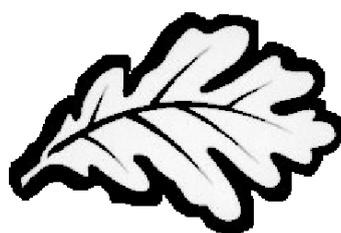


HEATHFIELD COMMUNITY SCHOOL



COMPLAINTS POLICY

This document has been written with reference to the DfE document ‘Best Practice Advice for School Complaints Procedures 2016 – Departmental advice for maintained schools, maintained nursery schools and local authorities – January 2016

Reviewed : February 2019

Next review : February 2021

Currently under mid-term review by Louise Husband – SLT (October 2020)

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Heathfield Community School Complaints Policy

Introduction

This policy covers all of Heathfield Community School including the Tacchi-Morris Arts Centre and The SPACE.

It has been developed with school staff and the governing body. The Complaints Policy was originally agreed by the governing body at their meeting on 28 January 2014 (in principle) and was to be reviewed every 2 years. Following a recommendation from a Governors Complaint Appeals Panel, it was updated in July 2015, November 2016, November 2018 and now again in February 2019.

This policy will be published on the school website, in the school prospectus and is available on request.

Section 29 of the Education Act 2002 requires that the Governing Body of a maintained school is responsible for having in place a formal procedure to deal with complaints relating to the school and to community facilities and services the school provides.

Third party providers offering community facilities or services through the school premises or using school facilities are required to have their own complaints procedure in place.

Our Ethos

At Heathfield Community School we believe it is in everyone's interest that concerns and complaints are resolved at the earliest possible stage. The school and governors promote an open and honest culture and an ethos of listening to each other and respecting the views of the individual. We encourage parents, carers, staff, students and members of the local community to raise concerns before they escalate into major issues. Contact can be made in person, by telephone or in writing.

We are committed to creating and maintaining a safe environment where students' welfare and learning are paramount.

As in all walks of life, misunderstandings, concerns and complaints can occur. Heathfield School will always take these seriously and endeavour to find the best outcome. We will keep an open mind and aim to resolve all issues at the earliest stage.

Please note that there are separate records of Accidents / Health & Safety incidents :

- 1.) Accident log book held in school office.
- 2.) Electronic log made on EEC live which is monitored by SCC Health & Safety.

(Governors may wish to request a print out of this from Health & Safety team at school if necessary.)

Concerns and Complaints Procedures

We should be clear about the difference between a concern and a complaint. Informal concerns taken seriously at the earliest stage, will reduce the numbers that develop into formal complaints.

If a parent, carer or member of the community has a concern or complaint then the following procedure should be used.

For complaints regarding SEN provision this policy still applies and the SENCO is likely to be involved in the investigation and resolution.

A flow chart is provided in Appendix B as a guide.

Concerns Procedure

Concerns should be passed to the most appropriate person which could include the Teacher, Tutor, Head of Department, Head of Year or Senior Leadership Team. They can be verbal or written.

Heathfield School deals with all concerns professionally and thoroughly and aims to handle them swiftly.

We will make contact as soon as is reasonably possible to work together to find a solution. All staff should seek to avoid the use of 'jargon' which can worsen the situation for the complainant.

Concerns are usually resolved over the phone, in writing or sometimes in a meeting with an appropriate member of staff.

If the concern has not been resolved in the first instance, the person with the concern should contact the Head of Department, Head of Year, Senior Leadership Team or Head as appropriate.

The General Principles in dealing with a complaint (p7) are also a helpful guide for dealing with concerns.

Formal Complaints Procedure

Formal procedures should only be invoked when initial attempts to resolve the issue are unsuccessful and the person raising the concern remains dissatisfied and wishes to take the matter further.

Heathfield's Complaints process has three stages. These should be followed in order, except where the complaint is about the Head, in which case start at Stage 2 (Chair of Governors).

Under no circumstances should the complainant contact a governor other than the Chair. Governors must not get involved in the initial stages of concerns as they need to be available to take part in an independent Governors Complaints Appeal Panel.

Formal complaints should be put in writing. Our complaints form can be found in Appendix C.

A log of complaints will be compiled and maintained by the Head/Head's PA (Appendix D) who will work with the Head, or in the absence of the Head the nominated lead officer or if the Head is the subject of the complaint, the nominated lead officer so as to ensure that the complainant is kept informed of progress and that timescales are adhered to.

