

Polisi Cwynion/ Complaints Policy

Ysgol Bancyfelin, Ysgol
Llangain ac Ysgol
Llansteffan



Introduction

We believe that our school provides a broad and balanced education for all our children, and that the Headteacher and other staff work very hard to build positive relationships with all parents and the community.

However, the school is obliged to have procedures in place in the event of a complaint by any member of the school community.

This policy sets out the procedure that the school follows in such cases.

If any member of the school community is unhappy with the education that their child is receiving, or has any concern relating to the school, we encourage that person to talk to the child's class teacher immediately.

We deal with all complaints in accordance with procedures set out by the LEA. If the school cannot resolve any complaint itself, those concerned can ask the LEA to intervene.

If a complaint is against the actions of the Headteacher, the Chair of Governors will carry out the necessary procedures.

A Governor may answer a complaint/query ONLY if it is a matter of explaining school policy and practice. IN ALL OTHER CASES a member of the governing body will advise the complainant to speak to the Headteacher.

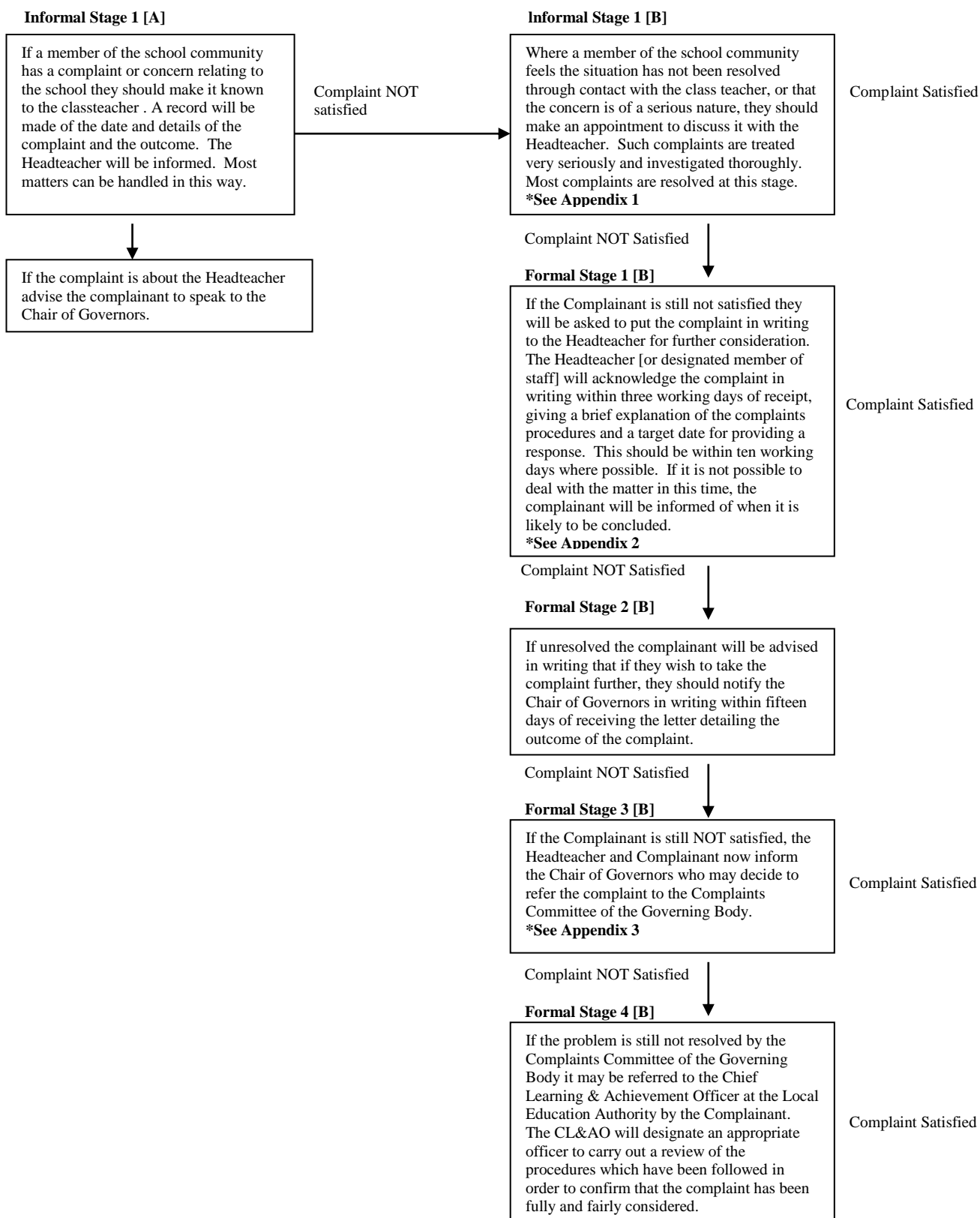
Aims and Objectives

Our school 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.

Legal Requirements

The Education Act 2002 Section 29 requires governing bodies to establish procedures for dealing with complaints. The Welsh Assembly Government Guidelines (Circular 3/2004) should be considered when drawing up procedures.

The Complaints Process



Monitoring and Review

The Headteacher and the governing body monitor the complaints procedure, in order to ensure that all complaints are handled properly.

The Headteacher logs all complaints received by school and records how they were resolved.

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 on request, so that they can be properly informed about the complaints process.

