

School Complaints Procedure

Reviewed June 2022

1. Introduction

1.1 Waunfawr Primary School is committed to dealing effectively with complaints. We aim to clarify any issues about which you are not sure. If possible, we will put right any mistakes we have made and we will apologise. We aim to learn from mistakes and use that experience to improve what we do. We have a zero-tolerance approach to all forms of bullying and harassment and promote respectful relationships between learners, parents, staff, and governors.

1.2 Our definition of a complaint is 'an expression of dissatisfaction in relation to the school or a member of its staff or the governing body that requires a response from the school.'

1.3 This complaints procedure supports our commitment and is a way of ensuring that anyone with an interest in the school can raise a concern, with confidence that it will be heard and, if well-founded, addressed in an appropriate and timely fashion.

2. When to use this procedure

2.1 When you have a concern or wish to 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.

2.2 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.

3. Have you asked us yet?

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

4. What we expect from you

4.1 We believe that all complainants have a right to be heard, understood, and respected. School staff and governors have the same right. We expect you to be polite and courteous. We will not tolerate aggressive, abusive, or unreasonable behaviour. Nor will we tolerate unreasonable demands, unreasonable persistence nor vexatious complaining. We have a separate policy to manage situations where we find that someone's actions are unacceptable.

5. Our approach to answering your concern or complaint

5.1 We will consider all your concerns and complaints in an open and fair way.

5.2 At all times the school will respect the rights and feelings of those involved and make every effort to protect confidential information.

5.3 Timescales for dealing with your concerns or complaints may need to be extended and we will notify you.

5.4 We may ask for advice from the local authority where appropriate.

5.5 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, and will tell you what steps will be taken.

5.7 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.

6. Answering your concern or complaint

6.1 There are up to three Stages: A, B and C. Most complaints can be resolved at Stages A or B. You can bring a relative or companion to support you at any time during the process, but you will be expected to speak for yourself, unless you require special assistance. We also recognise that when the complainant is a pupil it is reasonable for the companion to speak on their behalf and/or to advise the pupil.

6.2 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.

6.3 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 A

6.4 If you have a concern, you can often resolve it quickly by talking to a teacher or a member of the office staff. You should raise your concern as soon as you can; normally we would expect you to raise your issue 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.

6.5 If you are a pupil, you can raise your concerns with your school council representative, form tutor or a teacher chosen to deal with pupil concerns. 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.

6.6 We will try to 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.

6.7 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 B

6.8 In most cases, we would expect that your concern is resolved informally. If you feel that your initial concern has not been dealt with appropriately you should put your complaint in writing to the headteacher.

6.9 We would expect you to do this **within 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**. There is also a form attached (**Appendix B**) that you may find useful. If you are a pupil we will explain the form to you, help you complete it and give you a copy.

6.10 If your complaint is about the headteacher, you should put your complaint in writing to the chair of governors, addressed to the school, to ask for your complaint to be investigated.

6.11 In all cases a member of staff can help you to put your complaint in writing if necessary.

6.12 If you are involved in any way with a complaint, the Office Manager will explain what will happen and the sort of help that is available to you.

6.13 The Office Manager will 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. 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 C

6.14 If you still feel that your complaint has not been dealt with fairly, you should write, through the school's address, to the chair of governors 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.

6.15 If you need assistance instead of sending a letter or e-mail, you can talk to the chair of governors or Office Manager who will write down what is discussed and what, in your own words, would resolve the problem and then be asked to sign them as a true record of what was said. We would normally expect you to do this within five school days of receiving the school's response. We will let you know how the complaint will be dealt with and will send a letter to confirm this. The complaints committee will normally have a meeting with you within 15 school days of receiving your letter.

6.16 The letter will also tell you when all the documentation to be considered by the complaints committee must be received. Everyone involved will see the documentation before the meeting, while 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 information or seeking advice. In this case, the person dealing with the complaint will agree a new meeting date with you.

6.17 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 reasonable to make a decision on the complaint in your absence to avoid unnecessary delays. We aim to write to you within 10 school days of the meeting explaining the outcome of the governing body's complaints committee's consideration. The governing body's complaints committee is the final arbiter of complaints.

7. Special circumstances

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

i. **A governor or group of governors**

The concern or complaint will be referred to the chair of governors for investigation. The chair may alternatively delegate the matter to another governor for investigation. Stage B onwards of the complaints procedure will apply.

ii. **The chair of governors or headteacher and chair of governors**

The vice chair of governors will be informed and will investigate it or may delegate it to another governor. Stage B onwards of the complaints procedure will apply.

iii. **Both the chair of governors and vice chair of governors**

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

iv. **The whole governing body**

The complaint will be referred to the clerk to the governing body who will inform the headteacher, chair of governors, local authority and, where appropriate, the diocesan authority. The authorities will usually agree arrangements with the governing body for independent investigation of the complaint.

v. **The headteacher**

The concern or complaint will be referred to the chair of governors who will undertake the investigation or may delegate it to another governor. Stage B onwards of the complaints procedure will apply.