Stage 1 - Complaint sent to Head in writing

When the Head is not available to fulfil the Head's responsibilities as stated in Stage 1, a nominated lead officer will be identified. This will also happen if the Head is the subject of the complaint. The nominated lead officer will assume all responsibilities of the Head as described in this policy. He/she will assume responsibility for ensuring the policy is adhered to and timescales are achieved.

- The Head will acknowledge receipt of the complaint within 5 school working days.
- The complaint (on a formal complaint form) will be considered and the Head will establish the facts and who may have been involved. An incident report will be completed, as well as the complaints log, and contemporaneous notes and witness statements will be obtained.
- The Head may delegate the task of collating the information to another staff member but not the decision on the action taken.
- Within 5 school working days of the complaint being received the Head will usually meet with the complainant to clarify the nature of the complaint, what remains unresolved and what actions the complainant feels might resolve the problem.
- This meeting may be delayed where further investigations are necessary. The complainant will be told of a delay to the time deadlines and an explanation of the reason. Contemporaneous notes will be made and retained.
- Within 5 school working days of the meeting taking place, the Head will make a decision on how to proceed. The complainant will receive this in writing within 20 working days of receipt of the initial complaint. The complaint may be:
 - Upheld in whole or part
 - Dismissed in whole or part
 - Resolved.
- The complainant may be dissatisfied with the way the complaint is handled at Stage 1 and may wish to pursue their initial complaint to Stage 2.

Stage 2 - Complaint sent to Chair of Governors in writing

Please note, in his absence the Chair may have delegated his responsibility.

- The Chair will acknowledge receipt of the complaint and attempt to resolve it prior to the matter being escalated to the Governors Complaints Appeal Panel. Contemporaneous notes and witness statements should be obtained as appropriate and the incident report updated. The aim is to resolve this stage of the process in less than 15 school working days whenever possible. The complainant will be notified of the outcome on a 'signed for' basis.

The Chair has the right to refuse escalation of a complaint that falls outside of the remit of the complaints panel, for example, complaints that do not specifically relate to:

- a) The education of the student concerned.
- b) The welfare of the student concerned.
- c) The safety of the student, or other students.

The complainant would still have the right to complain to the Secretary of State at this stage.

Stage 3 - Complaint heard by Governors Complaints Appeal Panel

- At this stage it is important to emphasise that the Clerk to the Governors will be the contact point for the complainant. He/she will ensure that the complainant will have all the information and support necessary before, during and after the proceedings. The Clerk will acknowledge receipt of the complaint within 5 school working days in writing.
- The panel meeting will aim to convene within 15 school working days of first contact with the Clerk. The Governors Complaints Appeal Panel usually comprises three governors from a pre-selected group of five that includes the Chair of Governors and the Chair of the Personnel Committee. The Governors who will be hearing the appeal should have had no previous involvement with the complaint so that they can be seen to be impartial.
- The meeting will seek to identify areas of agreement between the parties. It will also clarify any misunderstandings that might have occurred. Having established this, a positive atmosphere will be encouraged in which to discuss any outstanding issues.
- The panel hearing is independent and impartial. The hearing takes place in private and consideration is given to create an atmosphere and proceedings that is welcoming and does not inhibit complainants. The aim of the panel is to resolve the complaint and achieve reconciliation between the complainant and the school. The Clerk will record the proceedings.
- Appendix A contains further details of the complaints panel proceedings.
The panel can:
 - Dismiss the complaint in whole or part.
 - Uphold the complaint in whole or part.
 - Decide on the appropriate action to be taken to resolve the complaint.
 - Recommend changes to the school's systems or procedures to ensure that problems of a similar nature do not recur.
- After the Chair of the Panel has approved the record of proceedings it will be sent out simultaneously to all parties who attended the hearing. The complainant may also ask for copies of any contemporaneous notes prepared earlier in the complaint process.
- The chair of the panel will ensure that the complainant is notified of the panel's decision in writing, with the panel's response, within 10 school working days. If, on occasions, the panel need longer following the meeting to gather all information and deliberate before making a decision, the clerk will inform all parties of the delay and expected timescale for the decision.
- The complainant will be notified of the panel's decision on a 'signed for' basis.
- Staff should be reminded about the Complaints Policy on a regular basis and given any necessary feedback following a complaint.
- A regular report including numbers of complaints and brief details should be submitted to the Personnel Sub Committee on a quarterly basis.
- The Complaints Appeals Panel should see the complaint papers before storage to ensure that copies of all documentation are included in case of subsequent DfE involvement or queries.
- Complaints file checked for completeness before storage. This is done by the person responsible for managing the complaint at the point at which it is resolved, i.e. Stage 1 Head or nominated lead officer, Stage 2 Chair of Governors, Stage 3 member of Governors' Complaints Appeal Panel.

