Concerns and Complaints Policy

Christ Church C of E School Clifton

Together We Learn

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Christ Church C of E School Clifton

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Contents:

Foreword:..... 2

1. Aims and Objectives 3

2. Overview..... 3

3. Stage 1: The first contact: 4

4. Stage 2: Referral to the Headteacher for investigation 5

5. Stage 3: Review by the Governing Body..... 6

6. Stage 4: Review of the Governing Body Complaints Panel Decision..... 8

7 Unreasonably persistent complainants/behaviour 9

Appendix A: Parental Conversation Record 10

Appendix B: Guiding Principles for dealing with concerns and complaints 11

Appendix C: Procedure for handling complaints..... 14

Appendix D: Parental Leaflet with instructions for concern /complaint..... 15

Appendix E: Listening to complaints..... 17

Appendix F: Example Complaints record form 18

Appendix G: Governing body complaints panel: roles and responsibilities 20

Appendix H: Governor's Complaint Review Panel – example script for Chair when opening the hearing..... 22

Foreword:

In order to investigate your concern or complaint as fully as possible the governing body of **Christ Church C of E Primary** School has implemented a staged approach. We are fully committed to dealing with all concerns and complaints fairly and impartially, in a friendly, respectful and professional way, as it is in everyone's best interest to help ensure the matter can be resolved as quickly and informally as possible. We anticipate that almost all concerns or complaints that arise will be resolved at Stage 1 or Stage 2 below, and that Stage 3 and 4 and Part 2 will only need to be followed on very rare occasions.

1. Aims and Objectives

1.1 To provide a policy on dealing with concerns and complaints that is clear to all and leads as far as possible to a resolution satisfactory to all parties.

1.2 To meet the requirement of the Education Act 2002 to have in place a procedure to deal with concerns and complaints relating to the school and to any community facilities or services that the school provides.

1.3 This policy will be implemented in accordance with the School Charter which sets out our character and convictions as a Church of England School

2. Overview

2.1 The following principles drawn from the Department of Education guidance are applicable. The school intends the process to:

- encourage resolution of problems by informal means wherever possible;
- be easily accessible and publicised;
- be simple to understand and use;
- 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;
- address all the points at issue and provide an effective response and appropriate redress, where necessary;
- provide information to the school's senior management team so that services can be improved.

2.2 This procedure covers all complaints about any provision of community facilities or services provided by Christ Church School, other than complaints that are dealt with under other statutory procedures including those listed below:

Exceptions	**Who to contact/ which policy to refer to**
Admissions to schools	Concerns about admissions are handled by the Local Authority (Reception places) or the Appeals process (in year admissions) – please see **Admissions Policy**
Matters likely to require a Child Protection Investigation	Complaints about child protection matters are handled under our **Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy** and in accordance with current statutory guidance. If you have serious concerns you may wish to contact the Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO)
Exclusion of children from School	Information about raising concerns about exclusion can be found in the **Behaviour & Anti Bullying Policy**

Whistleblowing	Concerns around suspected wrongdoing or dangers at work voiced by school employees, including temporary staff and contractors can be raised through the **Whistleblowing Policy**
Staff grievances	Complaints from staff should be dealt with under the school's internal **Grievance Policy**
Staff conduct	Complaints about staff will be dealt with under the school's internal **Disciplinary Procedure** is appropriate

Concerns and Complaints Procedure – PART 1

3. Stage 1: The first contact:

3.1. At Christ Church we aim to deal with all concerns in a positive and supportive manner. Many concerns will be dealt with informally when you first make them known to the school. Please do not delay raising in a concern (for example leaving it until parents evening) as it is important that we are made aware of it as soon as possible.

3.2 You should make your first point of contact either the class teacher (at drop off or pick up time) who will aim to resolve the issue on the spot. However, this is a busy time and should your concern need more time, you may choose or be asked to contact the class teacher or school administrator, by phone or in person to make an appointment to discuss the situation. This ensures that:

- We allocate sufficient time to listen carefully to your concern;
- Lessons can start on time and are uninterrupted.
- To enable us to provide the best possible outcome, you will be asked to share the nature of your concern.

3.3 Parents are always welcome to discuss any concerns with the appropriate member of staff, who will clarify with the parent the nature of the concern and reassure them that the school wants to hear about it. The member of staff may explain to the parent how the situation happened. It can be helpful at this point to identify what sort of outcome the parent is looking for. This conversation may be recorded on a Parental Conversation Form – Appendix A.

3.4. If the member of staff first contacted cannot immediately deal with the matter, s/he will make a clear note of the date, name and contact address or phone number.

3.5 All members of staff will know how to refer, if necessary, to the person with responsibility for the particular issue raised by the parent. S/he will check later to make sure the referral has been dealt with.

3.6. If the matter is brought to the attention of the Headteacher s/he may decide to deal with concerns directly at this stage; if the complaint is against the Headteacher the parent will be advised to contact the chair of the governing body.

3.7. The member of staff dealing with the concern will make sure the parent is clear what action (if any) or monitoring of the situation has been agreed, putting it in writing if appropriate.

