



Beulah Junior School

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Complaints Policy

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Introduction

This document sets out the school's procedure for addressing complaints. It should be used only when informal attempts to resolve problems have been unsuccessful. If you have any concerns about the school or the education provided, please discuss the matter with your child's class teacher at the earliest opportunity. The school considers any concerns very seriously and most problems can be resolved at this stage.

Please note that this procedure does not apply to issues concerning the curriculum, collective worship, admissions, exclusion appeals, decisions about your child's special educational needs or grievances by school staff. These are the subject of separate complaints procedures. Copies of these procedures can be obtained from the school.

All other complaints are handled by the school according to the arrangements set out below.

Aims and Objectives

The school will give careful consideration to all complaints and deal with them fairly and honestly. We will provide sufficient opportunity for any complaint to be fully discussed, and aim to resolve it through open dialogue and mutual understanding.

Framework of Principles

- be easily accessible and publicised
- be simple to use and understand
- be impartial
- be non-adversarial
- allow swift handling with established time-limits for action and keeping people informed of the progress
- ensure a full and fair investigation by an independent person where necessary
- respect people's desire for confidentiality, wherever possible (some information sharing may be necessary to carry out a thorough investigation)

Beulah Junior School – Complaints Policy

- address all points of issue, providing an effective response and appropriate redress, where necessary
- provide information to the school's senior management team so that services can be improved.

Legislation and Guidance

This document meets the requirements of section 29 of the [Education Act 2002](#), which states that schools must have and make available a procedure to deal with all complaints relating to their school and to any community facilities or services that the school provides.

It is also based on [guidance for schools on complaints procedures](#) from the Department for Education (DfE).

Principles for Investigation

When investigating a complaint, we will try to clarify:

- What has happened
- Who was involved
- What the complainant feels would put things right

We also intend to address complaints as quickly as possible. To achieve this, realistic and reasonable time limits will be set for each action within each stage.

Where further investigations are necessary, new time limits will be set, and the complainant will be sent details of the new deadline with an explanation for the delay.

The school expects that complaints will be made as soon as possible after an incident arises and no later than 3 months afterwards. We will consider exceptions to this time frame in circumstances where there were valid reasons for not making a complaint at that time and the complaint can still be investigated in a fair manner for all involved.

Informal Complaint

The school will take informal concerns seriously and make every effort to resolve the matter quickly. It may be the case that the provision or clarification of information will resolve the issue.

The complainant should raise the complaint as soon as possible with the relevant member of staff or the Head Teacher as appropriate, either in person or by letter, telephone or email.

If the complainant is unclear who to contact or how to contact them, they should contact the school office. The informal stage will usually involve a meeting between the complainant and the Head Teacher and/or member of Senior Leadership Team and/or the member of staff in question as appropriate. The Head Teacher (or designated member of the senior leadership team) will call a meeting to clarify concerns, and seek a resolution.

The complainant may be accompanied to this meeting, and should inform the school of the identity of their companion in advance.

In certain circumstances, the school may need to refuse a request for a particular individual to attend any such meeting – for example, if there is a conflict of interest. If this

Beulah Junior School – Complaints Policy

is the case, the school will notify the complainant as soon as they are aware, so that the complainant has the opportunity to arrange alternative accompaniment.

If the complaint is not resolved informally, it will be escalated to a formal complaint. The school will acknowledge informal complaints within 2 days, and investigate and provide a response within 5 days.

Formal Complaints Procedure

Stage 1

If you feel that a concern has not been addressed through informal discussion and you wish to have the matter formally investigated by the Head Teacher (or in her absence, the deputy head). Please make an appointment at the school office.

If the matter is about:

- the day-to-day running of the school
- the interpretation of school policies
- the actions or inactions of staff at the school

it will be investigated by **the Head Teacher and Deputy Head Teacher.**

Inform the Head Teacher in writing. This letter should provide details such as relevant dates, times, and the names of witnesses of events, alongside copies of any relevant documents. The complainant should also state what they feel would resolve the complaint.

If the matter is about:

- school policies as determined by the governing body
- the actions or inactions of the governing body
- the Head Teacher

then, it will be investigated by Chair of Governors, Ms Shona Campbell who can be contacted through the school.

Inform the chair of governors in writing. This letter should set out the details of the complaint including evidence as set out above. The complainant should also specify what they feel would resolve the complaint, and how they feel the previous stage of the procedure has not addressed their complaint sufficiently.

The person carrying out the investigation will review the way in which the complaint has been handled by the school and ensure that the issues have been dealt with properly and fairly. She will normally write to you with the outcome of this process within 15 school days of receiving the complaint.

If it becomes apparent that the complaint is a disciplinary or capability issue, then the matter will be dealt with by following the appropriate procedure rather than the complaints procedure. You will be notified if this is the case with your complaint, but you are not entitled to know which procedure or the final outcome.

Beulah Junior School – Complaints Policy

Stage 2

If you are not satisfied with the result from Stage 1, you may choose to refer your complaint to Stage 2 of the procedure. This must be done in writing to the school within 15 school days of the completion of Stage 1.

At this Stage, the complaint will be considered by either the chair of governors or a panel of **three** governors depending on who carried out the investigation in Stage 1: -

- A. If Stage 1 was investigated by the Head Teacher, the Chair of Governors will consider the manner in which the complaint was addressed and decide whether it has been properly dealt with. The general principle is that the school should be able to produce documentary evidence to show that the complaint has received fair and proper consideration within the school's procedure. If they have any concerns, they may ask the Head Teacher to re-open the investigation. The complainant will be kept informed of any delay.

If the complainant is not satisfied after the chair of governors has completed their review, a panel of three governors will meet to consider the complaint and make a final decision about it on behalf of the governing body.

- B. When Stage 1 has been investigated by the chair of governors, Stage 2 will be carried out by a panel of three governors, who will meet to consider the complaint and make a final decision about it on behalf of the governing body.

In either A or B, the panel will consist of governors who have no detailed prior knowledge of the complaint, or connection with the complainant. The meeting will normally take place within 15 days of your request.

You will have the opportunity to submit written evidence on the complaint prior to the meeting of the panel and also to attend, accompanied by a friend/partner if you wish, to put your case. The Head Teacher will be given the same opportunities. The panel will write to you with its conclusion within five working days of the meeting.

The decision of the panel is final. If you are still not satisfied, you may wish to put your complaint to the Secretary of State for Education and Skills.