Finally, if the complainant is still dissatisfied with the outcome of the complaints procedure they have the right to contact the Secretary of State for Education, Department for Education (Schools Complaints Unit), 2nd Floor, Piccadilly Gate, Store Street, Manchester M12WD.

General Principles

Investigating Complaints

- Establish the facts including who may be involved.
- Ensure the nature of the complaint is clearly understood by all parties and that there is agreement on what needs to be resolved (if anything).
- Establish from the complainant what is required from their point of view to put things right.
- If necessary meet with the complainant to progress any investigation if anything remains unclear.
- Consider meeting with anyone who might be instrumental to progress the above.
- Consider meeting with those complained of, making sure they understand they can be accompanied if they wish.
- Keep objectivity in mind at all times.
- Keep notes on any meetings/interviews.
- Complaints range from the most serious to the most trivial. A measured and appropriate response is crucial to a successful outcome.

Resolving Complaints

At each stage in the procedure we will want to keep in mind ways in which a complaint can be resolved. It might be sufficient to acknowledge that the complaint is valid in whole or in part. In addition, it may be appropriate to offer one or more of the following:

- An apology;
- An explanation;
- An admission that the situation could have been handled differently or better;
- An assurance that the event complained of will not recur;
- An explanation of the steps that have been taken to ensure that it will not happen again;
- An undertaking to review school policies in light of the complaint.

Complainants will be encouraged to state what actions they feel might resolve the problem. An admission that the school could have handled the situation better is not the same as an admission of negligence.

We will try to identify areas of agreement between the parties. We will also try to clarify any misunderstandings that might have occurred as this can create a positive atmosphere in which to discuss any outstanding issues.

A restorative justice/practice meeting may be held which will improve mutual understanding of the issues and enable individuals to work together to reach the best available solution. If available, a suitable leaflet/letter could be issued to all parties beforehand. Following attendance at a restorative justice/practice meeting those involved should be sent a letter thanking them and reminding them that the matter is now closed.

Serial and Persistent Complainants

Schools should do their best to be helpful to people who contact them with a complaint or concern or a request for information. However, in cases where a school is contacted repeatedly by an individual making the same points, or who asks them to reconsider their position, schools will need to act appropriately.

There will be occasions when, despite all stages of the complaint procedure having been followed, the complainant remains dissatisfied. It is important for schools to recognise when they really have done everything they can in response to a complaint. It is a poor use of schools' time and resources to reply to repeated letters, emails or telephone calls making substantially the same points. If a complainant tries to re-open the same issues, the Chair of Governors can inform them that the procedure has been completed and that the matter is now closed.

If the complainant contacts the school again on the same issue, then the correspondence may be viewed as 'serial' or 'persistent' and the school may choose not to respond. However, schools must be careful that they do not mark a complaint as 'serial' before the complainant has completed the procedure. For more information refer to Best Practice Advice for School Complaints Procedures 2016 (Departmental advice for maintained schools, maintained nursery schools and local authorities – January 2016).

Unreasonable Complainants

Heathfield Community School is committed to dealing with complaints fairly and impartially, and to providing a high quality service to those who complain. We will not normally limit the contact complainants have with the school. However, we do not expect our staff to tolerate unacceptable behaviour and will take action to protect staff from that behaviour, including that which is abusive, offensive or threatening.

Heathfield Community School defines unreasonable complainants as *'those who, because of the frequency or nature of their contacts with the school, hinder our consideration of their or other people's complaints.'*

A complaint may be regarded as unreasonable when the person making the complaint :

- Refuses to articulate their complaint or specify the grounds of a complaint or the outcomes sought by raising the complaint, despite offers of assistance;
- Refuses to co-operate with the complaints investigation process while still wishing their complaint to be resolved;
- Refuses to accept that certain issues are not within the scope of a complaints procedure;
- Insists on the complaint being dealt with in ways which are incompatible with the adopted complaints procedure or with good practice;
- Introduces trivial or irrelevant information which the complainant expects to be taken into account and commented on, or raises large numbers of detailed but unimportant questions, and insists they are fully answered, often immediately and to their own timescales;

- Makes unjustified complaints about staff who are trying to deal with the issues, and seeks to have them replaced;
- Changes the basis of the complaint as the investigation proceeds;
- Repeatedly makes the same complaint (despite previous investigations or responses concluding that the complaint is groundless or has been addressed.)
- Refuses to accept the findings of the investigation into that complaint where the school's complaint procedure has been fully and properly implemented and completed including referral to the Department for Education;
- Seeks an unrealistic outcome;
- Makes excessive demands on school time by frequent, lengthy, complicated and stressful contact with staff regarding the complaint in person, in writing, by email and by telephone while the complaint is being dealt with.

A complaint may also be considered unreasonable if the person making the complaint does so either face-to-face, by telephone or in writing or electronically :

- Maliciously;
- Aggressively;
- Using threats, intimidation or violence;
- Using abusive, offensive or discriminatory language;
- Knowing it to be false;
- Using falsified information;
- Publishing unacceptable information in a variety of media such as in social media websites and newspapers.

Complainants should limit the numbers of communications with a school while a complaint is being progressed. It is not helpful if repeated correspondence is sent (either by letter, phone, email or text) as it could delay the outcome being reached.

Whenever possible, the Head teacher or Chair of Governors will discuss any concerns with the complainant informally before applying an 'unreasonable' marking.

If the behaviour continues the Head teacher will write to the complainant explaining that their behaviour is unreasonable and asking them to change it. For complainants who excessively contact Heathfield Community School causing a significant level of disruption, we may specify methods of communication and limit the number of contacts in a communication plan. This will usually be reviewed after 6 months.

In response to any serious incident of aggression or violence, the concerns and actions taken will be put in writing immediately and the police informed. This may include banning an individual from Heathfield Community School.

Time-Limits

Complaints need to be considered, and resolved, as quickly and efficiently as possible. The complainant will be informed about the expected timescales associated with dealing with the complaint. Where further investigations are necessary, the complainant will be sent details of the new deadline and an explanation for the delay. See pages 4, 5 and Appendix B for more information on time limits.

Managing and Recording Complaints

Recording Complaints – We recognise that it is useful for us to record the progress of the complaint and the final outcome. A complaint may be made in person, by telephone, or in writing. At the end of a meeting, or telephone call, the member of staff involved will try to ensure that the complainant and the school have the same understanding of what was discussed and agreed. A brief note of meetings and telephone calls will be kept and a copy of any written response added to the record.

An incident report will be completed to record completion of the appropriate stages and to show action taken.

Governing Body Review

Heathfield Community School is committed to continual improvement.

As well as addressing an individual's complaints, the process of listening to and resolving complaints will contribute to our school improvement. The monitoring and review of complaints by the school and the Governing body is a useful tool in evaluating our school's performance. We will monitor the level and nature of complaints and review the outcomes on a regular basis to ensure the effectiveness of our procedure making changes where necessary. The Complaints Panel will share any lessons learned with SLT via Personnel sub-committee. Complaint information shared with the whole governing body will not name individuals.

Full reports of individual complaints will not be shared.

Publicising the Procedure

There is a legal requirement for the complaints procedure to be publicised. We include details of our procedure:

- On our website
- On request from school office
- In school prospectus

Roles and Responsibilities

The Complainant or person who makes the complaint will receive a more effective response to the complaint if he/she :

- Co-operates with the school in seeking a solution to the complaint;
- Expresses the complaint in full as early as possible;
- Responds promptly to requests for information or meetings or in agreeing the details of the complaint;
- Asks for assistance as needed;
- Treats all those involved in the complaint with respect.

