

FamilyCare

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Education

Complaints Policy

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Complaints Policy

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How to make a complaint

If you are complaining about unsafe or unprofessional conduct of a member of staff then please go straight to Stage 3 and speak to the Head Teacher or Proprietor of the school. Policy statement Number 12 '**STATEMENT OF PROCEDURES FOR DEALING WITH ALEGATIONS OF ABUSE AGAINST STAFF**' is usually used in these instances and it is no longer a complaint.

If you feel you need to complain about the staff in your child's school, we want to listen, and we want to resolve the matter as quickly as we can. We ask that you make your complaint as quickly as you can as this makes it easier for us to deal with.

There are 6 stages to this complaints policy

If you have asked for this policy, it is most likely that you have already spoken to a member of staff but may wish to take it further – this would-be Stage 2.

If you have not already spoken to a member of staff please read through Stage 1 first. All education staff are familiar with the Complaints Procedure.

Here are the people you will be communicating with during the complaints procedure"

Stage	Person	How you need to communicate
1 or 1a	Class teacher or learning support assistant or school administrator	Verbally either in person or on the telephone
2	Deputy Head or Senior Leader	Verbally either in person or on the telephone
3	Headteacher	In writing
4	Director of Operations	In writing
5	School Proprietor	In writing
6	Secretary of State for Education/Ofsted	In writing

You will be required to go through the stages one at a time.

Stage One: Class teacher or learning support assistant or school administrator (Usually within 3 days)

This can be in person or by telephone. It can also be in writing (letter or email). The adult you are complaining to will make notes on a Family Care Education complaint form. You may have a copy of this if you wish.

If your complaint is about any member of staff (including the senior team), it is really important that you talk to that person directly if you can and let them know that you are unhappy about something, so that it can be put right as quickly as possible.



If you have emailed then it is likely you will receive an email back. Anything in writing will be kept for our records. Please email the school office marking the email for the attention of the person you wish to communicate with. Most complaints will be resolved at this stage.

Stage 1a – If the parent/carer-giver or professional does not want to talk directly to the person they are complaining about

If you don't want to or feel unable to talk to the person whom you wish to complain about, you can approach a Deputy Head, Lead Teacher or Senior Teacher to talk things through. They will treat this as an informal (Stage 1) complaint first and will make notes on a Family Care Education complaint form. You may have a copy of this if you wish.

In most cases we expect this to resolve the situation, but if the Deputy Head or Senior Lead feels your complaint is serious enough, they will ask you to put it in writing so that it can be taken further.

This means it will go to Stage 2

Stage Two: **(Formal Complaint)** Heard by the Deputy Head or Senior Leader (Usually within 5 days but usually sooner)

Your complaint will be heard by your child's Deputy Head or a Senior Leader (whichever is appropriate). You can give your complaint in person or on the telephone, but at this stage it must also be put in writing, so we are clear what we need to address. It should contain the following information:

- Your name
- The child's name and class
- Your relationship to pupil – e.g. their parent, uncle, caregiver, etc.
- Your Address – so we can write back to you
- What you want to complain about – it would be really helpful to include details of what happened, the date, the time, who was involved
- Tell us what has been done to try and help you already – who from the child's schools has been involved and what have they done
- Tell us what you think we should do to help you – is there anyone you think we need to talk to?

The Senior leader or Deputy Head will then take all the information and think about how to solve the issue. This will include reading carefully all the information given, possibly talking it through with another (impartial) member of staff from the group.

The Senior leader or Deputy Head will then let you know what they have done to address your complaint and what they think the solution should be.

They may let you know by phoning you or talking to you in person but they will always put their findings and the proposed solution in writing.

If you are not happy with the way your complaint has been dealt with at this stage, you can proceed to Stage 3.

Stage Three: **(Formal)** Complaint heard by Headteacher, usually within 10 days, at this stage you can only complain in writing/email.

Your letter must contain the following information:

- Your name
- The child's name and class
- Your relationship to the pupil – e.g. their parent, uncle, caregiver etc.

- Your Address – so we can write back to you
- What you want to complain about – it would be really helpful to include details of: what happened, the date, the time, who was involved
- Tell us what has been done to try and help you already – who from the school has been involved and what have they done
- Tell us what you think we should do to help you – is there anyone you think we need to talk to?



The Headteacher will collect all the information available in writing about your complaint – this will usually be on the schools' complaint forms and copies of any letters already written about the complaint.

The Headteacher will usually speak to key members of staff involved, key children involved (if appropriate).

The Headteacher may ask key members of staff to write down their accounts.

The Headteacher may ask key children to write down their accounts (if appropriate).

The Headteacher should have your account in writing already but if they need any other details from you they may call you or ask you to write more.

The Headteacher may ask your child to write their account down or they may speak to your child (only with your permission)

It is not necessary for the Headteacher to do all of these things, and also there may be other ways to investigate that are not written here, which the Headteacher thinks may be a good idea, in order to help solve the complaint.

Once the Headteacher has all the information they will think about how to resolve the situation in the best way. The Headteacher will write to you and tell you how they investigated your complaint, what they found out, what decision/s they have come to and what actions will be taken.

We hope that at this stage, the complaint is resolved, but if you still feel that something further needs to be done you can write to the Director of Operations .

Stage Four: (Formal) Complaint heard by the Director of Operations (usually within 10 days)

At this stage you can only complain in writing, your letter/email must contain the following information:

- Your name
- The child's name and class
- Your relationship to pupil – e.g. their parent, uncle, caregiver etc.
- Your Address – so we can write back to you
- What you want to complain about – it would be really helpful to include details of what happened, the date, the time, who was involved.
- Tell us what has been done to try and help you already – who from The Trust has been involved and what have they done
- Tell us what you think we should do to help you – is there anyone you think we need to talk to?

The Director of Operations is Andrew O'Reilly

Upon receiving your complaint letter, The Director of Operations may decide to ask another Family Care Group Board member to deal with the complaint.

All information available in writing about your complaint will be collected and looked at carefully. Key members of staff and/or children (if appropriate) and also yourself may be spoken to and may be asked to put more things down in writing, but only to clarify what has already been written or said

We know that at this stage, there will already be a lot of information to look at.

Once all the information has been looked at, you will get a letter from The Director of Operations (or whoever is dealing with the complaint at a senior level) to tell you how they investigated your complaint, what further things they found out (if at all), what decision/s they have come to and what further actions will be taken (if appropriate / necessary).

We hope that at this stage, the complaint is resolved, but if you still feel that something further needs to be done you can proceed to Stage 5.



Stage Five: (Formal) Complaint heard by the school management committee complaints panel (Usually within 15 days)

This is the final stage of the process and you can only complain in writing to the head teacher who will pass the complaint on to the school management committee

Your letter / email must contain the following information:

- Your name
- The child's name and class
- Your relationship to pupil – e.g. their parent, uncle, caregiver etc.
- Your Address – so we can write back to you
- What you want to complain about – it would be really helpful to include details of what happened, the date, the time, who was involved.
- Tell us what has been done to try and help you already – who from Family Care Group has been involved and what have they done
- Tell us what you think we should do to help you – is there anyone you think we need to talk to?

The school management committee is a group containing the proprietor and 5 independent members of the community who are tasked with holding the school to account. In the event of moving a complaint to stage 5 your complaint will be heard by at least 3 members of the committee, 1 of whom is independent of the company and who are not involved directly with the complaint.

At this stage you will be invited to bring your complaint to the panel and if you wish you may come accompanied.

A copy the panel findings will be:

- Provided to the complainant and to the person complained about
- Available for inspection at school by the proprietor and head teacher

We hope that at this stage, the complaint is resolved, but if you still feel that something further needs to be done you can proceed to Stage 6.

Stage Six:

If you decide after all five stages have been gone through, that you are not satisfied, then the absolute final option is to complain directly to the Secretary of State. Department of Education, Ministerial and Public Communications Division, Piccadilly Gate, Store Street, Manchester, M1 2WD
Tel: 0370 000 2288
Email: ministers@education.gsi.gov.uk



Recording of Formal Complaints

In all cases where a formal complaint is made (Stage 2 or more) a complaint record should be completed. The complaint record includes:

- The stage at which the complaint was resolved
- Whether it proceeded to a panel hearing
- The action taken by the school as a result of the complaint

All complaints and associated records are kept confidentially by the school and in accordance with the data protection policy.

Complaint heard by the School Proprietor / Director

You can contact the School Proprietor through the Head Teacher.

Upon receiving your complaint letter, The Chair may decide to ask another Director or second proprietor to deal with the complaint or the Chair may deal with it him/herself.

All information available in writing about your complaint will be collected and looked at carefully.

Key members of staff and/or children (if appropriate) may be spoken to and may be asked to put more things down in writing, but only to clarify what has already been written or said

We know that at this stage, there will already be a lot of information to look at.

Once all the information has been looked at, you will get a letter from the proprietor (or whoever is dealing with the complaint) to tell you how they investigated your complaint, what further things they found out (if at all), what decision/s they have come to and what further actions will be taken (if appropriate / necessary).

The Proprietor / Director will make arrangements to write to all concerned within 10 school days to explain their decision and suggest a resolution to the problem, if appropriate. The decision of the Appeal process is final.

Anyone can complain to the Secretary of State for Education and Skills if he or she believes that a School or Proprietor is acting “unreasonably” or is failing to carry out its statutory duties properly.

Once a Proprietor/Director has heard an appeal, and it is clear that correct procedures have been followed, that specific complaint cannot be reopened. If a request is received in this respect, the Proprietors/Directors should inform the complainant that the matter is closed.

Any complaints concerning the conduct of school staff will be handled in accordance with the school’s internal disciplinary procedures. The details of such an investigation will remain confidential.

Should the complaint be directly against the Head teacher a Director will be identified to complete the investigation into the complaint under stage 2. If the decision is appealed another Director will be appointed to hear the appeal under the procedure as set out in stage 3. Any formal complaints will be made available to the Secretary of State or Inspectorate.

