



School Complaints Policy

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| Headteacher | Zehra Jaffer |
| Chair of Governors | Ndidi Edozie-Ansah |
| Policy Author | Linda Perkola, School Business Director |
| Statutory Policy | Yes |
| Review Cycle | 2 Years |
| Last Review | May 2025 |
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| Date of Review | Section/Subheading | Details of changes |
|----------------|--------------------|---|
| May 2025 | 1.10 | All complaints should be submitted within 3 months of the date of the incidents |
| | 2.5 | Being in scope |
| | 4.6 | Attempting to resolve at informal stage |
| | 5.4.1 | New issues being raised |
| | 5.6.1 | Evidence |
| | 6.1.1 & 6.1.2 | Escalation |
| | 6.12.1 & 6.12.2 | Legal representation |



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1. Introduction and Overview

- 1.1. Governing bodies are required by law to have a procedure in place to deal with complaints relating to a school or the provision of community facilities or services at the school. The law requires that this procedure must be publicised. This policy sets out the procedure followed by Stoke Newington School.
- 1.2. The vast majority of complaints and concerns can be resolved informally. We take all concerns seriously and will make every effort to resolve them as quickly as possible.
- 1.3. A complaint can be brought by a parent of a registered child at the School, a person who has been provided with a service or a facility at the School or any third party who may have cause to complain about the School. This procedure refers to this person as a complainant. Some complaints are dealt with under separate statutory procedures (such as appeals relating to exclusions or admissions) rather than this procedure.
- 1.4. A concern or unresolved problem will be treated as a complaint only when the complainant asserts that the School has acted wrongly in some significant decision, action or failure to take action.
- 1.5. Even when a complaint has been made it can be resolved or withdrawn at any stage.
- 1.6. Our school has a **nominated complaints lead** of staff with responsibility for the operation and management of the school complaints procedure. This senior member of staff is Ms Linda Perkola, School Business Director. They can be contacted by email using admin@sns.hackney.sch.uk. If the complaint is specifically against the Headteacher, this is to be addressed to the Chair of Governors at chairofgovernors@sns.hackney.sch.uk, marking your correspondence as confidential.
- 1.7. **Anonymous complaints** will not normally be investigated. The Headteacher or Chair of Governors may, however, determine if the complaint warrants investigation.
- 1.8. Unless exceptional circumstances can be shown, the complaint must be raised within three months of the incident or, where a series of associated incidents have occurred, within three months of the last of these incidents.
- 1.9. Complainants should not approach individual governors to raise concerns or complaints. They have no power to act on an individual basis and it may also prevent them from considering complaints at Stage 2 of the procedure.
- 1.10. All complaints should be submitted within 3 months of the date of the incidents. Complaints outside this deadline may be considered if accompanied by appropriate justification for the delay.

2. Scope of this Complaints Procedure

- 2.1. This procedure covers all complaints about any provision of community facilities or services by Stoke Newington School and Sixth Form, other than complaints that are dealt with under other statutory procedures, including those listed below.

| Exceptions | Who to contact |
|---|---|
| Admissions to schools Statutory assessments of Special Educational Needs School re-organisation proposals | Concerns about admissions, statutory assessments of Special Educational Needs, or school re-organisation proposals should be raised with Hackney Council: https://hackney.gov.uk/complaints |



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|---|---|
| Matters likely to require a Child Protection Investigation | Complaints about child protection matters are handled under our child protection and safeguarding policy and in accordance with relevant statutory guidance. If you have serious concerns, you may wish to contact the local authority designated officer (LADO) who has local responsibility for safeguarding or the Multi-Agency Safeguarding Hub (MASH). E-mail: MASH@hackney.gov.uk Telephone: 020 8356 5500 Website: https://hackney.gov.uk/child-protection |
| Exclusion of a child from school | Further information about raising concerns about an exclusion can be found at: www.gov.uk/school-discipline-exclusions/exclusions https://www.hackneylocaloffer.co.uk/kb5/hackney/localoffer/advice.page?id=ZrQOrRdcL-U https://www.ipsea.org.uk/exclusion-from-schools-statute-law-regulations-and-guidance <i>Note that complaints about the application of the behaviour policy can be made through the school's complaints procedure.</i> |
| Whistleblowing | We have an internal whistleblowing procedure for all our employees, including temporary staff and contractors. The Secretary of State for Education is the prescribed person for matters relating to education for whistleblowers in education who do not want to raise matters direct with their employer. Referrals can be made at: www.education.gov.uk/contactus . |
| Staff grievances | Complaints from staff will be dealt with under the school's internal grievance procedures. Volunteer staff who have concerns about our school should complain through the school's complaints procedure. You may also be able to complain direct to the local authority (LA) or the Department for Education (www.education.gov.uk/contactus), depending on the substance of your complaint. |
| Staff conduct | Complaints about staff will be dealt with under the school's internal disciplinary procedures, if appropriate. Complainants will not be informed of any disciplinary action taken against a staff member as a result of a complaint. However, the complainant will be notified that the matter is being addressed. |
| Complaints about services provided by other providers who may use school premises or facilities | Providers should have their own complaints procedure to deal with complaints about service. Please contact them directly. |
| National Curriculum - content | Please contact the Department for Education at: www.education.gov.uk/contactus |

2.2. If other bodies are investigating aspects of the complaint, for example the police, local authority (LA) safeguarding teams or Tribunals, this may impact on our ability to adhere to the timescales within this procedure or result in the procedure being suspended until those public bodies have completed their investigations.

2.3. Any complaint or other notice that suggests that a child has been at risk of significant harm through violence, emotional abuse, sexual interference or neglect may be referred without further notice to Children's Social Care and/or to the social services authority for the area in which the child lives.



- 2.4. If a social services authority decides to investigate a situation, this may postpone or supersede investigation by the Headteacher or Governing Body.
- 2.5. Complaints outside the scope of the complaints procedure will not be processed according to this policy. The matters raised will be redirected to other processes as appropriate and the complainant will be notified according and advised of next steps.

3. Other Solutions to Complaints

- 3.1. Where a matter can be resolved through a legal appeal it will not be considered as a formal complaint. The key areas that are the subject of legal appeals are admissions decisions, certain decisions relating to statutory assessment of special educational needs and decisions to permanently exclude a child.
- 3.2. In addition, school reorganisation proposals, child protection investigations, whistleblowing, staff grievance & disciplinary issues and complaints provided by other providers who may use school premises or facilities fall outside the scope of this procedure. In the majority of cases, these issues are covered by separate policies.

4. Dealing with concerns informally

- 4.1. The complainant will be given an opportunity to discuss their concern with an appropriate member of staff. This may require an appointment to be made. This person may be the nominated complaints lead or another senior school leader.
- 4.2. The complainant will be able to bring a friend to any discussion. The friend is there to support the individual, but would not normally be present to advocate for them.
- 4.3. At the end of the meeting, the member of staff dealing with the concern will make sure that the complainant is clear what action (if any) or monitoring of the situation has been agreed.
- 4.4. This stage should be completed speedily and concluded in writing with appropriate detail.
- 4.5. Where no satisfactory solution has been found, the complainant will be informed that s/he will need to consider whether s/he would like to make a formal complaint to the Headteacher. A formal complaint can be made in person, in writing or by telephone. To assist in this process a complaint form is provided (see Appendix A of this policy). If help is required to complete this form, please contact the school office.
- 4.6. Complainants should demonstrate they have made reasonable efforts attempting to resolve the complaint informally first.

5. Stage 1 – Referral to the Headteacher for investigation

- 5.1. The Headteacher/nominated complaints lead will acknowledge the formal complaint in writing within 3 school days of receipt of the complaint.
- 5.2. We will consider complaints made during the school holidays to have been received on the first school day after the holiday period.
- 5.3. Whilst the Headteacher may delegate investigation of the complaint to the nominated complaints lead or another member of the school's senior leadership team, they will still be responsible for the decision regarding the outcome of the investigation.
- 5.4. The Headteacher (or delegated investigator) may choose to meet with the complainant to supplement any information previously provided.
- 5.4.1. A complainant should not introduce new issues at stage 1 which were not raised at the informal



stage, or at stage 2 which they were not raised at previous stages without good grounds. New issues may be referred to the informal stage or stage 1 as appropriate, in the interest of fairness.

5.5. If the complaint is against a member of staff, the Headteacher (or delegated investigator) will talk to the staff member against whom the complaint has been made.

5.6. Where necessary, the Headteacher (or delegated investigator) will interview witnesses and take statements from those involved.

5.6.1. It is the responsibility of the complainant to provide evidence as requested by the school in order to aid the investigation of the complaint.

5.7. The Headteacher (or delegated investigator) should keep reasonable written records of meetings, telephone conversations and other documentation informing their investigation.

5.8. Once all the relevant facts have been established, the Headteacher (or delegated investigator) will produce a written response to the complainant. This will be agreed by the Headteacher who may wish to meet the complainant to discuss/resolve the matter before confirming the outcome in writing.

5.9. The written response will include a full explanation of the decision and the reasons for it. Where appropriate, it should include what action the school will take to resolve the complaint.

5.10. Stage 1 should be completed in 15 school days. However, it is recognised that where the case is complex, it may prove difficult to meet this timetable. In such cases, the Headteacher/nominated complaints lead should write to the complainant giving a revised target date.

5.11. Our school does not pay financial compensation as a response to complaints, although we may agree expenses for a relevant educational purpose (e.g. paying a fee for a repeat examination).

5.12. The formal Stage 1 response will also advise the complainant that if s/he is not satisfied with the response and wishes to take the matter further, s/he should write to the Chair of the Governing Body (save where the complaint relates to the Chair of Governors, individual governors or the whole governing body in which case the complaint should be addressed to the Clerk to the Governing Body), within 15 school days of receiving the outcome letter. The outcome letter will set out the name of the Chair of the Governing Body and the Clerk to the Governing Body and the address to which the complainant can send the letter.

6. Stage 2 – Consideration by the Governing Body

6.1. If the complainant decides to take the matter further, the Clerk / Chair of the Governing Body will write to the complainant to acknowledge the complaint within 3 school days of receipt of the complaint. A copy of the acknowledgement and the complaints form should be sent to the Headteacher and the Clerk to the Governing Body.

6.1.1. If the issue(s) raised in a complaint are found justified in full and requested remedies agreed at stage 1, it will be necessary for the complainant to offer a clear explanation of reasons for requesting an escalation to stage 2.

6.1.2. If, at Stage 2, the Headteacher's response finds the complaint fully justified and agrees to all requested remedies, the complainant will have to provide a clear and appropriate justification for wishing to escalate to a panel of governors, identifying which aspects they remain dissatisfied with, and the remedies sought. If the complainant is satisfied with the Headteacher's response, they will



have to confirm this in writing and the complaint will be closed. The Chair of the Governors will be informed of the outcome of the complaint.

6.2. Complaints against the Headteacher - If the complaint is wholly or mainly about the Headteacher, the complaint should be addressed to the Chair of Governors and the complainant is not required to make a Stage 1 complaint. Please mark your correspondence as confidential and send this to chairofgovernors@sns.hackney.sch.uk. In this instance, the Governing Body will consider the complaint in accordance with Stage 2 of the procedure. Before Stage 2 is instigated, the Chair of the Governing Body will invite the Headteacher to respond to the complaint in writing within 10 school days. The Chair will send a copy of the Headteacher's response to the complainant who will be asked to indicate within 5 school days of receipt of the response whether s/he is satisfied with the response. If the complainant is not satisfied with the response, Stage 2 should commence.

6.3. Where the complaint against the Headteacher is referred to Stage 2, the Chair of the Governing Body must decide how the complaint should be investigated. Where the facts of the complaint are clearly established, it is unlikely for the Chair of the Governing Body to order an investigation.

6.4. Complaints about the Chair of Governors, individual governors or the whole governing body should be addressed to the Clerk to the Governing Body at madalina.brockmann@hackney.gov.uk. These should be marked as private and confidential. Complaints will be considered in accordance with Stage 2 of the procedure. In these circumstances the complainant will not be required to make a Stage 1 complaint. In this instance the Complaints Appeal Panel will be made up of independent panel members who may be drawn from another school's Governing Body & / or from the Local Authority.

6.5. Investigating the complaint – If the complaint has been investigated at Stage 1, the result of the investigation must be made available to the Clerk / Chair by the Headteacher. Where the facts of the complaint are clearly established, it is unlikely for the Chair of the Governing Body to order a further investigation. The matter may instead be escalated directly to the Complaints Appeal Panel.

6.6. A Complaints Appeal Panel (CAP) drawing on three governors with no prior, direct involvement with the complaint will be established to hear the complaint at stage 2. In deciding the make-up of the CAP, where possible the Governing Body will try and ensure that it is a cross-section of the categories of governor and sensitive to the issues of race, gender and religious affiliation. The members of the CAP should not have had any previous involvement with the complaint. Where all (or a majority of governors) are aware of the substance of a complaint before the final stage has been completed, the Governing Body should arrange for the panel hearing the complaint to be made up of individuals who have had no previous involvement with the matter, which may require independent panel members to join the CAP. In this case, independent panel members may be drawn from another school's Governing Body or from the Local Authority. The CAP will agree a single member to act as panel chair.

6.7. The Headteacher cannot serve on the CAP. If the Chair of the Governing Body has had any prior involvement in the complaint, then the Chair will not sit on the CAP either.

6.8. The CAP will consider the complaint both on the basis of the written evidence and oral evidence through a hearing to which all parties will be invited. The CAP will reconsider the issues raised in the original complaint and not confine themselves to consideration of procedural issues.

6.9. The Clerk/Chair of the CAP will confirm the date of the meeting with the other governor(s). We will try to ensure this is arranged within 15 schools days of receipt of the Stage 2 complaint request. Where this is not possible, the Clerk / Chair of the CAP will provide an anticipated date and keep the complainant informed.



6.10. At the same time, the clerk / Chair of the CAP will write to the complainant and Headteacher confirming the CAP meeting date, time and venue. The letter will also ask that any further written material to be submitted is done so by a specific date, which must be at least six school days prior to the hearing.

6.11. If the complainant rejects the offer of two proposed dates, without good reason, the Clerk / Chair of the CAP will decide when to hold the meeting and it may proceed in the complainant's absence.

6.12. The complainant may wish to be accompanied to the meeting by a friend/representative. We generally do not encourage either party to bring legal representatives.

6.12.1. In the event that a complaint progresses to a CAP, we recommend that neither the complainant nor the school bring legal representation. These panels are not a form of legal proceedings. The aim of the CAP is reconciliation and to put things right that may have gone wrong.

6.12.2. If a complainant commences legal action against the school in relation to their complaint, the school will consider whether to suspend the complaints procedure, until those legal proceedings have concluded.

6.13. The Headteacher will also be invited to prepare a written report for the CAP in response to the complaint. It must be submitted at least six school days prior to the hearing and include relevant school policies.

6.14. All relevant correspondence and any regarding the complaint will be circulated to the CAP, the complainant and the Headteacher at least 5 school days in advance of the meeting. In exceptional circumstances, this timeframe may be less.

6.15. If the Headteacher and/or the complainant wish to call witnesses, the agreement of the Chair of the CAP should be obtained in advance of the meeting.

6.16. It is the responsibility of the Chair of the CAP to ensure that the meeting is properly conducted. However, the proceedings should be as informal as possible.

6.17. The aim of the meeting is to resolve the complaint and achieve reconciliation between the school and the complainant. However, at the end of the meeting, the CAP will decide to either uphold the complaint in whole or in part, or to dismiss the complaint in whole or in part.

6.18. If either party wishes to introduce previously undisclosed evidence or witnesses, in the interest of natural justice, the Chair of the CAP may choose to adjourn the meeting so that the other side has time to respond to the new evidence. Late evidence of witnesses should not be accepted unless there are exceptional circumstances that justify the lateness.

6.19. The meeting will allow for:

- The complainant to explain his or her complaint and the Headteacher to explain the reasons for his or her decision;
- The Headteacher to question the complainant about the complaint and the complainant to question the Headteacher;
- The CAP to have an opportunity to question both the complainant and the Headteacher;
- Any party to have the right to bring witnesses (subject to the approval of the Chair of CAP) and all parties having the right to question all the witnesses; and
- A final statement by the Headteacher and complainant.

- 6.20. At the end of the meeting, the complainant, Headteacher and any witnesses will be asked to leave, and the CAP will consider the complaint and all the evidence presented. Where the complaint is upheld (in whole or in part), the CAP will decide on action required to resolve the complaint and/or suggest recommended changes to the school's system or procedures to ensure that problems of a similar nature do not happen again.
- 6.21. Within 5 school days of the meeting, the Clerk/Chair of CAP will send a written statement outlining the decision with reasons to both the complainant and the Headteacher. It will also set out how to contact the Department for Education if they are dissatisfied with the way their complaint has been handled.
- 6.22. Stage 2 should be completed in 20 school days. However, it is recognised that this timetable may prove challenging where complaints are complex or where there are difficulties agreeing a mutually convenient CAP hearing date. In such cases, the CAP chair should write to the complainant and Headteacher giving a revised target date.

6.23. **Timeline for Stage 2 Process**

| Time | Action | Reference Paragraph |
|--|---|---------------------|
| Day 1 | Complaint received by relevant person | 6.1 |
| Within 15 school days of Day 1(where possible) | Date of Complaints Hearing Scheduled | 6.9 |
| By six school days before the date of the complaints hearing | Any additional written evidence that the complainant wishes to submit must be received. Headteacher's report must be received. | 6.10, 6.13 |
| Five school days before the date of hearing | All relevant parties (the Complainant, the Panel and the Headteacher) sent the relevant paperwork. | 6.14 |
| Within five school days after the complaint's hearing | The panel will send its decision letter to all relevant parties | 6.21 |

7. Role of the Secretary of State, Department for Education

- 7.1. If the complainant believes the School did not handle their complaint in accordance with the published complaints procedure or they acted unlawfully or unreasonably in the exercise of their duties under education law, they can contact the Department for Education after the completion of Stage 2.
- 7.2. The Department for Education, however, will not normally reinvestigate the substance of complaints or overturn any decisions made by the School. They will consider whether the School has adhered to education legislation and any statutory policies connected with the complaint.
- 7.3. The complainant can refer their complaint to the Department for Education online at: www.education.gov.uk/contactus, by telephone on: 0370 000 2288 or by writing to:
 Department for Education
 Piccadilly Gate
 Store Street
 Manchester M1 2WD



8. Managing Serial and Unreasonable Complaints

- 8.1. There will be occasions when despite all stages of the procedure having been followed, the complainant remains dissatisfied. If the complainant tries to reopen the same issue, the Chair of the Governing Body can inform the complainant in writing that the procedure has been exhausted and that the matter is now closed.
- 8.2. The School is committed to dealing with all 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 our 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.
- 8.3. The School defines unreasonable behaviour as that which hinders our consideration of complaints because of the frequency or nature of the complainant's contact with the school, such as, if the complainant:
- 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
 - Refuses to accept that certain issues are not within the scope of the complaints procedure
 - Insists on the complaint being dealt with in ways which are incompatible with the complaints procedure or with good practice
 - Introduces trivial or irrelevant information which they expect to be taken into account and commented on
 - 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 and complicated contact with staff regarding the complaint in person, in writing, by email and by telephone while the complaint is being dealt with
 - Uses threats to intimidate
 - Uses abusive, offensive or discriminatory language or violence
 - Knowingly provides falsified information
 - Publishes unacceptable information on social media or other public forums.
- 8.4. Complainants should try to limit their communication with the school that relates to their complaint, while the 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.
- 8.5. Whenever possible, the Headteacher or Chair of Governors will discuss any concerns with the complainant informally before applying an 'unreasonable' marking.
- 8.6. If the behaviour continues, the Headteacher will write to the complainant explaining that their behaviour is unreasonable and ask them to change it. For complainants who excessively contact the

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 be reviewed after six months.

- 8.7. In response to any serious incident of aggression or violence, we will immediately inform the police and communicate our actions in writing. This may include barring an individual from the School.

9. Roles and Responsibilities

9.1. Complainant

The complainant will receive a more effective response to the complaint if they:

- Explain the complaint in full as early as possible
- Co-operate with the school in seeking a solution to the complaint
- Respond promptly to requests for information or meetings or in agreeing the details of the complaint
- Ask for assistance as needed
- Treat all those involved in the complaint with respect
- Refrain from publicising the details of their complaint on social media and respect confidentiality.

9.2. Investigator

The investigator's role is to establish the facts relevant to the complaint by:

- 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
- Interviewing staff and children/young people and other people relevant to the complaint
- Consideration of records and other relevant information
- Analysing information
- Liaising with the complainant and the complaints co-ordinator as appropriate to clarify what the complainant feels would put things right.

The investigator should:

- Conduct interviews with an open mind and be prepared to persist in the questioning
- Keep notes of interviews or arrange for an independent note taker to record minutes of the meeting
- Ensure that any papers produced during the investigation are kept securely pending any appeal
- Be mindful of the timescales to respond
- Prepare a comprehensive report for the Headteacher or complaints committee that sets out the facts, identifies solutions and recommends courses of action to resolve problems.
- The Headteacher or complaints committee will then determine whether to uphold or dismiss the complaint and communicate that decision to the complainant, providing the appropriate escalation details.

9.3. Complaints Co-ordinator

(This could be the Headteacher/nominated leads officer)

The complaints co-ordinator should:

- Ensure that the complainant is fully updated at each stage of the procedure
- Liaise with staff members, Headteacher, Chair of Governors, Clerk and LAs (if appropriate) to ensure the smooth running of the complaints procedure
- Be aware of issues regarding:
- sharing third party information
- additional support. This may be needed by complainants when making a complaint including interpretation support or where the complainant is a child or young person
- Keep records.



9.4. Clerk to the Governing Body

The Clerk is the contact point for the complainant and the committee and should:

- Ensure that all people involved in the complaint procedure are aware of their legal rights and duties, including any under legislation relating to school complaints, education law, the Equality Act 2010, the Freedom of Information Act 2000, the Data Protection Act (DPA) 2018 and the General Data Protection Regulations (GDPR)
- Set the date, time and venue of the meeting, ensuring that the dates are convenient to all parties (if they are invited to attend) and that the venue and proceedings are accessible
- Collate any written material relevant to the complaint (for example; stage 1 paperwork, school and complainant submissions) and send it to the parties in advance of the meeting within an agreed timescale
- Record the proceedings
- Circulate the minutes of the meeting
- Notify all parties of the committee's decision.

9.5. Committee Chair

The committee's chair, who is nominated in advance of the complaint meeting, should ensure that:

- Both parties are asked (via the Clerk) to provide any additional information relating to the complaint by a specified date in advance of the meeting
- The meeting is conducted in an informal manner, is not adversarial, and that, if all parties are invited to attend, everyone is treated with respect and courtesy
- Complainants who may not be used to speaking at such a meeting are put at ease. This is particularly important if the complainant is a child/young person
- The remit of the committee is explained to the complainant
- Written material is seen by everyone in attendance, provided it does not breach confidentiality or any individual's rights to privacy under the DPA 2018 or GDPR.
- 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 meeting
- Both the complainant and the school are given the opportunity to make their case and seek clarity, either through written submissions ahead of the meeting or verbally in the meeting itself
- The issues are addressed
- Key findings of fact are made
- The committee is open-minded and acts independently
- No member of the committee has an external interest in the outcome of the proceedings or any involvement in an earlier stage of the procedure
- The meeting is minuted
- They liaise with the Clerk (and complaints co-ordinator, if the school has one)..

9.6. Committee Member

Committee members should be aware that:

- The meeting must be independent and impartial, and should be seen to be so
- No governor may sit on the committee if they have had a prior involvement in the complaint or in the circumstances surrounding it.
- The aim of the meeting should be to resolve the complaint and achieve reconciliation between the school and the complainant
- We recognise that the complainant might not be satisfied with the outcome if the meeting does not find in their favour. It may only be possible to establish the facts and make recommendations.
- Many complainants will feel nervous and inhibited in a formal setting
- Parents/carers often feel emotional when discussing an issue that affects their child.
- extra care needs to be taken when the complainant is a child/young person and present during all or part of the meeting



- Careful consideration of the atmosphere and proceedings should ensure that the child/young person does not feel intimidated.
- The committee 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 committee 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 committee should give the parent the opportunity to say which parts of the meeting, if any, the child/young person needs to attend.
- However, the parent should be advised that agreement might not always be possible if the parent wishes the child/young person to attend a part of the meeting that the committee considers is not in the child/young person's best interests.
- The welfare of the child/young person is paramount.



10. Appendix A - School Complaint Form for Stage 1 complaints

If you have tried unsuccessfully to resolve your complaint and wish to take the matter further, please complete this form and send it to the Headteacher. {If your complaint is against the Headteacher you will need to send the form to the Chair of the Governing Body}

Your Name: _____

Address: _____

Post Code: _____

Telephone Number (Day): _____

Telephone Number (Evening): _____

Name of Child: _____

Date of Birth of Child: _____ **Relationship to Child:** _____

What is your complaint about?

Continue on a separate sheet as necessary

Have you discussed your concern/complaint with anyone in the school? If yes, who did you talk to and when? What was the result of this discussion?



Continue on a separate sheet as necessary

What would you like to happen as a result of your complaint?

Continue on a separate sheet as necessary

Have you attached any supporting information? If yes, what is this?

Continue on a separate sheet as necessary

Signed: _____

Date: _____

| Office Use only: | |
|--------------------------|--------------------|
| Date complaint received: | How received: |
| Acknowledged by: | Date acknowledged: |
| Complaint referred to: | Date referred: |