3.8. Where no satisfactory solution has been found within ten days, parents will be advised that if they wish their concern to be considered further they should write to the Headteacher.

3.9 Governors may also be approached by people raising concerns. The appropriate response is to listen sympathetically and either suggest taking the concern to a member of staff or to undertake to approach a member of staff on their behalf. Governors should not seek to resolve the concern – this is the school's responsibility - but they may be able to facilitate an early and amicable resolution.

4. Stage 2: Referral to the Headteacher for investigation

4.1 The Headteacher (or designated person) will acknowledge a complaint in writing within three school days of receiving the written complaint. The acknowledgement will give a brief explanation of the school's complaints procedure and a target date for providing a response to the complaint. This should normally be within fifteen school days (i.e. excluding weekends and school holidays). If this proves impossible, a letter will be sent explaining the reason for the delay and giving a revised target date.

4.2 The Headteacher will provide an opportunity for the complainant to meet them to supplement any information provided previously. It will be made clear to the complainant that if s/he wishes s/he might be accompanied to any meeting by a friend, relative, representative or advocate who can speak on his/her behalf.

4.3 If necessary the Headteacher will interview witnesses and take statements from those involved. If the complaint centres on a pupil, the pupil should also be interviewed. Pupils should normally be interviewed with parents/guardians present, but if this would seriously delay the investigation of a serious/urgent complaint or if the pupil has specifically said that s/he would prefer that parents/guardians were not involved, another member of staff with whom the pupil feels comfortable should be present. If a member of staff is complained against, they must have the opportunity to present their case (see General Principles).

4.4 The Headteacher will keep written records of meetings, telephone conversations and other documentation.

4.5 Once all the relevant facts have been established as far as possible, the Headteacher will then produce a written response to the complainant, including a full explanation of the decision and the reasons for it. Where appropriate, this will include what action the school will take to resolve the complaint. The complainant will be advised that should s/he wish to take the complaint further s/he should notify the chair of governors within four weeks of the date of the letter.

4.6 If, in the course of an investigation, a fault is identified, the headteacher should take immediate action to put matters right so that any potential injustice does not continue or risk happening to somebody else.

What if the complaint is about the headteacher?

4.7 If the complaint is against the Headteacher, or if the Headteacher has been closely involved at Stage 1, the chair of the governing body will carry out all the Stage 2 procedures.

What if the complaint is about a governor?

4.8 The complainant should still contact the chair of governors who will investigate the concerns. If the complaint is about the chair of governors the complainant should be referred to the vice chair. If the complaint is about the governing body as a whole, the complainant should be referred to the Strategic Director, Children, Young People and Skills, Bristol City Council.

5. Stage 3: Review by the Governing Body

5.1 The chair of the governing body will write to the complainant to acknowledge receipt of the written request for the governing body to review the complaint. The acknowledgement will inform the complainant that three members of the school's governing body will hear the complaint within twenty school days (i.e. excluding weekends and school holidays) of receiving the complaint. The letter will also explain that the complainant has the right to submit any further documents relevant to the complaint. These must be received in time for the documents to be sent to the three members.

5.2 A meeting of the Governors' Complaints Panel will be convened by the chair of governors and a clerk to the panel will be appointed.

The Complaints Panel can be drawn from the whole governing body. Governors with prior involvement must not be included on the panel. If s/he has not previously been involved the chair of governors can chair the panel. However this does not need to be the case. It is up to the Complaints Panel to decide who should be its chair. When deciding on the make up of the panel, bear in mind the advantages of including a parent governor and if possible having a balance of race and gender. It is not appropriate for the Headteacher to sit on the panel. Careful consideration will need to be given whether it is appropriate for staff governors to be appointed as panel members; in many instances this may lead to a conflict of interest.

NB. Academies must also comply with Part 7 The Education (Independent School Standards) Regulations 2014 by ensuring that, where there is a panel hearing of a complaint by the parent of a pupil, one panel member is independent of the management and running of the school.

5.3 The Chair of the Complaints Panel will ensure the panel hears the complaint within twenty school days (i.e. excluding weekends and school holidays) of receiving the letter. All relevant correspondence relating to the complaint will be given to each panel member as soon as the composition of the panel is confirmed. If the correspondence is extensive, the Chair may prepare a thorough summary for sending to panel members.

5.4 The Clerk will write and inform the complainant, Headteacher, any relevant witnesses and members of the Panel at least five working days in advance of the date, time and place of the meeting. The notification will also inform the complainant of his/her right to be accompanied to the meeting by a friend/advocate/interpreter and explain how the meeting will be conducted.

5.5 The Headteacher will be invited to attend the panel meeting and will be asked to prepare a written report for the panel in response to the complaint. All concerned, including the complainant, should receive any relevant documents including the Headteacher's report, at least five school days prior to the meeting. The Headteacher may also invite members of staff directly involved in matters raised by the complainant to respond in writing or person.

5.6 The meeting should allow for:

- The complainant to explain their complaint and the Headteacher to explain the school's response
- The opportunity for both parties to ask questions of each other about the complaint.
- Panel members to have an opportunity to question both the complainant and the Headteacher
- Any party to have the right to call witnesses (subject to approval of the Chair) and all parties having the right to question all the witnesses
- Final statements by both the complainant and the Headteacher.

