



## REDLAND SCHOOL COMPLAINTS POLICY

# Redland Primary School Complaints Policy

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## Overview

Redland Primary School Complaints Procedure

### General Principles:

- This procedure is intended to allow you to raise a concern or complaint relating to the school, or the services that it provides.
- The procedure is designed to ensure that, wherever possible, an informal resolution is attempted.
- All stages of the complaints procedure should be investigatory rather than adversarial.
- An anonymous concern or complaint will not be investigated under this procedure.
- 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 **3 months** after the event, being complained of, will not be considered.
- The responsibility for dealing with general complaints lies solely with the school. The procedures of the LA, and other agencies reflect existing legislation and ensure that any complaint received by them, which does not fall to them by statute to resolve, will be redirected to the school immediately and that the complainant be informed accordingly.
- The head teacher and governing body are committed to the improvement of our school. We welcome feedback from parents/carers and will always try to resolve any concerns as quickly as possible. However a small percentage of people will correspond with or complain to the school or governing body in a way that could reasonably be described as obsessive, harassing or repetitious. This correspondence from a minority of individuals takes up a disproportionate amount of school resources and can result in unacceptable stress for governors and staff. This circumstance is covered in the Redland School Policy and Procedure for Vexatious Correspondence and Complaints. This is a separate document, but it will be reviewed concurrently with this Complaints Policy.

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## For people involved in complaints

The person receiving the complaint will:

- Listen sympathetically to the complaint with courtesy and respect.
- Offer an immediate acknowledgement verbally or if the complaint is in writing; within five days of receipt.
- Indicate what initial action will be taken, by whom and by when.
- Decide, in consultation with others if necessary, to whom the complaint should be referred.
- Ensure that all relevant information is passed to the person investigating immediately.

The person dealing with the complaint

- Ensure that a thorough and fair investigation is carried out.
- Consult appropriately.
- Maintain confidentiality.
- Involve other agencies, e.g. the police, social services etc. as appropriate and after careful consultation.
- Keep the complainant informed of the progress of the investigation.
- Ensure that careful records are kept.
- Complete the complaints log.

If the complaint concerns a member of staff that person has the right to be informed immediately, be given the opportunity to put their side of the case, be kept informed of progress in the investigation and of the outcome. However, safeguarding guidance and protocols will be followed at all times.

The person making the complaint should

- Treat all members of the school community with courtesy and respect.
- Respect the needs of pupils and staff within the school.
- Avoid the use of violence, or threats of violence, towards people and property.
- Recognise the time constraints under which members of staff in school work and allow a reasonable time to respond to a complaint.
- Follow the schools complaints procedure.

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## Raising a concern or complaint

### Informal Stage

It is normally appropriate to communicate directly with the member of staff concerned. This may be by letter, by 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 them directly to the head teacher (or to the chair of the governing body, if the complaint is about the head teacher). If you are uncertain about who to contact, please seek advice from the school office or the clerk to the governing body.

### Formal Stage

If your concern or complaint is not resolved at the informal stage you must request a formal complaints form from the Clerk to Governors who will pass completed forms to the head teacher, who will be responsible for ensuring that it is investigated appropriately. If the complaint is about the head teacher, your complaint should be passed to the clerk to the governing body, for the attention of the chair of the governing body.

*An example form is included within this policy. Complaint forms will be sent within 10 working days of request.*

You should include details which might assist the investigation, dates and times of events, and copies of relevant documents.

Please pass the completed form, in a sealed envelope to the school office. The envelope should be addressed to the head teacher, or to the clerk to the governing body, as appropriate.

The head teacher (or chair) 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 head teacher (or chair). If not, arrangements will be made for the matter to be fully investigated, using the appropriate procedure. In any case you should learn in writing, usually within 5 days of receipt of the school receiving your formal complaint, of how the school intends to proceed. This notification should include an indication of the anticipated timescale.

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

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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 10 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 sample review Request form is included within this policy.

## **Review Process**

Any review of the process followed by the school will be conducted by a panel of 3 members of the governing body. This will usually take place within 10 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 should be considered sympathetically.

## **Governing body meetings**

### a) Complaints panel

If the school receives a formal complaint about one of the limited number of matters, that is not dealt with by another statutory process, it may be necessary to convene a governing body panel to consider the matter and formulate a response.

The complaint is likely to relate to matters such as:

- the content or the application of a governing body policy;
- school facilities;
- services that the school provides.

If a governing body committee already has delegated power with respect to a policy that is being complained of, a panel of members from that committee should be convened.

Otherwise the clerk should convene a panel of 3 governors, who have not previously been involved with the complaint.

The complainant should submit the details of their concerns, in writing, to the clerk. The clerk will seek similar written responses from the school, where this is necessary.

A meeting of the panel will take place, usually within 10 school days, to consider the matter. The complainant (who may be accompanied by a friend if they wish) and representative(s) from the school (who may also be accompanied by workplace colleagues or representatives from their professional associations) may be invited to attend this meeting in order to clarify the matter. As the panel meeting is intended to be investigatory, rather than adversarial, the persons giving evidence or making representations to the panel will normally attend separately.

When the panel has collected sufficient information, it will deliberate and then inform the complainant, the head teacher and the governing body of the outcome, in writing.

Consideration of the complaint by the governing body and the school, save for any actions that are agreed, will terminate at this point.

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If the complainant is not satisfied that the appropriate procedure has been followed, they may request a review of that process by another panel of the governing body.

### b) Review meeting

Any review of the process followed by the school will be conducted by a panel of 3 members of the governing body. This will usually take place within 10 school days of receipt of a written request.

The review will normally be conducted through a consideration of written submissions, but reasonable requests, from any of the parties, to make oral representations should be considered sympathetically.

The panel will first receive written evidence from the complainant.

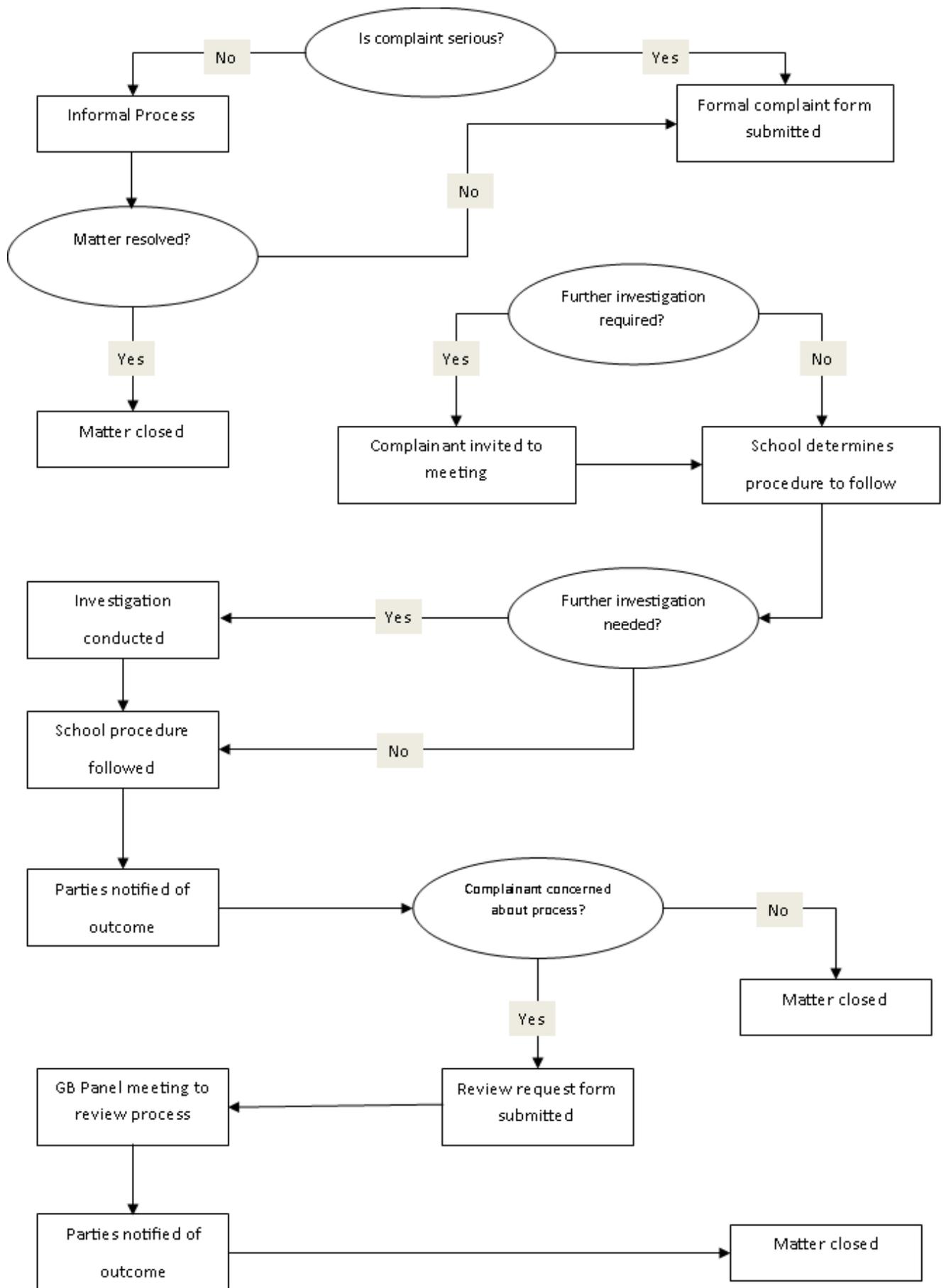
The panel will then invite representatives of the school (usually the head teacher or the chair of the governing body panel that has considered the matter), as appropriate, to make a response to the complaint.

The panel may also have access to the records kept of the process followed. The complainant and the school representative(s) will be informed in writing of the outcome, usually within 5 school days of the panel meeting.

The matter will then be closed as far as the school is concerned.

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## Redland Primary School

### Complaints Form for Completion by the School

This is to be initiated by the person receiving the complaint and passed to others for completion as appropriate.

Name of Complainant	Contact Details	Received by	Date Received	Dealt with By
<b>Nature of Complaint:</b>				
<b>Action Taken:</b>				
<b>Date Matter Closed</b>	<b>Signed</b>		<b>Date</b>	

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## Redland Primary School Complaint Pro-forma for Complainants

Please complete the form and return it via the school office, to the Headteacher,(or clerk of the governing body) who will acknowledge its receipt and inform you of the next stage in the procedure

Your name:

Relationship with school (e.g. parent of a child on roll)

Pupil's name

Your address

Telephone numbers

Daytime

Evening

e-mail address

Please give concise details of your complaint, (including dates, names of witnesses etc.) to allow the matter to be fully investigated

You may continue on a separate paper or attach additional documents, if you wish

Number of additional pages attached:

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What action, if any, have you already taken to try to resolve your complaint? (i.e who have you spoken with or written to and what was the outcome)

Signed \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

School Use	Date received	Received by	Date acknowledgement sent	Acknowledgement sent by
Complaint referred to				
Date				

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### Redland Primary School Complaint Review Request Form

Please complete the form and return it via the school office, to the Headteacher,(or clerk of the governing body) who will acknowledge its receipt and inform you of the next stage in the procedure

Your name:

Relationship with school (e.g. parent of a child on roll)

Pupil's name

Your address

Telephone numbers

Daytime

Evening

e-mail address

Dear Sir/Madame

I submitted a formal complaint to the school on \_\_\_\_\_ and am dissatisfied by the procedure that has been followed.

My complaint was submitted to \_\_\_\_\_ and I received a response from \_\_\_\_\_ on \_\_\_\_\_

I Have attached copies of my formal complaint and of the response (s) from the school

I am dissatisfied with the way in which the procedure was carried out , because:

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You may continue on a separate paper or attach additional documents, if you wish  
Number of additional pages attached:

What actions do you feel might resolve the problem at this stage

Signed \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

<b>School Use</b>	Date received	Received by	Date acknowledgement sent	Acknowledgement sent by
Complaint referred to				
Date				