SCHOOL COMPLAINTS/COMPLIMENTS PROCEDURE

Date	Review Date	Coordinator	Nominated Governor
04/04/2021	**03/04/2023**	**Jane Maclennan**	**Daniel Childerhouse (Chair)**

It is important that parents/carers or other stakeholders are able to tell us what we do well in order to celebrate our successes and understand which aspects of our provision is particularly helpful to pupils and/or their families.

It is essential that all compliments are recorded and acknowledged by the school. We recognize that this may be difficult as often compliments can come in a range of formats, from verbal compliments to cards and letters. The compliment form (Annex 4) has been designed to capture compliments. Compliments will be shared with staff within one working week.

Conversely, it is important that we understand areas of our work which may have been deemed unsatisfactory to parents/carers or other stakeholders in order that we can understand and address any issues with our provision and improve our services.

Policy aims

This procedure aims:

- To reassure parents and others with an interest in the school that:
  - Any complaint against the school will be dealt with in a fair, open and responsive way;
  - The school recognises that a willingness to listen to questions and criticism and to respond positively, can lead to improvements in school practices and provision for pupils.
- To provide a speedy and satisfactory resolution to complaints
- To establish a clear procedure for dealing with compliments/complaints

Monitoring, evaluation and review

This Policy document is reviewed regularly by the school Head Teacher (working with Teachers and Staff) and the Board of Governors regularly.

Reviews include assessment of the implementation and effectiveness of this policy, along with the review arrangements themselves.

Scope of the Procedure:

A complaint is defined as a clear statement of dissatisfaction about any specified aspect of the school's work.

This procedure deals with specified day-to-day complaints against the management and/or operation of the school which fall outside the scope of employment procedures e.g. disciplinary or grievance procedures, or other policies such as whistleblowing which can be found on the school website or from the school office.

It is expected that it will be mainly parents or guardians who will make use of this procedure. The term 'parent' is therefore used throughout the policy as a generic term but the procedures also apply in relation to any other type of complainant.

Complaints may be made by telephone, e-mail, in person or in writing. However, it is preferable that complaints are received in writing.

General arrangements

Records of all conversations and meetings with parents to resolve complaints will be kept. At a Board of Governors Complaints Panel meeting, minutes will be taken. To help prevent recurring complaints, copies of correspondence and notes will be kept on file in the school's records, separately from individual pupil records.

If at any stage in the procedure it becomes apparent that the complaint falls outside of this general complaints procedure, parents will be informed.

There may be rare occasions when, despite all the stages of the procedure having been followed, a parent remains dissatisfied. If the parent seeks to re-open the same issue, the school reserves the right to inform him/her in writing that the procedure has been exhausted and the matter is closed.

Stage 1: Informal Stage

On occasions, a parent may raise a concern directly with school staff without any formality. At this stage, it may be unclear whether the parent is making a complaint, seeking information or has misunderstood a situation. In any effect, the school aims to resolve the concern at this point in a speedy and effective way.

However, if the concern is not resolved immediately and a complaint is confirmed by the parent, the opportunity to discuss the matter with an appropriate member of staff will be given. In the case of complaint against the Head Teacher, this stage will always be heard directly by the Head Teacher.

The member of staff will discuss the issue with the parent and those involved in school, with the aim of resolving the complaint as soon as possible. The parent will be informed of the outcome of the investigation and what action, if any, the school proposes to take.

If the informal process has been exhausted and no satisfactory solution has been found, the parent will be asked by the member of staff dealing with the complaint whether he/she wishes the complaint to be considered formally at stage two of this procedure.

If wishing to proceed with the complaint, the parent will be invited to put the complaint in writing to the Head Teacher using the form attached at Appendix 1.

The form should be sent to the Head Teacher within **ten school days**.

Stage 2: Referral to the Chair of School Board of Governors or Head Teacher for further investigation

Where the complaint has been addressed by the Head Teacher at stage one, this stage will be heard by the Chair of the School Board of Governors. Where another staff member has addressed the complaint at stage one, this stage will be heard by the Head Teacher.

The Chair of the School Board of Governors or Head Teacher will acknowledge the written complaint within **five school days** of receipt and provide an opportunity to meet the parent to discuss the complaint.

The Chair of Schools Board of Governors or Head Teacher will investigate the complaint and a written response will normally be made within **ten school days** of receipt of the complaint. If this is not possible, a letter will be sent explaining the reason for the delay and providing a revised target date.

The written response will include full reasons for the conclusions reached by the Chair of Schools Board of Governors or Head Teacher and what action, if any, the school proposes to take to resolve the matter.

