
CHALLNEY HIGH SCHOOL FOR GIRLS



DOCUMENT NAME:

Complaints Procedure

DATE APPROVED BY GOVERNORS:

6th October 2016

DATE OF NEXT REVIEW:

October 2017

Signed:

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be "A.W.", written over a light grey rectangular background.

.....
Chair of Governors

Signed:

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be "Z. Jennings", written over a light grey rectangular background.

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Headteacher

CHALLNEY HIGH SCHOOL FOR GIRLS COMPLAINTS PROCEDURE

Introduction

Our Governing Body has adopted this procedure to deal with concerns or complaints from members of the School community or the general public.

Aims and Objectives

Our School aims to be fair, open and honest when dealing with any complaint and to resolve it through open dialogue and mutual understanding.

Careful consideration will be given to all concerns and complaints and we will deal with them as swiftly as possible. We will provide sufficient opportunity for any complaint to be fully discussed.

In all cases we will put the interests of the child above all other issues.

Our procedure is underpinned by the following:

- we will encourage the resolution of problems by informal means wherever possible
- the procedure will be easily accessible and publicised
- the procedure will be simple to use and understand
- the School will ensure that complaints/ concerns are dealt with quickly, fully and fairly and within clearly defined time limits.
- the procedure will provide effective response and appropriate redress
- the procedure will support and confirm good working relationships between all people involved with the School
- in following the procedure, information will be provided to the School's senior leadership team so that services can be improved

Complaints about a School by parents or members of the public should be taken up with the School itself. The Local Authority will normally pass on any complaint received by them to the School immediately and without further intervention. The Local Authority would only become involved in exceptional circumstances and then not until the School's own procedures have been exhausted.

Areas not covered by this procedure

This procedure does not apply to issues concerning the curriculum, collective worship, admissions and exclusion appeals, decisions about your child's special educational needs or grievances by school staff. These are the subject of separate complaints procedures. Copies of these procedures can be obtained from the School.

In addition, Ofsted has the power to investigate certain (qualifying) complaints about maintained Schools, including those from parents. A qualifying complaint is one that affects

the whole School, not an individual. More information can be obtained from the School or Ofsted.

All other complaints are handled by the School according to the arrangements set out below.

Stage 1 – initial concerns

If you have any concerns about the School, or the education we are providing at any time, please discuss the matter with your child's class teacher or other relevant member of staff (this could be the Headteacher) at the earliest opportunity.

The School considers any concerns very seriously and most problems can be resolved following discussion and a shared understanding of the issues. All members of staff work very hard to ensure that each child is happy at School and is making good progress and they always want to know if there is a problem so they can help to resolve it.

Most concerns can be resolved at this level, however, if after speaking to your child's class teacher or other relevant member of staff, you are still concerned, please discuss the matter with the Headteacher.

Stage 2 - formal procedure

Most concerns are resolved at Stage 1, however if you remain dissatisfied and wish to take the matter further you will be asked to submit a written complaint to the Headteacher. The Headteacher will acknowledge receipt of your submission within 5 working days and a full written response will be provided within 15 working days. If necessary, the complainant will be informed how to contact the Chair of Governors. If, at any time, it becomes apparent that the complaint is a disciplinary or capability issue, the matter will be dealt with by following the appropriate procedure rather than the complaints procedure. You will be notified if this is the case with your complaint; however, you are not entitled to know which procedure, or the final outcome, because of the right to confidentiality of the member of staff involved.

Stage 3- if the complaint is not resolved or if the complaint is about the Headteacher

A written complaint is submitted to the Chair of Governors. This should be sent to the Chair of the Governing Body at the School address marking the envelope 'FOR IMMEDIATE ATTENTION'. The submission should be within 15 days of the completion of stage 2. The Chair of Governors will acknowledge receipt of your submission within 7 working days and a full written response will be provided within 20 working days. If necessary, the complainant will be informed how to progress the complaint to stage 4. The School will notify the Local Authority Governor Support Team.

Stage 4- if the complaint is still not resolved

The complainant should write to the Clerk to the Governors requesting that a Complaints Committee of the Governing Body is convened to hear the complaint. The Clerk will make arrangements for the Complaints Committee to meet within 10 School days of the receipt of the letter and will inform the complainant of the findings of that Committee within 5 days of the hearing. The School will notify the Local Authority Governor Support Team of the outcome. If necessary the complainant will be informed how to contact the Children & Learning Department.

