

Growing Together Federation

Complaints & Resolutions Policy

Bowerdean Nursery School | Henry Allen Nursery School | Mapledean Nursery School

1. Aims

Our school aims to meet its statutory obligations when responding to complaints from parents of pupils and others. We aim to be impartial, non-adversarial, and to provide prompt, lawful and fair responses. Complaints will be used to support school improvement and always handled with respect and confidentiality. The interests of the child will be paramount.

Most complaints can be quickly resolved by talking to the teacher or member of staff concerned. To do this, contact the school to arrange a time to meet the person concerned and discuss the problem. If the matter cannot be resolved directly, take it up with the Headteacher by arranging an appointment. It is helpful to put concerns in so the matter can be investigated in advance. In a very small number of cases, the matter may not be resolved even with the involvement of the Headteacher. In this instance, the complaint must be made in writing to the Chair of Governors. It is important that the official stages outlined in paragraph 6 'Stages of Complaint' are followed in order for any complaint to be investigated.

2. Legislation and Guidance

This policy is based on Section 29 of the Education Act 2002, DfE guidance on school complaints procedures, and the EYFS statutory framework.

3. Definitions and Scope

- Concern: an expression of worry or doubt for which reassurance is sought
- Complaint: an expression of dissatisfaction about action taken or lack of action

This policy does not cover admissions, SEN assessments, safeguarding, exclusions, whistleblowing, staff grievances or disciplinary matters.

4. Roles and Responsibilities

- Complainants should cooperate, communicate respectfully **and not publicise complaints on social media**
- Investigators gather evidence and prepare factual reports
- Complaints co-ordinator manages communication and records
- Clerk and governors arrange hearings and ensure fairness

5. Principles for Investigation

Investigations will establish what happened, who was involved and what resolution is sought. Complaints should normally be raised within three months of the incident. When complaints are made out of term time, we will consider them to have been received on the first day after the holiday period.

6. Stages of Complaint

Stage 1 – Informal: Concerns raised with staff or Co-Headteacher. Response within 5 school days.

Stage 2 – Formal: Written complaint investigated and outcome issued within 15 school days.

Stage 3 – Review Panel: Independent governor panel reviews unresolved complaints.

7. Complaints Against the Headteacher or Governors

Such complaints are handled by suitably skilled, impartial governors or independent investigators.

8. Referring Complaints

Complainants may refer matters to the Department for Education if dissatisfied after completing the school procedure. All complainants are expected to have followed the stages of the school's complaints procedure before contacting the DfE or Ofsted. For more information about how to refer a complaint, see the following webpage:

<https://www.gov.uk/complain-about-school>

9. Persistent Complaints

The Federation may manage unreasonable or vexatious complaints through proportionate communication strategies while considering any new legitimate issues.

10. Record Keeping

All complaints are logged securely in line with data protection requirements and retention schedules.

11. Learning Lessons

The governing board will review complaints to identify improvements to policy, systems and practice.

12. Monitoring Arrangements

This policy is reviewed annually by the governing board.

13. Links with Other Policies

- Safeguarding and Child Protection
- Admissions
- Behaviour
- Staff Grievance and Disciplinary
- SEN Policy
- Privacy notices