If the parent still remains dissatisfied, (s)he will be advised that, in order to progress the complaint further at Stage 3, (s)he must notify the Clerk to the School Board of Governors in writing **within ten school days**, copying the original complaint form.

The Clerk will then ensure that the parent is offered the opportunity of taking the complaint to the Schools Board of Governors' Complaints Panel at Stage 3 of this Procedure.

Stage 3: Review by the School Board of Governors' Complaints Panel

Complaints only rarely reach this level. However, when the need arises, the Schools Board of Governors' Complaints Panel (established according to the suggested composition detailed in Appendix 2 attached) will consider complaints at this stage.

A written acknowledgement of the complaint and the request for it to be heard at Stage 3 of the Procedure will be sent by the parent to the Clerk (to the Schools Board of Governors) within **five school days**.

The letter will inform the parent that the complaint will be heard by the School's Board of Governors' Complaints Panel within **twenty school days** of receiving the complaint. It will also inform the parent of the right to submit any further documents other than the complaint form and that these must be made available to the panel within **five school days** of receipt of the acknowledgement letter. The right to call witnesses to the meeting, subject to the approval of the Chair of the panel, and the right of the parent to be accompanied by a companion of her/his choice, will also be explained in the letter.

The Clerk to the Schools Board of Governors will send a copy of the letter of acknowledgement of the complaint to the Chair of Schools Board of Governors and/or Head Teacher and request a written report in response to the complaint to the panel within **five school days** of receipt of the letter.

The right to call witnesses, subject to the approval of the Chair, will also be explained.

The Clerk to the Schools Board of Governors will then convene a panel meeting, having consulted with all parties on convenient times. The date, time and venue for the meeting will then be confirmed at least **five school days** in advance.

The names of all parties and witnesses (if any) to attend the meeting and all relevant documents to be referred to at the meeting will also be provided by the Chair of the panel to: the parent; the Chair of Schools Board of Governors and/or Head Teacher; and each panel member. This will be provided as soon as possible and, in any event, at least **five school days** prior to the meeting.

The meeting will be held following the procedures for hearing a complaint detailed in Appendix 3.

A written decision will be sent to both the parent and the Chair of Schools Board of Governors and/or Head Teacher by the Chair of the panel within **ten school days** of the hearing.

The letter will explain that the decision of the Schools Board of Governors' Complaints Panel is final but that complaints can be taken to the Secretary of State for Education and Skills under the Education Act 1996, on the grounds that:

- A School Board of Governors or Local Authority is acting or proposing to act unreasonably; or
- The School Board of Governors or the Local Authority has failed to discharge its duties under the Act.

Headteacher:	J. McLennan (Acting Headteacher)	**Date:**	04/04/2021
Chair of Governing Body:	D. Childerhouse	**Date:**	04/04/2021

Appendix 1

Form to notify formal School Complaint (Stage 2 and/or Stage 3)

Child's Name (to whom issue relates) _____

Class group _____

Parent/Guardian _____

Contact details (including mobile Telephone no. if appropriate)

_____

Details of Complaint:

(Please be as specific as possible e.g. giving dates, who was involved and where etc.)

Please attach a continuation sheet/additional information if you wish

What would you like to see done to resolve your complaint and bring the matter to an acceptable closure for yourself and the school?

Signed ---------- Date ---------- *(Parent/Guardian)*

Please return the completed form to the **Chair of Schools Board of Governors or Head Teacher** at the school.

Appendix 2

Composition of the Schools Board of Governors' Complaints Panel

The Schools Board of Governors' Complaints Panel (panel) should consist of three members of the School Board of Governors together with an independent member who is not involved with the management of the school.

A Chair of the panel should also be appointed.

The School Board of Governors may decide to appoint the three members annually, together with three reserves, designated in the order in which they would be called upon to stand in order to ensure that three School Governors will be available to meet within the timescales.

The Governors may wish to consider the advantages of having a parent governor as a member of the panel.

No member of the panel should have had prior involvement with the complaint. As the Chair of the School Board of Governors may be involved at an earlier stage in the procedure (particularly where the complaint is about the Head Teacher) it may be wise not to include the Chair as a member of the panel to avoid any possible conflict of interest and maintain impartiality.

It is not considered appropriate for the Head Teacher to be a member of the panel.

The role of the Head Teacher would be to attend the panel hearing to give evidence and s/he may choose to invite staff directly involved in matters raised by the complainant (subject to the approval of the Chair of the panel).