8. Our commitment to you

8.1 In all cases the school and governing body will ensure that complaints are dealt with in an unbiased, open and fair way. We will take your concerns and complaints seriously and, where we have made mistakes, will try to learn from them.

8.2 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.

The governing body has reviewed this policy on September 2024

Signed by chair of governors on behalf of the governing body: Melanie James

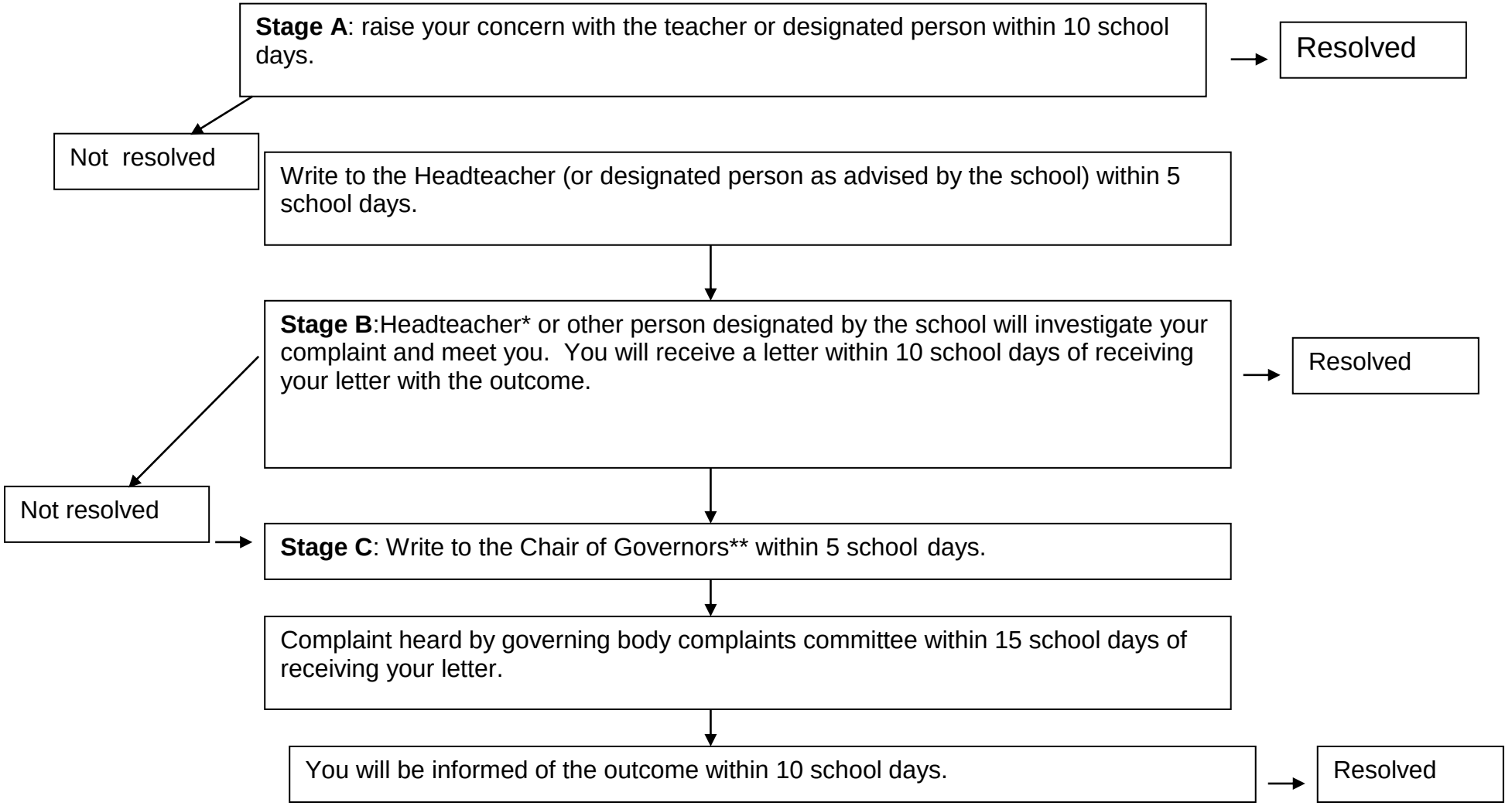
Date approved: May 2023 (by full governing body)
Date of review: .....

Date sent to the local authority: ……..……

[there is no statutory requirement to do this, but it is good practice]
MEIC may be contacted by freephone: 0808 802 3456, or text: 84001.
This service is operated 24 hours a day.
The Children's Commissioner for Wales can be contacted by freephone: 0808 801 1000 (Monday to Friday 9a.m. to 5p.m.), text: 80 800 (start your message with COM) or e-mail: advice@childcomwales.org.uk (mailto:advice@childcomwales.org.uk). This document may not be fully accessible. For more information refer to our accessibility statement (https://gov.wales)

Appendix A:Summary of dealing with concerns or complaints

The procedure will be followed in the event of a concern or complaint about the school, provided that the concern or complaint does not fall under other statutory procedures.



