

Stratford Rural Schools' Federation



FEDERATION COMPLAINTS POLICY

Dealing with concerns and complaints

A Parents' Guide

Adapted from the WCC model version	February 2016
Adopted by the Governors	22-02-16
Reviewed	September 2017
Adopted by the Governors	13-10-17
Review date	September 2018



Sharing your concerns about your child's education – Parents' Guide

The schools in the Stratford Rural Schools Federation recognise that at times things can go wrong.

This guidance will help you understand how to resolve concerns you may have about your child's education.

The school has procedures for dealing with concerns or complaints and we value any feedback about our services, including compliments and suggestions.

If you are concerned about any aspect of your child's education, you should contact your child's Class teacher in the first instance.

The school's governing body has overall responsibility for the school and for ensuring the well-being of pupils and that all pupils receive an appropriate and high standard of education.

The Head of School is responsible for making decisions on a daily basis about the school's internal management and organisation. So you should contact the school if you are concerned about an issue such as:

- your child's academic progress
- special education needs provision
- your child's welfare
- bullying
- something that has happened in school;

How do I complain to the school?

First, we hope you will speak to the relevant member of staff as soon as you have a concern. This will normally be the class teacher. This informal approach is nearly always the quickest and most effective way of resolving your concerns. You should then speak with the Head of School.

If you feel that your concern has not been resolved, then it is important to speak to or write to the Executive Headteacher who will look into your concern.

If you are unhappy with the Executive Headteacher's response you should write with your complaint to the Chair of Governors/Clerk to the Governing Body at the school address. Mark your envelope 'FOR IMMEDIATE ATTENTION' – Private and Confidential.

This is how your complaint will be handled

Within 5 working days the chair of governors will clarify the nature your complaint by asking you to complete a complaint form and will offer help in completing the form, if appropriate.

Within 5 working days of receiving the form the Chair will decide whether mediation should be offered to help you and the Headteacher explore possible resolution.

If mediation is agreed, the Chair of Governors will endeavour to set up the meeting **within 10 working days**. If that timescale is not possible you will be told the reason.

If mediation is not deemed appropriate or if it is not successful, the Chair of Governors or Clerk will set up a panel of governors to meet **within 15 working days** of receipt of complaint form to consider your complaint. The clerk will provide details of the hearing and will request any further information you may wish to provide.

The complaints panel will consist of three governors who (as far as possible) will have no prior knowledge of the events being complained of. The panel will be supported by a clerk who will take notes during the hearing and will stay with the panel while they make their decision in case governors need to be reminded about responses to a particular question. The panel will hear the complaint impartially and make their decision based on the facts and the evidence they have been provided with.

Five working days before the hearing the clerk will send to you, the complainant, the Executive Headteacher and the three panel members, copies of all papers submitted by both sides so that there is sufficient time to read the evidence before the hearing (which must be submitted to the clerk seven days before the hearing).

At the hearing:

1. You and the Headteacher will be invited into the room where the panel is being held at the same time.

After introductions, you, the complainant will be invited to explain your complaint,

3. The Headteacher may question you

4. The panel will question you

5. The Headteacher will be invited to explain the school's actions

6. You, the complainant may question the Headteacher

7. The panel will question the Headteacher

8. The panel may ask questions at any point.

9. You, the complainant will then be invited to sum up your complaint.

10. The Headteacher will then be invited to sum up the school's actions and response to the complaint.

11. The chair will explain that you and the Headteacher will hear from the panel **within five working days**.

12. Both you and the Headteacher will leave together while the panel decides on the issues.

13. The clerk will remain with the panel.

Can I take my complaint further?

You cannot take your complaint to the local authority. The local authority cannot investigate school matters on a parent's behalf nor can it review how the school has dealt with your complaint. However, if you feel that the school has acted unreasonably or not followed the correct procedures, you can write to the Secretary of State for Education:

<http://www.education.gov.uk/heip/contactus/df>

Appendix 1 – Complaints Form

The following form must be used by any person making a complaint about the operation of the school which is not covered by an alternative specific procedure. Complaints will most often come from parents or carers but may also come from pupils/students or members of the public, e.g. school neighbours.

If you would like help to complete the form please ask at the School Office.

Complaints Form

Please complete fully and return to the Head of School. Receipt will be acknowledged within 2 working days.

Your name	
Your address (inc. postcode)	
Contact telephone number	
Email	
Your relationship to the school (parent, neighbour, member of the public)	
Name of children at the school (if applicable)	
Nature of your complaint	

Please state what action you have taken (if any) to resolve your complaint	
What actions do you feel might resolve the issue at this stage?	
Signature	
Date	

For Office use:

Date of acknowledgement sent	
By whom	
Complaint referred to	
Date	