

Belmont School Complaints Policy



Authorised:
(Headteacher)

Authorised:
(Chair of Governors)

Date Approved: 20-3-18

Date for Review: Summer Term 2018/19

COMPLAINTS POLICY

1. OVERVIEW

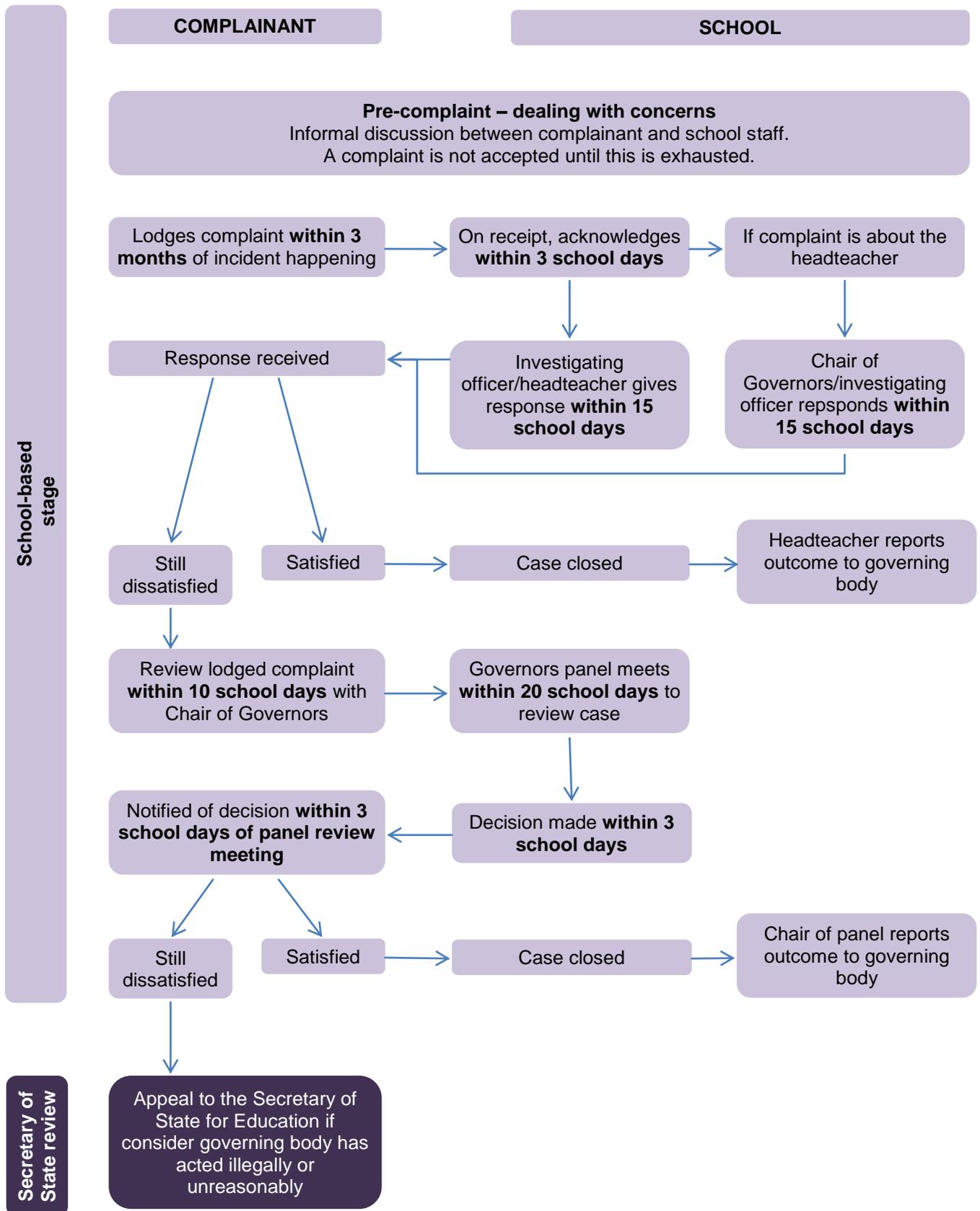
Belmont School takes any complaint very seriously and, when considering such a complaint, will address the following principles:

- Complaints will be welcomed, together with other comments from parents, carers and others.
- Every attempt will be made to resolve complaints informally in the first instance.
- The process of complaining will not be difficult. Concerns or complaints can be received by letter, telephone or in person, but a written record of a complaint must be made to the Headteacher or Chair of Governors depending on the type of complaint (see Stage 3 in the process chart below). Support is available to help write a complaint if required.
- Independent advice and support to help with any aspect of the complaints process is available to parents/carers if required – see Section 3.
- A record of recognised complaints will be kept by the Headteacher.
- Complaints will be handled as speedily as possible and in line with the policy timescales.
- Conciliatory language will be used at all times.
- Where there are communication difficulties, recording devices can be used to ensure the complainant is able to access and review discussions at a later point.
- Complainants will be assured of confidentiality and that pupils will not be victimised.
- For some issues the procedure for handling complaints is defined by statutory provisions rather than via the school. These include:
 - **Special education needs**
 - **Child protection/Safeguarding**
 - **School admissions**
 - **The school curriculum**
 - **School exclusions**

See Appendix 1 for further details.

- Complaints by staff will be dealt through other policies and procedures, ie Whistleblowing Policy and Grievance Policy.
- Complaints about services provided by other providers who use the school premises or facilities will follow their own complaints procedures.

2. COMPLAINTS PROCESS



3. ACCOMPANIMENT AND REPRESENTATION

The names of independent organisations that can provide advice and/or support to parents/carers if required and can be obtained from Special Educational Needs and Disability Information and Advice Support Service) **SENDIASS Gloucestershire:**

Freephone: 0800 158 3603 – mobile users may be charged

Direct lines: 01452 389344 / 01452 389345

Email: sendiass@carersgloucestershire.org.uk

SENDIASS Gloucestershire
2nd Floor Messenger House
35 St Michael's Square
Gloucester
GL1 1HX

4. TIMESCALES

The school aims to resolve concerns almost immediately, or where minimal investigation is required, complainants will receive a response within 2 school days.

For complaints, complainants will receive a written response within 3 school days. The investigating officer will provide the complainant a response within 15 school days. If this is not satisfactory the complaint must be referred to the governing body within 10 days.

If the complaint goes to Panel, it will meet within 20 school days, whereby a decision and notification of that decision will be given within 3 school days. Where further investigations are necessary, the school will set new time limits which will be communicated in writing to the complainant and an explanation for the delay.

5. UNREASONABLY PERSISTENT, HARASSING OR ABUSIVE COMPLAINANTS

There may be occasions when, despite all stages of the complaint procedure having been followed, the complainant remains dissatisfied and tries to re-open the same issue. In this instance, the school will clearly state to the complainant that the matter is closed. If the complainant continues to make the same complaint, the school may choose not to respond.

Whilst the school recognises that some complaints may relate to serious and distressing incidents, they will not accept threatening or harrassing behaviour towards any members of the school commuinity. The school will endeavour to keep communication channels open, perhaps involving an independent third party to help resolve the issue, but where abusive behaviour continues the school will contact the Local Authority for advice. The school will act to ensure the school remains a safe place for its community.

6. RECORDING COMPLAINTS

At all formal stages of the complaints procedure, the following information should be recorded:

- The name of the complainant
- The date and time at which complaint was made
- The details of the complaint
- The desired outcome of the complainant
- How the complaint is investigated (including written records or recordings of meetings and telephone calls)
- Results and conclusions of investigations
- Any action taken

- The complainant's response (satisfaction or further pursuit of complaint).

7. POLICY DISTRIBUTION

There is a legal requirement for schools to publicise their complaints procedures. This policy will be included or referenced, as appropriate, within the following:

- the information given to new parents when their children join the school
- the information given to pupils at the school
- the home-school agreement
- home school bulletins or newsletters
- on the school website.

All staff and members of the governing body are made aware of the complaints procedure and the various stages involved.

At all stages of the complaints procedure, everybody involved needs to be clear about what is happening and what their responsibilities are. In addition, the complainant will be told how to proceed to the next stage of the procedure if and when their complaint is not upheld.

8. THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR EDUCATION

Individuals have the right to contact to the Secretary of State for Education with regards to the way their complaint has been handled.

Usually, action will not be taken by the Secretary of State until both the school and the Council's procedures have been exhausted.

If the Secretary of State agrees that a complaint is justified, the DoE has the power to require the LA to take certain actions including issuing instructions to the school governing body in appropriate circumstances.

If the complainant feels that the School or the Council has behaved unreasonably about their concerns they can write to:

The Secretary of State for Education
House of Commons
London
SW1A 0AA

APPENDIX 1

Special Educational Needs.

If a parental complaint is received concerning provision made for a child with a Education Health & Care Plan, it should be referred to the Local Authority Education Office (SEN) CYPS.

Address:

Shire Hall
Gloucester
GL1 2TP
Tel: TBC

Safeguarding

If a parental complaint is received concerning alleged child abuse by a member of a school staff, it must be referred immediately as detailed in the school safeguarding policy .

Complaints or concerns that a child is being abused at home should be referred immediately as detailed in the School Safeguarding Policy. The procedures are outlined on the Gloucestershire Safeguarding Children Board website at www.gscb.org.uk/. Social Services will be informed and, where necessary, the Police Protection Unit.

Where there are concerns for a child which are of an urgent nature contact:

Children and families helpdesk: 01452 426565

School Admissions

The Local Authority is the admissions authority for county maintained special schools. If a parental complaint is received concerning the non-availability of a school place, it should be referred to the appropriate Appeal Panel.

Curriculum / Sex Education

If a parental complaint is received concerning the school curriculum, or sex education, it should be referred to the Local Authority Education Office (SEN) CYPS (as above)

School Exclusions

If a parental complaint is received concerning a pupil who has been, or is about to be excluded from school, it should be referred to the Education Inclusion Service:

Tel: 01452 427360

Email: exclusions@gloucestershire.gov.uk

Education Inclusion Service

**Shire Hall
Westgate Street
Gloucester
GL1 2TP.**