

STOKE NEWINGTON SCHOOL COMPLAINTS POLICY

This policy is not for use in dealing with staff complaints against another member of staff, which will usually be dealt with using the school Grievance or Harassment and Bullying procedures.

Procedures for dealing with complaints

At Stoke Newington School and Sixth Form, we undertake to provide a friendly and safe environment in which pupils will be helped to achieve their potential, both academically and socially.

We believe that a close partnership between the school, parents and pupils is essential to ensure pupil progress and well-being. In support of this, parents are invited to enter a Home-School Agreement. This agreement sets out the school's aims and values, as well as the responsibilities of the school and parents, and our expectations of pupils.

Through our programme of meetings between parents and teachers, as well as through informal contact, we provide opportunities for parents to raise matters of concern - about the curriculum or more general issues. If a complaint is not resolved through discussion with a teacher or Form tutor (Stage 1), the parent or the teacher can refer it to the Head of Department or Head of Year (Stage 2). A meeting will then be held between the Complainant and the Head of Department or Head of Year (Stage 3). If the complaint is resolved, no further action will be taken. If it cannot be resolved, it will be escalated to the Head Teacher (Stage 4). A meeting with the parent or other complainant will then be offered, as far as possible at a mutually convenient time (Stage 5). At that meeting, and through discussion, an acceptable outcome to the satisfaction of all parties involved will be sought. If resolution is not achieved, the complaint will move to Stage 6, a Hearing with a Committee called by the Chair of Governors.

The Chair of Governors will ask for the complaint to be put in writing. It is helpful if the complainant can set out their concerns in detail, but this is not essential. The Chair of Governors will convene a Hearing to consider the complaint. As far as possible at a time convenient to all parties, within 15 school days. The complainant, the Head Teacher and any member of staff about whom there are complaints will be invited to the meeting. Any person invited can bring a friend or supporter if they wish.

If the complaint is complex, the Chair of Governors can appoint an investigating officer, who will usually be a member of the Leadership Team, to gather evidence and conduct preliminary interviews.

The Complaints committee will consider any written material, and also give the person making the complaint and the Head teacher and staff an opportunity to state their case and to question the other side. The committee will ensure that all present are treated fairly.

The committee will give a decision as soon as possible after the hearing, and will confirm it in writing, along with the reasons for their decision. The letter will also explain the right of appeal to the Learning Trust if the complaint is not accepted.

Paperwork relating to complaints will not be held on personnel files, but will be retained for a period of at least one year. In some circumstances the complaint may result in school action under separate procedures, the results of which may be held on a personnel file, however.

**Approved: December 2016
Renewal date: December 2019**

COMPLAINTS POLICY - FLOWCHART OF STAGES