Appendix 3

Schools Board of Governors' Complaints Panel Procedures for Hearing the Complaint

Introduction

The aim of the meeting is to resolve the complaint and achieve a reconciliation between the school and the parent.

The Chair of the panel will ensure that the meeting is properly minuted. Although the meeting will follow the structured order below, given potential sensitivities and anxieties, the Chair will endeavour to ensure that the proceedings are as informal as possible and that all parties are put at their ease.

The introduction of new information or witnesses, previously not notified to all parties, would be reason to adjourn the meeting so that everyone has time to consider and respond to the new information.

The current Chair of Governors is: **Daniel Childerhouse**

The current Chair of the Board of Governors Complaints Panel is: **Daniel Childerhouse**

The current Clerk to the Governors is: **Helen Paterson**

Order of Meeting

1. The panel Chair welcomes the parent and his/her companion and introduces the panel.
2. The panel Chair explains the purpose of the meeting, the procedure, and that all written evidence has been made available to all parties.
3. The parent/companion explains the complaint, calling in witnesses if appropriate.
4. The panel may question the parent/companion and witnesses.
5. The parent and companion retire from the meeting.
6. The panel Chair welcomes the Head Teacher and the Chair of Governors (where the complaint has been addressed by the Chair of Schools Board of Governors at stage 2).
7. The panel Chair explains the purpose of the meeting, the procedure, and that all written evidence has been made available to all parties.
8. The Head Teacher/Chair of Schools Board of Governors present a response to the complaint, including action taken to address the complaint at stage 1 and 2 of the procedure and calling witnesses, if appropriate.
9. The panel may question the Head Teacher/Chair of Schools Board of Governors.
10. The Head Teacher and Chair of Schools Board of Governors retire from the meeting.
11. The parent, together with his/her companion, is invited back into the room to make a final statement, then retires.
12. The Head Teacher, together with the Chair of Schools Board of Governors, where applicable, is invited back into the room to make a final statement, then retires.
13. The panel considers the complaint and reaches a unanimous or majority decision. The panel also decides what action (if any) to take to resolve the complaint and, if appropriate, recommends changes to ensure similar complaints are not made in future.
14. When a decision has been made, the panel Chair recalls the parent, then the Head Teacher and each is informed of the outcome and any action to be taken.
15. All outcomes are confirmed in writing to both parties and the person to whom the complaint was made in accordance with the Complaints Procedure.
16. All records remain confidential.

Appendix 4

Compliments Form

Full Name			
Address			
Telephone/Mob		Email	
Does your compliment relate to a specific member of staff, activity, subject or area of delivery? **If so, please specify**			
Details of your compliment/suggestion: **Please be as detailed as possible when giving feedback**			
What would you like to see us do as a result of your input?			
Date:			

Appendix 5

Complaint Record Form

This form is for internal use to present information relating to complaints in a simplified way to enable leadership and governors to review and scrutinise. This form does not form part of the complaints procedures, but may be shared with the complainant to document the complaint, the action taken, and the outcome.

Date of complaint:			
Source of complaint			
Parent (in writing, including email)		Staff member	
Parent (in person)		Anonymous	
Parent (phone call)		Ofsted (include complaint number if known)	
Member of public		Other (please state)	

Nature of complaint Please tick all welfare requirements that relate to complaint	
Safeguarding and promoting children's welfare	
Safeguarding	
Information and confidentiality	
Premises and security	
Trips & Visits	
Equality/Equal ops	
Medicines	
Illnesses and Injuries	
Food and drink	
Smoking	
Behaviour management	
Suitable people	
Safe recruitment	
Adults looking after children are suitable	
Alcohol and other substances	
Qualifications	
Staffing arrangements	
Staffing Behaviour	

Suitable premises		
Risk assessment –outdoor and indoor spaces furniture, equipment etc. Premises		
Organisation		
Documentation		
Data		
Providers records		
Please give details of the complaint:		
How it was dealt with		
Internal investigation		
Investigation by Ofsted		
Investigation by other agencies (please state)		
Referral to other agencies (LADO etc)		
Please give details of any internal investigation or attach any outcome letter from Ofsted or other agencies:		
Actions and outcomes		
Internal actions		
Actions agreed with Ofsted		
Changes to Policy/Procedure		
Other action taken by Ofsted		
Actions imposed or agreed with other agencies		
Additional Training		
Disciplinary action		
No action		
Please give details:		

Has a copy of this record been shared with parents/complainant:	
Name of recorder:	Date notified to parent/complainant:
Position: Name: Signature:	Date completed: