



Brampton Abbots CE Primary School



Bridstow CE Primary School



Oak Meadow Federation

## COMPLAINTS POLICY

### Chapter 4

### PARENT INFORMATION SUITE

This suite of information will be reviewed and updated by the Governing Body at least annually.  
All references to 'the school' imply both Brampton Abbots and Bridstow Primary Schools.

Date signed off by full governing body: 17<sup>th</sup> October 2023

Signed Daniel Brearey, Head teacher

Paul Mason, Chair of governors

Date next review due: October 2024

## **Introduction**

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Our vision is rooted in Psalm 1:3: 'You are like a tree, planted by streams of water that never run dry. Your fruit ripens in its time; your leaves never fade or curl. In all you do, you prosper'. To this end, and in order to create a positive learning environment, this policy suite has been designed to provide parents with the information needed to support their child(ren) to get the most out of school, and to appropriately challenge school if this is not happening.

This suite of information aims:

- to give parents/carers an overview of the key information they need to know from our various policies and procedures;
- to let parents/carers know how to raise issues and complaints with school;
- to identify behaviour that the school considers to be unreasonable from third parties.

This policy suite contains the following chapters:

[Chapter 1](#): Overview of key information for parents

[Chapter 2](#): Charging for activities (charging and remissions)

[Chapter 3](#): SEND Information

[Chapter 4](#): Complaints procedure

[Chapter 5](#): Unreasonable behaviour

## **Complaints and whistleblowing**

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Complaints should follow the procedures as set out in the Complaints Policy at chapter 4. Staff also have a responsibility to raise any concerns following the school's whistleblowing policy.

## **Compliance**

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This policy is set out in line with the [DfE Good Practice Guidance on Complaints Procedures](#).

## CHAPTER 4: COMPLAINTS PROCEDURE

### 4.1 General Principles

This procedure is intended to allow parents, or any other individual, to raise a concern or complaint relating to the school, or the services that it provides. To enable a proper investigation, concerns or complaints should be brought to the attention of the school as soon as possible. In general, any matter raised more than three months after the event, will not be considered. An anonymous concern or complaint will not be investigated under this procedure unless there are exceptional circumstances.

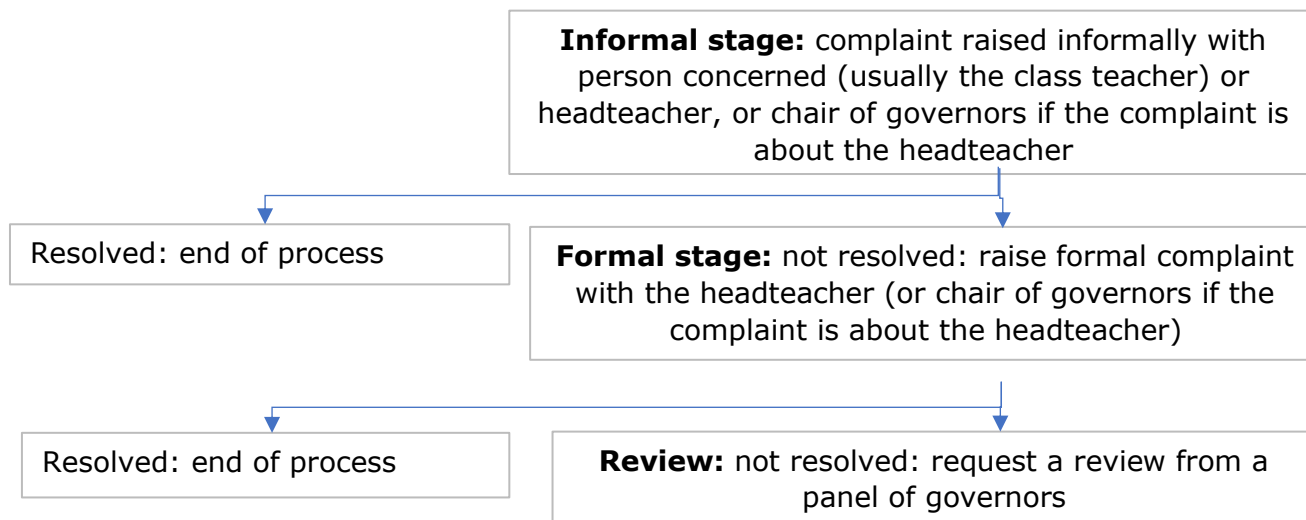
### 4.2 Scope of this complaints procedure