The Complaints Co-ordinator (or Head teacher)

The complaints co-ordinator should :

- Ensure that the complainant is fully updated at each stage of the procedure;
- Ensure that all people involved in the complaint procedure will be aware of the legislation around complaints including the Equality Act 2010, Data Protection Act 1998 and Freedom of Information Act 2000;
- Liaise with staff members, Head teacher, Chair of Governors and Clerk to ensure the smooth running of the complaints procedure;
- Keep records;
- Be aware of issues regarding :
 - Sharing third party information;
 - Additional support – this may be needed by complainants when making a complaint including interpretation support.

The Investigator

The Investigator is the person involved in Stages 1 and 2 of the procedure. The Investigator's role can include :

- Providing a comprehensive, open, transparent and fair consideration of the complaint through;
 - Sensitive and thorough interviewing of the complainant to establish what has happened and who has been involved;
 - Consideration of records and other relevant information;
 - Interviewing staff and children/young people and other people relevant to the complaint.
 - Analysing information;
 - Effectively liaising with the complainant and the complaints co-ordinator as appropriate to clarify what the complainant feels would put things right;
 - Identifying solutions and recommending courses of action to resolve problems;
 - Being mindful of the timescales to respond; and
 - Responding to the complainant in plain and clear language.

The person investigating the complaint should make sure that they :

- Conduct interviews with an open mind and are prepared to persist in the questioning;
- Keep notes of interviews or arrange for an independent note taker to record minutes of the meeting.

The Panel Clerk (this could be Clerk to the Governors or the Complaints Coordinator)

The Clerk is the contact point for the complainant for the panel meeting and is expected to:

- Set the date, time and venue of the hearing, ensuring that the dates are convenient to all parties and that the venue and proceedings are accessible;
- Collate any written material and send it to the parties in advance of the hearing;
- Meet and welcome the parties as they arrive at the hearing;
- Record the proceedings;
- Circulate the minutes of the panel hearing;
- Notify all parties of the panel's decision;
- Liaise with the complaints co-ordinator;
- Remain independent;
- Provide quarterly report in Personnel Sub Committee on the number of complaints and action taken.

The Panel Chair

The Panel Chair has a key role in ensuring that :

- The meeting is minuted;
- The remit of the panel is explained to the complainant and both they and the school have the opportunity of putting their case without undue interruption;
- The issues are addressed;
- Key findings of fact are made;
- Parents/carers and others who may not be used to speaking at such a hearing are put at ease – this is particularly important if the complainant is a child/young person;
- The hearing is conducted in an informal manner with everyone treated with respect and courtesy;
- The layout of the room will set the tone – care is needed to ensure the setting is informal and not adversarial;
- The panel is open-minded and acts independently;
- No member of the panel has an external interest in the outcome of the proceedings or any involvement in an earlier stage of the procedure;

- Both the complainant and the school are given the opportunity to state their case and seek clarity;
- Written material is seen by everyone in attendance – if a new issue arises it would be useful to give everyone the opportunity to consider and comment upon it; this may require a short adjournment of the hearing;
- Liaise with the Clerk and complaints co-ordinator.

Panel Member

Panellists will need to be aware that :

- It is important that the review panel hearing is independent and impartial, and that it is seen to be so;
- No Governor may sit on the panel if they have had a prior involvement in the complaint or in the circumstances surrounding it;
- The aim of the hearing, which will be held in private, will always be to resolve the complaint and achieve reconciliation between the school and the complainant;

However, it must be recognised that the complainant might not be satisfied with the outcome if the hearing does not find in their favour. It may only be possible to establish the facts and make recommendations which will satisfy the complainant that his or her complaint has been taken seriously.

- Many complainants will feel nervous and inhibited in a formal setting;

Parents/carers often feel emotional when discussing an issue that affects their child. The panel chair will ensure that the proceedings are as welcoming as possible.

- Extra care needs to be taken when the complainant is a child/young person and present during all or part of the hearing;

Careful consideration of the atmosphere and proceedings will ensure that the child/young person does not feel intimidated. The panel should respect the views of the child/young person and give them equal consideration to those of adults.

If the child/young person is the complainant, the panel should ask in advance if any support is needed to help them present their complaint. Where the child/young person's parent is the complainant, the panel should give the parent the opportunity to say which parts of the hearing, if any, the child/young person needs to attend.

The parent should be advised however that agreement might not always be possible if the parent wishes the child/young person to attend a part of the meeting which the panel considers not to be in the child/young person's best interests.

- The welfare of the child/young person is paramount.

Governors Complaints Appeal Panel Proceedings

Panel members – points to remember – there are several points which any governor sitting on a complaints panel needs to remember:

- It is important that the appeal hearing is independent and impartial and that it is seen to be so. No governor will sit on the panel if they have had a prior involvement in the complaint or in the circumstances surrounding it. In deciding the make-up of the panel, governors will ensure that it is a cross-section of the categories of governors and sensitive to the issues of race, gender and religious affiliation.
- The aim of the hearing, which will be held in private, will always be to resolve the complaint and achieve reconciliation between the school and the complainant. However, it has to be recognised the complainant might not be satisfied with the outcome if the hearing does not find in their favour. It may well be possible to establish the facts and make recommendations which will satisfy the complainant that his or her complaint has been taken seriously.
- An effective panel will acknowledge that many complainants feel nervous and inhibited in a formal setting. Parents often feel emotional when discussing an issue that affects their child. The panel chair will ensure that the proceedings are as welcoming as possible. The layout of the room will set the tone and care is needed to ensure the setting is informal and not adversarial.
- Extra care will need to be taken when the complainant is a child. Careful consideration of the atmosphere and proceedings will ensure that the child does not feel intimidated. The panel needs to be aware of the views of the child and give them equal consideration to those of adults. Where the child's parent is the complainant, it would be helpful to give the parent the opportunity to say which parts of the hearing, if any, the child needs to attend.
- The governors sitting on the panel need to be aware of the complaints procedure.

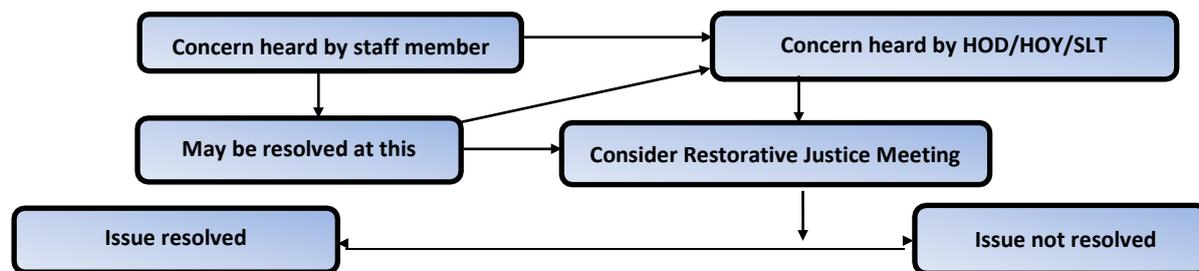
The role of the Chair of the Governors Complaints Appeal Panel is to ensure that:

- There is a check that the correct procedure has, and is, being followed.
- If a hearing is appropriate, that the clerk is notified to arrange the panel.
- The remit of the panel is explained to the parties and each party has the opportunity of putting their case without undue interruption.
- The issues are addressed.
- Key findings of fact are made.
- Parents and others who may not be used to speaking at such a hearing are put at ease.
- The hearing is conducted in an informal manner with each party treating the other with respect and courtesy.
- The panel is open minded and acting independently.

Checklist for the panel hearing

- The hearing is as informal as possible.
- Witnesses are only required to attend for the part of the hearing in which they give their evidence.
- If the hearing is to meet with the parties individually:
 - The panel will meet with the complainant and any witnesses they have. After being interviewed they will then leave.
 - The panel will then meet with Head and any witnesses to hear the school's response to the complaint.
 - After each meeting the chair will explain the time scales as to when all parties will hear from the panel.
 - The panel decides on the issues.
- The Panel reports to the full Governing Body after the complaint has been dealt with. (This is because the Appeal Panel may comprise governors who are not part of the Personnel Sub Committee.) The Panel will report their findings and recommendations to the full Governing Body at the earliest opportunity. This is the (final) stage of the process where any shortcomings can be rectified and action taken to try to avoid recurrences.
- If the hearing is to meet with all parties concerned at the same time:
 - After introductions, the complainant is invited to explain their complaint, and be followed by their witnesses.
 - The Head may question both the complainant and the witnesses after each has spoken.
 - The Head is then invited to explain the school's actions and be followed by the school's witnesses.
 - The complainant may question both the Head and the witnesses after each has spoken.
 - The panel may ask questions at any point.
 - The complainant is then invited to sum up their complaint.
 - The Head is then invited to sum up the school's actions and response to the complaint.
 - The chair of the panel will explain the time scales as to when all parties will receive notification of their decision.
 - All parties leave together while the panel decides on the issues.