Stage 5- if the complainant is not satisfied that the complaint has been dealt with properly according to the School's procedure

The complainant should write to the Children & Learning Department's Complaints Officer at the Local Authority with evidence that the School did not follow its Complaints Procedure. The Children & Learning Department will acknowledge receipt of the letter within 3 working days and will inform the complainant about what will be done. The Children & Learning Department can only investigate inappropriate procedure, not the complaint itself.

Stage 6- if the complainant is not satisfied that the complaint has been dealt with properly and fairly

The complainant should submit a written submission to the Secretary of State for Education & Skills or the Local Government Ombudsman. The Secretary of State may intervene if a Governing Body or Local Authority has not carried out its statutory duty or has acted unreasonably. The Ombudsman only investigates issues of maladministration.

Unreasonably persistent complainants and unreasonable complainant behaviour

Unfortunately, in a minority of cases, people pursue their complaints in a way which can either impede the investigation of their complaint or can have significant resource issues for the School.

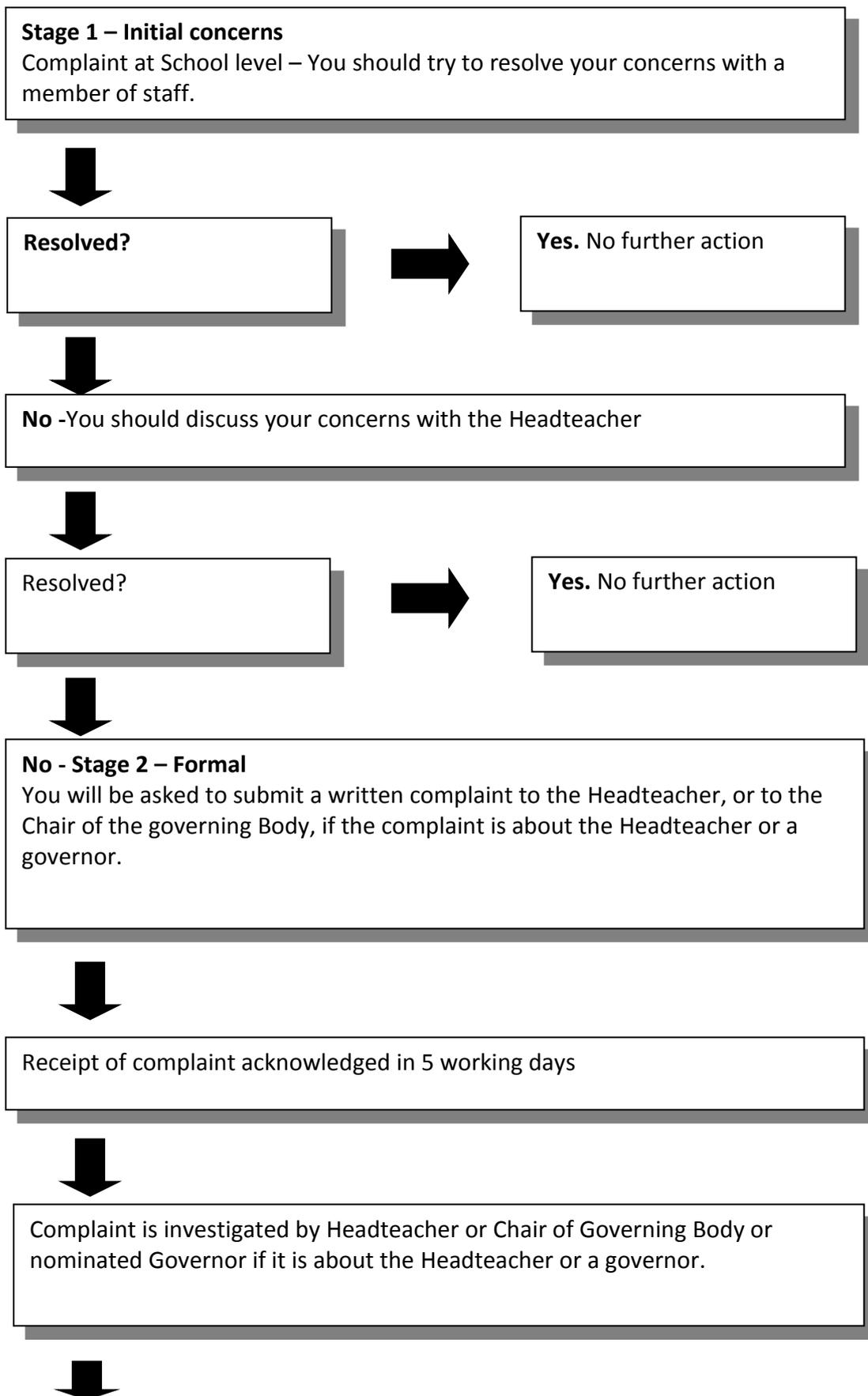
These actions can occur either while the complaint is being investigated, or once the School has concluded the investigation.

In such cases, the School will observe the Local Government Ombudsman's Guidance Note on 'unreasonably persistent complainants' and 'unreasonable complainant behaviour.'

Monitoring and Review

The Governing Body will monitor the complaints procedure, in order to ensure that all complaints are handled properly. The Headteacher will log all formal complaints received by the School and record how they were resolved. The Governing Body will examine this log on an annual basis and consider the need for any changes to the procedure.

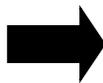
Flowchart Summary



You will be informed of the outcome of the investigation within 15 working days of.



Resolved?



Yes. No further action



No - If you wish to take your complaint to Stage 3 of the procedure you will be asked to confirm this in writing within 15 working days of the completion of Stage 2.



A written complaint is submitted to the Chair of Governors who will acknowledge receipt within 7 working days and a full written response will be provided within 20 working days.



Resolved?



Yes. No further action



No- A written complaint should now be submitted to the Clerk to Governors who will convene a meeting of the Complaints Committee within 10 school days.



Governor Complaints Panel meets to consider your complaint. You will be asked to submit written evidence in advance and attend the panel meeting to explain the nature of your complaint. You will be informed of the outcome within 5 days of the hearing.



If after following this procedure the complaint remains unresolved, you can write to The Children & Learning Department at the Local Authority who may investigate any inappropriate procedure. If the complaint is still unresolved you can write to the Secretary of State for Education and Skills who may intervene if the Governing Body or Local Authority has not carried out a statutory duty.

Procedures for Complaints Committee Hearings

Before the hearing

- The complainant and the Headteacher should be provided with details of the way in which the hearing will be conducted.
- If necessary, support for the complainant should be arranged. For example, translation of any of the papers provided by the School or any arrangements necessary to give the complainant full access to the proceedings.
- The members of the committee should elect one of their number to act as Chair of the committee for the hearing.

The hearing

- Once the complainant has been invited into the committee room the Chair may wish to explain the scope of the Governing Body's powers and clarify the aims of the hearing, that is, to resolve the complaint, reconcile differences and to identify the way to move forward.
- The Chair should introduce all those present and ensure that all parties understand the way in which the hearing will be conducted.
- The complainant should begin by explaining the basis of their complaint and the Headteacher/ Chair of Governors may respond by stating the reasons for the School's response.
- The panel may ask questions at any point.
- The complainant will be invited to sum up their complaint and the Headteacher/ Chair of Governors will be invited to sum up the School's actions and response to the complaint.
- The Chair to confirm that a decision will be issued within 5 working days.
- The complainant and Headteacher/ Chair of Governors should then leave the hearing.
- The panel should then consider a decision based on the information and evidence presented to them. It should decide whether or not to uphold the complaint and to suggest any actions which may be taken to resolve the issue. The panel should reach a unanimous or majority decision.

The findings of the committee should be notified to both parties in writing within 5 school days of the meeting.

Addresses for correspondence:

Challney High School for Girls,
Addington Way,
Luton, LU4 9FJ
01582 571427

Luton Borough Council,
Children & Learning Department,
Town Hall,
Luton, LU1 2BQ

The Secretary of State for Education & Skills,
Sanctuary Buildings, Great Smith Street,
London, SW1 3BT

The Local Government Ombudsman,
21 Queen Anne's Gate,
London, SW1 9BU