This complaints procedure covers any complaints about the school, except for those covered by alternative statutory processes. These are listed below, but we always ask you to speak to someone at the school first, and we will do our very best to address any concerns.

Exceptions	Whom to contact
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Admissions to schools</li> <li>School re-organisation proposals</li> <li>Statutory assessments of Special Educational Needs</li> </ul>	Concerns about admissions, statutory assessments of SEND, or school re-organisation proposals should be raised initially with the governing body, and subsequently with the Diocese of Hereford Board of Education and Herefordshire Council.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Matters likely to require a Child Protection Investigation</li> </ul>	Complaints about child protection matters that cannot be dealt with within school may be raised with the Local Authority Designated Officer, whose contact details are available in the Child Protection & Safeguarding Policy Suite.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Exclusion of children from school</li> </ul>	Further information about raising concerns about exclusion can be found at: <a href="http://www.gov.uk/school-discipline-exclusions/exclusions">www.gov.uk/school-discipline-exclusions/exclusions</a> .
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Whistleblowing</li> </ul>	We have an internal whistleblowing procedure for all our employees, including temporary staff, as well as contractors and volunteers. The Secretary of State for Education is the prescribed person for matters relating to education for whistleblowers in education who do not want to raise matters direct with their employer. Referrals can be made at: <a href="http://www.education.gov.uk/contactus">www.education.gov.uk/contactus</a> .
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Staff grievances</li> </ul>	Complaints from staff will be dealt with under the school's internal grievance procedures.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Staff conduct</li> </ul>	Complaints about staff will be dealt with under the school's internal disciplinary procedures, if appropriate. Complainants will not be informed of any disciplinary action taken against a staff member as a result of a complaint. However, the complainant will be notified that the matter is being addressed.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Complaints about services provided by other providers who may use school premises or facilities</li> </ul>	Providers should have their own complaints procedure to deal with complaints about service. Please contact them direct.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>National Curriculum - content</li> </ul>	Please contact the Department for Education at: <a href="http://www.education.gov.uk/contactus">www.education.gov.uk/contactus</a>

### 4.3 Raising a concern or complaint

Most complaints are resolved informally, but on occasion then a more formal response may be needed. The following diagram summarises the process, which is elaborated upon in more detail below.



#### Informal Stage

It is normally appropriate to communicate directly with the class teacher or member of staff concerned. This may be by email, telephone or in-person by appointment, requested via the school office. Many concerns can be resolved by simple clarification or the provision of information, and it is anticipated that most complaints will be resolved by this informal stage.

In the case of serious concerns, it may be appropriate to address these directly to the headteacher (or to the chair of governors if the complaint is about the headteacher). If you are uncertain about whom to contact, please seek advice from the school office or the clerk to the governors.

#### Formal Stage

If your concern or complaint is not resolved at the informal stage you may choose to put the complaint in writing by using the school complaint form and pass it to the headteacher, who will be responsible for ensuring that it is investigated appropriately. If the complaint is about the headteacher, your complaint should be passed to the clerk to the governors, for the attention of the chair of governors. If the complaint is jointly about the chair and vice-chair, or about the entire governing body, or the majority of the governing body, then the complaint at this stage will be considered by an independent investigator appointed by the governing body and the Diocese of Hereford. At the conclusion of their investigation, the independent investigator will provide a formal written response.

A Complaint Form is provided to assist you; forms are available from the school office. You should include details which might assist the investigation, such as names of potential witnesses, dates and times of events, and copies of relevant documents. It is very important that you include a clear statement of the actions that you would like the school to take to resolve your concern. Without this, it is much more difficult to proceed. Please pass the completed form, in a sealed envelope to the school office. The envelope should be addressed to the headteacher, or to the clerk to the governors, as appropriate.

If you prefer to let us know your complaint verbally and for us to take notes, the school office or clerk to the governors can assist with this, or the headteacher may assist if you feel more comfortable with this.

The headteacher (or chair of governors) will acknowledge your complaint within two working days. The headteacher (or chair of governors) may invite you to a meeting to clarify your concerns and to explore the possibility of an informal resolution. If you accept that invitation, you may be accompanied by a friend, if you wish, to assist you in explaining the nature of your concerns.

It is possible that your complaint will be resolved through a meeting with the headteacher (or chair). If not, arrangements will be made for the matter to be fully investigated, using the appropriate procedure, which may include interviews which will be fully documented. In any case you should learn in writing, usually within five school days of the school receiving your formal complaint, of how the school intends to proceed. This notification should include an indication of the anticipated timescale, which will vary depending on the complexity of the situation.

Any investigation will begin as soon as possible and when it has been concluded, you will be informed in writing of its conclusion.

If you are not satisfied with the manner in which the process has been followed, you may request that the governing body reviews the process followed by the school, in handling the complaint. Any such request must be made in writing to the clerk to the governing body, within ten school days of receiving notice of the outcome and include a statement specifying any perceived failures to follow the procedure. The procedure described below will be followed. A Review Request form, available from the school office, is provided for your convenience.

### Review Process

Any review of the process followed by the school will be conducted by a panel of three impartial members of the governing body who have not been involved in the process previously. If there are fewer than three impartial governors of the school, the clerk will source additional governors from other local schools. If the complaint is jointly about the Chair and Vice Chair, or the entire governing body, or the majority of the governing body then the complaint at this stage will be considered by a committee of independent governors.

The review will usually take place within ten school days of receipt of your request. The review will normally be conducted through a consideration of written submissions, but reasonable requests to make oral representations will be considered sympathetically. In this case, the clerk will organise a meeting; if more than three reasonable dates are turned down without good reason, the clerk will select a date. If a meeting is to take place, the clerk will notify all parties at least a full working week before the date of the meeting and will circulate any written materials at the same time. If the above timescales cannot be met then the clerk will let you know as soon as possible and will let you know the revised timescale.

### Next steps

If the complainant believes the school did not handle their complaint in accordance with the published complaints procedure or they acted unlawfully or unreasonably in the exercise of their duties under education law, they can contact the Department for Education after they have completed the Review Process.

The Department for Education will not normally reinvestigate the substance of complaints or overturn any decisions made by the school. It will consider whether the school has adhered to education legislation and any school policies connected with the complaint.

The complainant can refer their complaint to the Department for Education online at: [www.education.gov.uk/contactus](http://www.education.gov.uk/contactus), by telephone on 0370 000 2288, or by writing to Department for Education, Piccadilly Gate, Store Street, MANCHESTER M1 2WD.

#### **4.4 Provision for children with special educational or disability needs.**

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If you feel that the school has not provided the support required by your child's Education, Health and Care Plan (EHCP) then you should talk to the school's special educational needs coordinator (SENDCo). If your complaint remains unresolved you should follow the complaints procedure outlined above, and if you then remain unhappy you should contact [the local authority](#).

If you disagree with a decision that the local authority has made about a SEN statement or an EHCP you can appeal the decision through one of the following websites: <https://www.gov.uk/appeal-ehc-plan-decision> or <https://www.gov.uk/appeal-sen-statement-decision>. Please note that complaints of this kind cannot be investigated by the school.