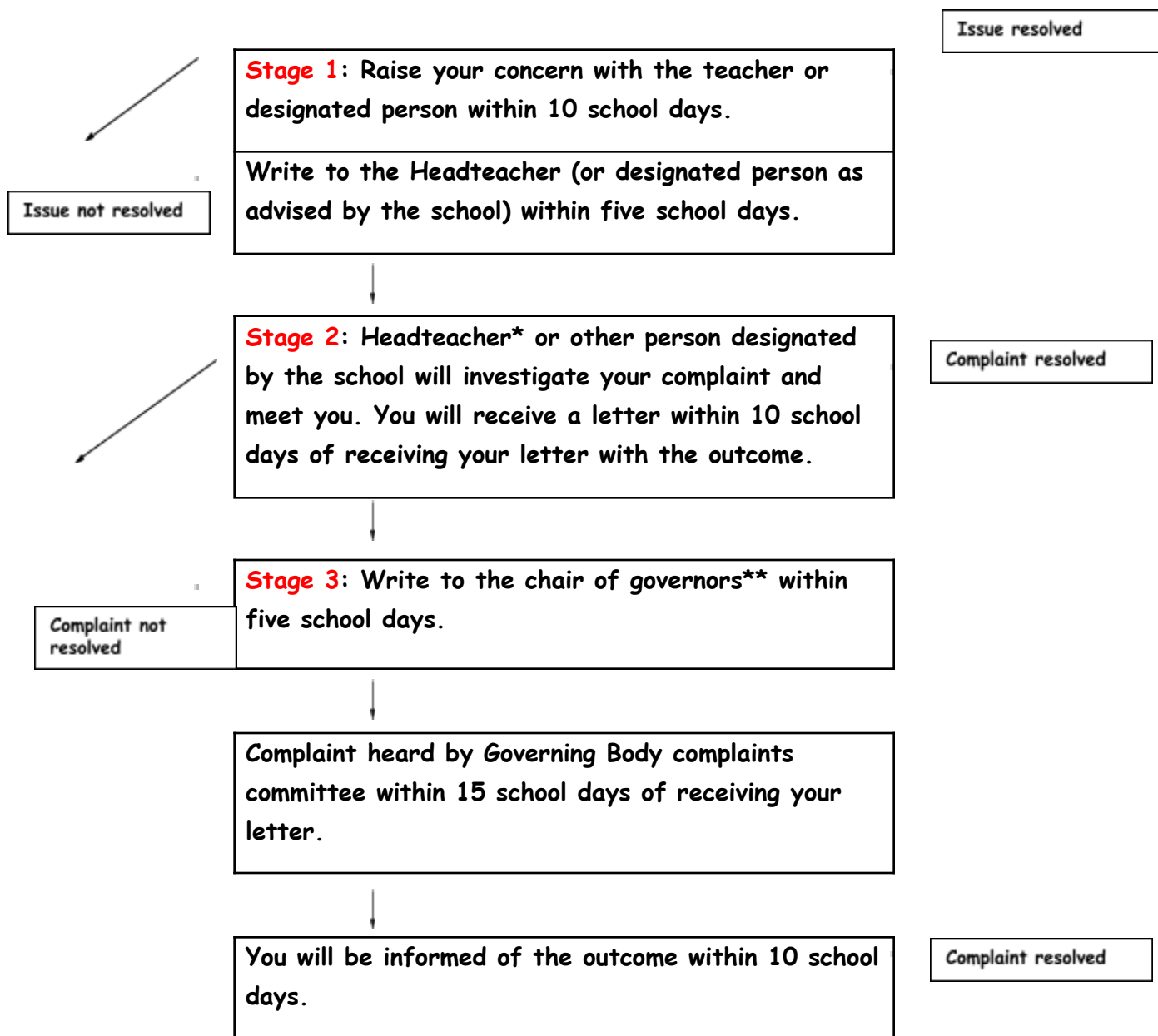
The governors monitor the complaints procedure, in order to ensure that all complaints are handled properly. The Headteacher logs all complaints received by the school and records how they were resolved. Governors examine this log on an annual basis.

Governors 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.

Monitoring and Review

This policy will be reviewed by the Governing Body every two years or earlier if deemed necessary.

School Complaints



*If the complaint is about the Headteacher you should write to the Chair of Governors.

**If the complaint is about the Chair of Governors you should write to the Vice Chair.

All timescales shown are targets and are flexible; however it is in everyone's best interest to resolve a complaint as soon as possible.

The school will work with you to ensure that the time allowed to deal with your concern or complaint is reasonable and helps to achieve an answer to the problem.

Brackla Primary School Meeting Request Form

I wish to meet _____ to discuss the following matter:

Brief details of topics to be discussed:

Dates/times when it would be most convenient for a meeting:

Your name: _____

Relationship with the school (parent, step parent, carer, grandparent etc.) _____

Pupil's name (if relevant to the matter to be discussed): _____

Address: _____

Telephone number: _____

E-mail address: _____

Signed: _____

Date: _____

Please complete this form and return it to the school office.

School use:

Date form received:

Date response sent:

Received by:

Response sent by:

Brackla Primary School Formal Complaint Form

Please complete this form and return it to the school office or to the Headteacher in a sealed envelope who will acknowledge its receipt and inform you of the next stage in the procedure.

Your name: _____

Relationship with the school (e.g. parent, carer, step parent, grandparent etc.) _____

Pupil's name (if relevant to your complaint): _____

Your address: _____

Telephone number: _____

E-mail address: _____

Please give details of your complaint (including dates, names of witnesses etc.) to allow the matter to be fully investigated:

You may continue on a separate sheet or attach additional documents if you wish.

Number of additional pages attached:

What action, if any, have you already taken to try to resolve your complaint? (i.e. who have you spoken with or written to and what was the result?)

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

Signed: _____

Date: _____

School use:

Date form received:

Date response sent:

Received by:

Signed:

Response sent by:

Signed:

Complaint referred to:

Date:

Brackla Primary School Complaint Review Request Form

Please complete this form and return to the Headteacher (or Clerk to the Governing Body), who will acknowledge its receipt and inform you of the next stage in the procedure.

Your name: _____

Relationship with the school (e.g. parent, carer, step parent, grandparent etc.) _____

Pupil's name (if relevant to your complaint): _____

Your address: _____

Telephone number: _____

E-mail address: _____

Dear _____,

I submitted a formal complaint to the school on _____ and am dissatisfied by the procedure that has been followed.

My complaint was submitted to _____ and I received a response from _____ on _____.

I have attached copies of my formal complaint and of the response (s) from the school. I am dissatisfied with the way in which the procedure was carried out because:

You may continue on a separate sheet or attach additional documents if you wish.

Number of additional pages attached: _____

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

Signed: _____

Date: _____

School use:

Date form received:

Date response sent:

Received by:

Response sent by:

Signed:

Signed:

Complaint referred to:

Date: