



Annex A

COMPLAINTS FORM	
<i>Name of School</i>	
When we receive a written complaint, we aim to acknowledge its receipt within 2 days and send a full or interim response within 5 school days.	
Name of complainant:	
Address:	
Postcode:	
Telephone (day):	Telephone (evening):
What is your concern and how has it affected you?	
Are you attaching any paperwork? If so, please list below:	
Have you discussed this matter with a member of staff before filling in this form? If so, who did you speak to and what was the response?	
What would you like to happen as a result of making this complaint?	
Signature:	Date:
Please return this form to	



Annex B

COMPLAINTS PROCEDURE

As a Church of England School, Christian values are at the heart of all we do. We value our relationship with parents and all members of the school and local community. If you have a concern we want to know about it so that it can be dealt with immediately. Most concerns can be dealt with easily and quickly but to ensure all concerns are handled effectively the Governing Body has adopted a complaints policy and procedure.

The School's Complaints Procedure is devised with the intention that it will :

- ◆ usually be possible to resolve problems by informal means;
- ◆ be simple to use and understand;
- ◆ treat complaints confidentially;
- ◆ allow problems to be handled swiftly;
- ◆ inform future practice so that the problem is unlikely to recur;
- ◆ reaffirm the partnership between parents, staff and governors as they work together for the good of the pupils in the school;
- ◆ ensure that the school's attitude to a pupil would never be affected by a parental complaint;
- ◆ discourage anonymous complaints;
- ◆ actively encourage strong home-school links;
- ◆ ensure that all staff have opportunities to discuss and understand the school's response to concerns and complaints made by parents;
- ◆ ensure that any person complained against has equal rights with the person making the complaint;
- ◆ regularly review its system for monitoring concerns and complaints received from parents.

EXPRESSING A CONCERN: NOTES FOR PARENTS

If you have a concern

We would like you to tell us about it so that we can talk with you and see how best to resolve your concern. The majority of concerns can be resolved informally by speaking to a member of staff. We welcome suggestions for improving our work in the school. Whatever your concern, please know that we shall treat it as strictly confidential.

Be assured that no matter what you wish to share with us, our support and respect for you and your child in the school will not be affected in any way; please do not delay telling us of your concern. It is difficult for us to investigate properly an incident or problem which is more than a day or two old.

After hearing your concern we will act as quickly as we can; we will let you know the timescale within which you may expect a response. Please allow time for any action we may take to be effective. Our procedure is in three stages outlined below:

What to do first (Stage I – informal)

Please contact your child's class teacher or other appropriate member of staff, and arrange a time when you can discuss your concern. It may be possible for you to see the member of staff straight

away but normally it is better to make an appointment so that you can sit and talk things through. It may be possible to give a response immediately, but where any investigation or information is required, a response will be given within five days.

What to do next (Stage 2- Formal)

If you are still unhappy, ask for an appointment with the Headteacher within 10 school days of receiving a response under Stage 1. It is helpful if you can give a brief outline of your concern on the School's complaints form when you make the appointment. After your discussion with the headteacher you may have to wait a short time while investigations are carried out. Every effort will be made to resolve the situation as quickly as possible and the headteacher will send you a written response within 5 school days of your meeting. If it is not possible to respond within this timescale, the headteacher will tell you when you can expect a response.

If you are still unhappy (Stage 3- Formal)

The problem will normally be resolved by this stage. However, if you still have concerns and they have not been resolved you may ask for your complaint to be considered by the complaints panel of the Governing Body by writing to the Chair of Governors c/o The School. The complaints panel will be formed of three governors who have had no prior involvement in the complaint, they will listen to you, to the headteacher and, if appropriate, any others involved and come to a decision. You may bring a friend to the hearing if you wish.

The table below summarises the procedure:

Stage	Description	Timescale for receipt of complaint	Time-limit for School's response
Informal Stage 1	Informal discussions with relevant member of staff and/or headteacher		As soon as possible but no later than 5 school days.
Formal Stage 2	Written complaint to Headteacher (or Chair of Governors if complaint is about the Headteacher)	Within 10 school days of receipt of response to stage 1	Acknowledge within 2 school days. Response normally within 5 school days.
Formal Stage 3	Governors' Complaints' Panel Hearing	Within 10 school days of receipt of response to stage 2	Hearing set up within 15 school days with 10 days notice of meeting. Agenda and papers sent out 7 days in advance. Decision letter within 2 school days.

In all cases if any stage in the procedure is likely to take longer than publicised, parents will be informed of new timescales and the reasons for delay.



Annex C

PROCEDURAL ADVICE - CONDUCTING INTERVIEWS WITH COMPLAINANTS

- 1 In conducting interviews with complainants, headteachers (or Chairs of Governors, if appropriate) should:
 - (a) have regard to confidentiality at all times. The need to treat conversations and correspondence as confidential is of paramount importance; from the outset all parties to a complaint should be made aware of the need for confidentiality.
 - (b) listen attentively and sympathetically to complainants, allowing them to explain their concern/s in their own way. After they have finished, it may be necessary to try to identify the issue(s) by asking questions and summarising what has been said. It is helpful to ascertain the complainant's desired outcome and possibilities (if any) for redress. Headteachers may wish to ensure that the meeting is minuted by a third party, so that there is a clear record of the meeting.
- 2 At the end of the interview decide if it is possible to:
 - (a) make an immediate response to the concern/s; or
 - (c) delay a response. It is often necessary to say to complainants that their concerns will be carefully considered and when all the facts and circumstances have been ascertained, they will receive a response normally within five school days.
- 3 Avoid passing judgement or coming to conclusions before having spoken to any third parties and having considered all the aspects of the complaint.
- 4 If the complaint is against a third party, ensure that they have an opportunity to explain the situation as they see it, but not usually in the presence of the complainant unless this is deemed desirable by all concerned.
- 5 Examine the general context and constraints of the situation and consider if there are any precedents.
- 6 When all the facts and circumstances relating to the matter have been ascertained make careful notes summarising your investigation. You should then decide how to respond to the complainant.
- 7 The complainant should be clearly informed of the school's response to the complaint/s and of the next stage in the procedure, should s/he wish to proceed further.



OUTLINE OF THE PROCEDURE FOR A COMPLAINTS PANEL HEARING

The Panel may:

- (a) dismiss the complaint in whole or in part;
- (b) uphold the complaint in whole or in part;
- (c) decide on the appropriate action to be taken to resolve the complaint;
- (d) recommend changes to the school's systems or procedures to ensure that problems of a similar nature do not recur.

The Panel members should be aware of the following:

- (a) the school's complaints procedure;
- (b) the appeal hearing is independent and impartial and must be seen to be so;
- (c) no governor may sit on the panel if they have had a prior involvement in the complaint, or the circumstances surrounding it;
- (d) panel members should be drawn from a cross-section of the governing body;
- (e) the hearing is held in private;
- (f) the aim of the hearing is to resolve the complaint and achieve conciliation between the school and the complainant;
- (g) it may not be possible to resolve matters to the complainant's satisfaction, it may only be possible to establish facts and satisfy the complaint that the matter has been taken seriously;
- (h) some parents may feel nervous: the panel chair will make efforts to ensure proceedings are as informal as possible.

The chair of the panel:

- (a) welcomes those present and introduces each person by name;
- (b) stresses that the meeting is strictly confidential to those present;
- (c) outlines the procedure to be followed;
- (d) asks all attending the Panel, including witnesses, to remain available for approximately 30 minutes after they withdraw from the hearing, in case the Panel needs to clarify a point;
- (e) ensures that key findings of fact are made and the issues addressed;
- (f) ensures that each party is able to state their case and ask questions without undue interruption;
- (g) ensures that all written material is seen by all parties;
- (h) conducts the hearing in an informal manner and ensures each party treats the other with respect and courtesy.

Order of hearing:

- The complainant is invited to present their case and explain their desired outcome and any possibilities of redress.
- The headteacher may question both the complainant and any witnesses.
- The headteacher is invited to explain the school's actions.
- The complainant may question the headteacher and any witnesses.
- Both parties are invited to sum up.

After the complainant, Chair of the governing body (if appropriate) and Headteacher have withdrawn, the Panel decides on its recommendations, including any redress. The decision and

recommendations of the Complaints Panel are sent within two school days to all parties. The Panel's decision is final.