Summary of Dealing with Concerns and Formal Complaints



Formal complaints procedure begins - Stage 1: Complaint heard by Head

- Acknowledge receipt of complaint (within 5 days of initial receipt).
- Complete incident report.
- Write up contemporaneous notes and get witness statements.
- Probable meeting (within 10 days of initial receipt).
- Write to complainant on a 'signed for' basis if possible, with outcome of investigation (within 20 school working days of initial receipt).



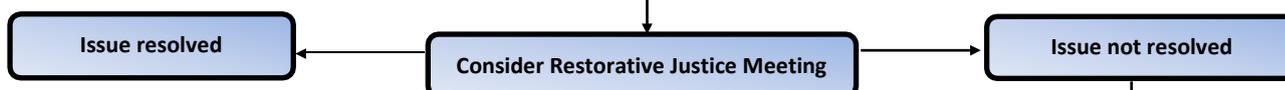
Stage 2: Complaint heard by Chair of Governors

- Acknowledge receipt of complaint (within 5 days)
- Write up contemporaneous notes and get witness statements as appropriate as part of investigation.
- Write to complainant on a 'signed for' basis with outcome outcome of investigation (within 15 school working days or as soon as possible).



Stage 3: Governors Complaints Appeal Panel meeting arranged

- Issue letter inviting complainant to meeting : consider 'signed for' delivery.
- Panel convened (within 15 school working days).
- A copy of the record of proceedings to be sent to all parties as soon as possible.
- Issue letter confirming panel decision (within 10 school working days) on a 'signed for' basis.



Restorative Justice Meeting

- Arrange the Restorative Justice meeting.
- After the Restorative Justice meeting send a letter of thanks to all parties, explain what was agreed and that the matter is now closed unless the complainant wishes to proceed to the next stage of the complaints process.

Complainant has the right to contact the Secretary of State via the Department for Education - Schools Complaints Unit.

HEATHFIELD COMMUNITY SCHOOL**FORMAL COMPLAINT FORM**

If a formal complaint, please complete and return to Head who will acknowledge receipt and explain what action will be taken. Please note that in the absence of the Head a nominated lead officer (senior staff member) will deal with the complaint.

Your name:	
Student's name:	
Your relationship to the student:	
Address:	
Postcode:	
Day time telephone number:	
Evening telephone number:	
Please give details of your complaint:	
What action, if any, have you already taken to try and resolve your complaint. (Who did you speak to and what was the response?)	

What actions do you consider might resolve the problem at this stage?

Please attach/outline supporting evidence and/or documents.

Signature:

Date:

Official use:

Date acknowledgement sent:

By whom:

Complaint referred to:

Date:

INCIDENT REPORT

Check List / Incident Form to supplement Appendix B (see appropriate flow chart for timescale)

Name of student : _____ Tutor Group : _____ Date complaint received : _____

Complainant's Name : _____ Relationship to student : _____

Complaint handled by : _____ Position in school : _____

<p>Brief details of complaint</p>	
<p>Details of any Witnesses (witnesses should be obtained from both points of view)</p>	
<p>Brief details of what witnesses said</p>	

	Checklist	Yes	No	Date	Comments
1	Has the complaint been recorded on the log sheet? (Held by Head's P.A.)				
2	Has a file been started? (Held by Head's P.A.)				
3	Has the complaint been acknowledged? (Ensure the date is logged here)				
4	Have you obtained witness statements?				
5	Have contemporaneous notes been prepared?				
6	Has a Restorative Justice/Practice meeting been considered?				

Meeting date(s) and list of those present :		
Date	Purpose	Present

Was the complaint resolved? Yes No Date : _____

Checklist :

- Complaints file checked for completeness before storage. This is done by the person responsible for managing the complaint at the point at which it is resolved, i.e. Stage 1 Head or nominated Lead Officer, Stage 2 Chair of Governors, Stage 3 member of Governors Appeal Panel.
- Staff briefed/reminded about complaint process and given feedback.
- Quarterly report given to Personnel Sub Committee – number of complaint forms/incident reports completed, action taken etc.