

A complaint may be generally defined as

‘an expression of dissatisfaction or disquiet which requires a response’.

### **INFORMAL STAGE**

Our Complaints Policy says:

‘Parents should please **start by telling the class teacher** ... about your concern. This is usually the best and quickest way of resolving issues.’

Our aims:

- **Encourage resolution of problems by informal means**
- **establish the issues**
- **seek a realistic resolution**

### **When a complaint is made**

A complaint may be acknowledged by the school to be valid in whole or in part. You may be **offered** one or more of the following:

- an **apology**;
- an **explanation**;
- an **admission that the situation could have been handled differently** or better;
- an **assurance that the event** complained of **will not recur**;
- an **explanation of the steps that have been taken to ensure that it will not happen again**;
- an **undertaking to review school policies** in light of the complaint.

### **FORMAL STAGE**

We hope most matters can be solved informally and ‘closed’ but should you wish to pursue a complaint further, you are entitled to do so and can enter into the formal complaints procedure.

#### **Stage 1 – Complaint Heard by Headteacher**

If the complaint cannot be resolved informally, then the Headteacher will investigate.

#### **Stage 2 – Complaint Heard by Chair of Governors**

If the complainant remains unhappy or the complaint is about the Headteacher the investigation will be undertaken by the Chair of Governors.

#### **Stage 3 – Complaint Heard by Governing Body Review Panel**

This will consist of Governors not involved in the complaints process at an earlier stage.

**Formal complaints** must be made to the **School Complaints Co-ordinators:**

**Nicola Brooke (HT) or Lesley Brynning (Chair of Governors)**

A formal complaint can be made:

- **in person**
- **in writing** (envelope clearly labelled ‘formal complaint’)
- **by email**

The **Complaints Co-ordinator** will record the date the complaint is received and will **acknowledge** in writing (letter or email) receipt of the complaint **within 3 school days**.

The **Head Teacher** will investigate the complaint and **respond** to the Complainant **within 10 school days** of the date of receipt of the complaint. Complainants can **contact the Complaints Co-ordinator if they wish to escalate their complaint to Stage 2**.

### **Investigation Checklist**

- **Meet** with the Complainant **or contact** them
- Establish **what has happened** so far, and who has been involved
- Clarify **what remains unresolved**
- Establish the **outcomes that the complainant is seeking**
- **Interview those involved** in the matter and/or those complained of, allowing them to be accompanied if they wish
- **Keep notes** of interviews

## Stage 2 – Complaint Heard by the Chair of Governors

If the Complainant is dissatisfied with the outcome of the Head Teacher's investigation at Stage 1

or

If the complaint is about the Head Teacher, they can ask for the matter to be considered by the Chair of Governors by **writing a letter**.

The **Chair of Governors** will **acknowledge** the complaint **within 3 school days**. The acknowledgement will **include a summary of the complaints procedure and a response date** will be given. This will be **within 10 school days**. If this date cannot be met, the Complainant will be given an update and revised response date.

The Chair of Governors will **provide a formal written response** to the Complainant **detailing actions taken to investigate the complaint and a full explanation of decisions taken and the reasons for them**. Where appropriate, it may include details of actions the school will take to resolve the complaint.

The Complainant will be provided with **details of how to contact the Governing Body if they are still not satisfied with this response at Stage 2 and wish to escalate their complaint to Stage 3**.

## Stage 3 – Complaint Heard by the Governing Body's Complaints Review Panel

Complaints **must have been considered by the first two stages before** proceeding to panel.

The **Clerk** to the Governors will **acknowledge the request** in writing **within 3 school days** and **inform the Complainant** of the **right to submit** any further **documents or information relevant to the complaint**.

A **deadline** for submission of these documents will be **5 working days before the hearing**.

The **school will submit the Stage 1 and 2 responses** (as appropriate) together with **any written response from the Head Teacher** as appropriate. The Head Teacher may also **invite members of staff directly involved** in matters raised by the Complainant **to respond personally or in writing**.

The panel will comprise of:

**3 governors (who have had no previous involvement with the complaint)**.

The complaint will **not** be heard by **the entire governing body**.

The review hearing will be **heard within 20 school days of receiving the request and the response given is final**.

**Complaints that have already been investigated cannot be considered again.**



DEALING WITH  
CONCERNS and COMPLAINTS  
at  
DURWESTON CE VA  
PRIMARY SCHOOL

*Stand true in what you believe. Be courageous,  
be strong. And do everything with love. 1  
Corinthians 16: 13-14*