


Gosforth East Middle School Policy Proforma		
Policy Number: 7	Name: Complaints Procedure Policy	
Agreed Date: Sept 2019	Agreed by:GB/SLT	
Longevity: 2 Years	Review Date: Sept 2021	

### Who do I complain to?

The school itself. There are generally three main steps in making a complaint.

#### Stage 1 (informal)

It is always useful to talk through your complaint with an appropriate member of school staff. This could be your child's form teacher, head of year or member of the senior management team.

The school may request that you make an appointment to discuss this matter, as this will ensure they can listen to your concerns fully and allocate an appropriate amount of time for the conversation. Hopefully your concerns can be addressed at stage 1. However, you may progress this matter further if you remain dissatisfied with the outcome at stage 1.

#### Stage 2

You are required to put your complaint in writing to the Head teacher (or the Chair of Governors if the complaint is about the Headteacher). This should be acknowledged in writing by the school with an indication of the timescales that will be followed. The Headteacher (or Chair of Governors) will then investigate your complaint and respond directly. If you remain dissatisfied at this stage 2 you may escalate the complaint to stage 3.

#### Stage 3

You are required to make a formal complaint in writing to the Governing Body. You should contact the Chair of Governors outlining your complaints. These will be investigated by either the Chair of Governors or a Governing Body Complaints Committee, depending on the nature of the complaint. You should send the documentation you have from stage 2 for their information.

Correspondence to the Chair of Governors can be handed in at the school office and it will be forwarded on. Alternatively, the letters can be sent c/o Governor Services, Room 400, Civic Centre, Barras Bridge, Newcastle upon Tyne, NE1 8PU or

email to [governorservices@newcastle.gov.uk](mailto:governorservices@newcastle.gov.uk)

### What if I remain dissatisfied after I have been through each stage of the school complaint's process?

Stage 3 is the last school-based stage of the complaints process. However, complainants have a lawful right to approach the Secretary of State for Education if they believe that the Governing body is acting, or proposing to act unreasonably. The Secretary of State would only follow up a complaint if they believed the school had either acted unreasonably or failed to carry out a statutory duty. This should be a last resort, and you should highlight the steps you have already taken to resolve the problem. You should be aware that the Department for Education will not usually be able to investigate a complaint if the child no longer attends the school where the incident took place.

Contact details for the Department of Education are:

Tel: 020 7925 5065

Email: [ministers@education.gsi.gov.uk](mailto:ministers@education.gsi.gov.uk)

Or write to: Secretary of State for Education, House of Commons, London, SW1 0AA

### **Complaining to Ofsted**

Ofsted do have the powers to investigate certain types of complaints from parents and carers about their child's school. The types of complaint to which Ofsted can respond include:

- The school is not providing a good enough education
- The pupils are not achieving as much as they should, or their needs are not being met
- The school is not well led and managed, or is not using its resources efficiently
- The pupils' personal development and well-being are being neglected.

When considering a complaint, Ofsted can require the school or local authority to provide information, or require the school to arrange a parents meeting to seek their views.

Ofsted can also record parents' concerns for consideration during the school's next inspection.

Where a complaint is serious, Ofsted can arrange an immediate inspection of the school.

Ofsted are not in a position to judge how well the school investigated or responded to a complaint, or to mediate between a parent and a school to resolve a dispute.

### **Contacting Ofsted**

Parents can contact Ofsted at any time and give their views about the school on:

<http://parentview.ofsted.gov.uk>

### **Why are complaints referred to the governors rather than the Local Authority?**

Under the Local Management of Schools legislation, Head teachers are directly accountable to the governing body of the school, and not the Local Authority.

Complaints and concerns must therefore be dealt with by the governors of a school, with guidance and advice from relevant officers within the Local Authority where they request it. The Local Authority has no power to direct a school in relation to a complaint from a parent or pupil, unless there is a statutory basis for doing so (see below)

If a written complaint is received into the Local Authority 'prematurely' this will be forwarded to the school to deal with under their own procedures.

Anyone making a telephone complaint to the Local Authority about a specific school will be transferred to Governor Services who will clarify the correct procedures and refer them back to the relevant school. Although Governor Service will inform the school about the contact received, the responsibility remains with the parent/carers to follow the correct procedure and raise the issue with the school themselves.

Are there any exceptions to schools' complaints procedures?

Some complaints are dealt with in a slightly different way. There are special arrangements if you want to appeal or complain about the following:

Admissions to school  
Exclusions from school

School reorganisation proposals  
Special educational need provision  
Religious education and collective worship  
Curriculum issues

If you have any queries about the school complaints procedure or if your complaint relates to any of the above areas please contact the Civic Centre on 0191 2787878

**Reviewed by : SLT**

**Date: September: 2019**

**Review Date : September 2021**