*If the complaint is about the Headeacher 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 ananswer to the problem.

Waunfawr Primary School Complaint Form

The person who experienced the problem should normally fill in this form. If you are making a complaint on behalf of someone else, please fill in Section B also. Please note that before taking forward the complaint we will need to be satisfied that you have the authority to act on behalf of the person concerned. If you are a pupil the school will help you complete this form, will explain it to you and will give you a copy of it when it is completed.

Your details

Surname	
Forename(s)	
Title: Mr/Mrs/Ms/other	
Address and postcode	
Daytime phone number	
Mobile phone number	
e-mail address	

How would you prefer us to contact you? _____

If you are making a complaint on behalf of someone else, what are their details?

Their name in full _____

Address and postcode _____

_____

What is your relationship to them? _____

Why are you making a complaint on their behalf?

_____

_____

About your complaint (continue your answers on separate sheets of paper if necessary)

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_____

Name of the school you are complaining about.

_____

What do you think they did wrong or did not do?

_____

_____

Describe how you have been affected.

_____

_____

When did you first become aware of the problem?

_____

If it is more than one month since you first became aware of the problem, please give the reason why you have not complained before.

_____

_____

What do you think should be done to put matters right?

_____

Have you raised this complaint before?

_____

Have you already put your complaint to a member of staff? If so, please give brief details about how and when you did so.

_____

_____

_____

Signature of complainant: Date:

Signature if you are making a complaint on behalf of someone else

Signature: Date:

Please return this form and any documents to support your complaint to the school.

Have your say – Information for Pupils

Do you have a suggestion, concern or complaint?

By working together we can make a difference.

We want you to feel safe and happy at school, but sometimes you may feel worried, have a concern or want to make a suggestion. We also want to hear about areas of school life that you enjoy and value.

If you are worried about something please tell a member of staff straight away so that we can look into it. We will take your concerns and any issues that you raise very seriously.

If you don't want to raise the concern yourself, you can ask a member of the school council, a member of staff or someone else you trust to take the matter up on your behalf (the school may have a designated person for pupils to speak to).

When you raise a suggestion, concern or complaint:

• we will listen to everything you say

• we will ask you questions to help make things clear

• we will treat you fairly

• someone can help you, such as a parent/carer, friend, relative or someone else

• the person dealing with your concern will tell you what is happening.

Privacy

Usually, we will not tell anyone about what you say unless they are involved in dealing with your concern. Sometimes we will tell other people, for instance, if you or someone else is in danger of being hurt or upset. If this is the case we will explain it to you.

When you have a concern or complaint against another person, then that person will normally have a right to be made aware of the concern or complaint and be allowed to give their side of the story.

School council

If your concern or suggestion affects the whole school or a group of pupils, we might suggest that the school council considers it or you might want to ask the school council yourself.

We all want our school to be safe, caring and successful – the best it can be. With your help we can make it so.

Pupil Complaints Leaflet

A complaint is when you tell someone about something you are not happy with. As a child at school you can talk about anything that you do not like, that worries you or upsets you. Your school will have a way of dealing with your worries.

How do you tell someone about your worries?

If you are not happy with something in your school you can tell your teacher or another grown up at school. That person will try to help you or find someone else to help you. Your school has information telling you what you need to do and who you can talk to about your worries.



Some things you might be worried about in school are:

- A school trip
- homework
- School uniform
- School meals

- School bus service
- Behaviour of someone else - could be another pupil or a teacher
- Behaviour of pupils on the school bus or in the street at school times.



These are only some things you may worry about. There may be other things that you are not happy with that you want to talk about. These things could be in school or away from school. Don't keep your worry a secret. Anything you say will be listened to. Sometimes this worry has to be told to someone else so that your worry can be dealt with. The person you are talking to will tell you this.

Pupil Complaints Leaflet

As a pupil you can make a complaint about any matter concerning your school. By law your school must have a procedure for dealing with complaints from many people including parents and pupils.



Where to find the Complaints Procedure

If you want to make a complaint ask a member of staff for a copy of your school's complaints procedure. It will explain how you go about making your complaint. You can also ask the person named in the procedure as a contact point to find someone to help you make your complaint and guide you through the process.

Some things you could complain about are:

- an event – such as a school trip
- anything about your school life – such as homework, school uniform
- school services – such as school meals or the school bus service
- the behaviour of an individual(s) – for example another pupil or member of staff
- something that affects you as a pupil – such as bullying
- something that has happened outside school but which is connected to the school – such as the behaviour of pupils on a school bus or in the street.



Privacy

All complaints will be kept private. This means that normally it will not be discussed with anyone without your consent. However there are some circumstances where a complaint has to be shared with other people, especially if it means you or another child is in danger of being hurt. If this is the case this will be explained to you.