Appendix 1

1. The Complainant can be accompanied by a friend or relative when meeting the Headteacher if desired.
2. If necessary the Headteacher [or designated member of staff] will interview any witnesses and take statements from those involved. If the complaint centres around a pupil, the pupil will also be interviewed with a senior member of staff whom the pupil feels comfortable with. If a member of staff is complained against, they need to be made aware of the complaint, have an opportunity to respond and be accompanied by a representative if required.
3. The Headteacher [or designated member of staff] will ensure that written records of meetings, telephone conversations and other documentation are kept.

Appendix 2

1. Once all the relevant facts have been established, the Headteacher [or designated member of staff] will arrange a meeting with the complainant to discuss or resolve the matter. This meeting will be followed up with a letter setting out the outcome of the meeting.

Appendix 3

Complaints only rarely reach this formal stage, but it is important that *Governing Bodies* are prepared to deal with them when necessary. It should be noted that formal stages 1 and 2 must be completed before this stage is reached.

Formal complaints to the *Governing Body* should be made in writing to the *Chair of Governors*. The *Chair of Governors* will ask the *Clerk to the Governing Body* to acknowledge the complaint and to make arrangements for a meeting of the *Complaints Committee*.

Complaints which may lead to disciplinary action should be handled in accordance with the school's appropriate procedures.

The governing body will take care that no governor can be accused of prejudice by ensuring that:

1. an individual governor does not deal with the complaint;
2. the complaint is quickly referred to the Headteacher and *Chair of Governors*, if complaint procedures at that level have not been exhausted;

3. the complaint is not reported to the whole governing body until it is resolved, and then not in detail;
4. the Governing Body Complaints Committee will ensure that all parties to the complaint are given a fair hearing. It is important that a person against whom a complaint is made is given sufficient time, usually 10 school days, to consider all the evidence and take advice before providing a response and before the hearing takes place.
5. the decision of the Committee will be given in writing to the complainant and any person against whom the complaint is made within five working days of the Committee's meeting;
6. the letter will also advise the complainant that if they are dissatisfied with the outcome of the procedure they may write to the LEA who will carry out a further review. This further review will, however, only consider whether the complaint has been fully and fairly considered according to the school's complaints procedures; it will not rehear the substantive complaint.

Appendix 4

The following protocols should be followed upon receipt of a written request from the complainant for the complaint to proceed to Stage 4.

1. The Clerk to the Governing Body should write acknowledging receipt of the written request within 5 working days and informing the complainant that it will be heard by the Complaints Committee of the Governing Body within fifteen working days of receipt. The letter should also inform the complainant that they have the right to submit any further documents relevant to their complaint and that these must be received in order for the Committee members to be sent copies at least five working days prior to the meeting.
2. The Clerk to the Governing Body should convene a meeting of the Complaints Committee. In establishing the Committee the Governing Body should nominate a pool of five Governors from which three can be drawn for any hearing. This will ensure that there are always sufficient Governors with no conflict of interest to constitute the Committee when required. The Committee should elect its Chair.
3. The Committee members should have had no prior involvement with the complaint. Generally, it would not be appropriate for the Headteacher to have a place on the Committee. Governing Bodies should have regard to the advantages of having a mix of different type of Governor on the Committee and be sensitive to issues of equal opportunity in the composition of the Committee.
4. All relevant correspondence and documentation should be given to each Committee member. The Chairperson of the Committee should ensure that the complainant, Headteacher and any other witnesses are given five working days notice in writing of:
 - a) the time and place of the Committee meeting, and
 - b) the grounds of the complaint, together with copies of all documents relied upon by either the complainant or Headteacher, and
 - c) the right of both parties to be accompanied or represented by a person of their choice, and

- d) the Committee's option to proceed in the absence of the complainant/Headteacher or their representative if no good reason is given why they should not do so.
5. The Chairperson of the Committee should ensure that the meeting is properly minuted.
 6. The aim of the meeting is to resolve the complaint and achieve a reconciliation between the school and complainant. However, it may only be possible to establish the facts of a situation and make recommendations about future action which will satisfy the complainant that their complaint has been taken seriously.
 7. The Chairperson of the Committee should try to ensure that the proceedings are as informal as possible and that the complainant feels at ease.
 8. The Committee will conduct the meeting having regard to the following principal steps. It shall be a rule that the Committee shall not see one party in the absence of the other except in a case where the Committee has resolved to proceed in the absence of the complainant/Headteacher in circumstances outlined in paragraph 4d above:-
 - a) the complainant/representative will open by outlining the complaint and present any documentary evidence and/or call witness(es) as appropriate.
 - b) the Headteacher/representative may ask questions of the complainant/representative or of any witness called by him/her. [N.B. This opportunity is reserved for asking questions to clarify matters not for making statements].
 - c) members of the Committee may ask questions similarly.
 - d) the Headteacher/representative will respond to the complaint, present the documentary evidence and/or call witness(es).
 - e) the complainant/representative may ask questions of the Headteacher/representative or of any witness called by him/her. [N.B. This opportunity is reserved for asking questions to clarify matters not for making statements].
 - f) members of the Committee may ask questions similarly.
 - g) at the conclusion of the meeting, the Chairperson of the Committee should explain that the Committee will consider its decision and write to both parties with the outcome within five working days. The Headteacher, complainant and any witnesses should then withdraw and the Committee should consider its decision. This should include:
 - a) the decision on the complaint.
 - b) appropriate action to be taken by the school, and where appropriate
 - c) recommendations on changes to the school's systems or procedures to ensure similar problems do not arise in the future.

The school should ensure that a copy of all correspondence and notes is kept on file in the school. This should be held separately from pupils' personal records.