It is the responsibility of the Clerk of the panel to ensure that sufficient notes are taken to record an accurate reflection of the points considered and any decisions taken or actions agreed. The notes do not need to be verbatim but should be sufficient to remind the panel of the evidence that has been presented and the reason for the decision.

5.7 The Chair of the Panel will explain to the complainant and Headteacher that the panel will consider its decision and that a written decision will be sent to both parties within five school days. The complainant, Headteacher, other members of staff and witnesses will then leave.

5.8 The panel will then consider the complaint and all the evidence presented and

- Reach a majority decision on the complaint;
- Decide upon the appropriate action to be taken to resolve the complaint; and, where appropriate, suggest recommended changes to the school's systems or procedures to ensure that problems of a similar nature do not happen again.

5.9 A written statement outlining the decision of the panel must be sent to the complainant and Headteacher. The letter to the complainant should also explain how a further appeal can be made (See Stage 4).

5.10 The school should ensure that a copy of all correspondence and notes are kept on file in the school's records. These records should be kept separately from the pupil's personal records.

6. Stage 4: Review of the Governing Body Complaints Panel Decision

6.1 We hope that you feel your complaint has been handled correctly and resolved to your satisfaction. However once the school's complaints procedure has been exhausted, if you remain unhappy with the outcome you can contact the ESFA via the below contact details:

Academy Complaints and Customer Insight Unit
Education and Skills Funding Agency
Cheylesmore House
5 Quinton Road
Coventry
CV1 2WT

www.education.gov.uk/contactus
tel: 0370 000 2288

6.2 You should set out in full your concerns, and the reasons why the complaint is being submitted, attaching all previous correspondence relevant to the complaint. This is the final stage in the complaint handling process.

6.3 It would be useful if complainants were encouraged to state what actions they feel might resolve the problem at any stage. An admission that the school could have handled the situation better is not the same as an admission of negligence.

Christ Church C of E School Clifton

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7 Unreasonably persistent complainants/behaviour

7.1 We are fully committed to dealing with all complaints fairly and impartially, in a friendly, respectful and professional way. We are sure that you will understand the need to behave in a similar way as it is in everyone's best interest to help ensure the matter can be resolved as quickly and informally as possible. However the school does not expect its staff or governors to tolerate behaviour by complainants which is unacceptable, for example, which is abusive, offensive or threatening, and they will take action to protect staff and governors from any such behaviour if it occurs. Also, there may be complainants who, because of the frequency of their contact with the school, hinder our consideration of their, or other people's, complaints and potentially the running of the school.

7.2 We anticipate that such behaviour will be a very rare occurrence, but if we consider a complainant's behaviour is unacceptable or unreasonably persistent, we will tell them why and ask them to change it. If the behaviour continues, we may take action to restrict the complainant's contact with the school.

7.3 The decision to restrict access to the school will be taken by the Headteacher and Chair of Governors. Any restrictions imposed will be appropriate and proportionate. They may include:

- requesting contact in a particular form (for example, letters only);
- requiring contact to take place with a named member of staff or governor;
- restricting telephone calls to specified days and times; and/or
- asking the complainant to enter into an agreement about their conduct.

In all cases we will write to tell the complainant why we believe his or her behaviour is unacceptable or unreasonably persistent, what action we are taking and the duration of that action. We will also tell them how they can challenge the decision if they disagree with it.

7.4 Where a complainant continues to behave in a way which is unacceptable or unreasonably persistent, we may decide to terminate contact with that complainant and discontinue any investigation into their complaint. If we decide to carry on treating someone as an unreasonably persistent complainant and we are still investigating their complaint six months later, we will carry out a review and decide if restrictions will continue.

7.5 Where the behaviour is so extreme that it threatens the immediate safety and welfare of the school's staff or governors, we will consider other options, for example reporting the matter to the Local Authority, the police or taking legal action. In such cases, we may not give the complainant prior warning of that action.

7.6 Where a complainant whose case is closed persists in communicating with us about it, we may decide to terminate contact with that complainant. In such cases, we will read all correspondence from that complainant, but unless there is fresh evidence which affects our decision on the complaint we will simply acknowledge it or place it on the file with no acknowledgement.

7.7 New complaints from people who have come under the unreasonably persistent complainants policy will be treated on their merits.

Head Teacher: Mark Oldfield
Acting Deputy Head Teacher: Vikki Richardson
Christ Church CE Primary School (Academy)
Royal Park, Clifton, Bristol, BS8 3AW
T: 0117 377 2830
E: christchurchp@bristol-schools.uk W: www.christchurch.bristol.sch.uk
(Company Number 8082405)

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Appendix A: Parental Conversation Record

Christ Church C of E School Clifton

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Date:	People Present:	Meeting focus:

Actions agreed	Future meeting needed? When?
• • • • •	Refer to SLT? Who?

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Appendix B: Guiding Principles for dealing with concerns and complaints

These ***guiding principles*** will help you to ensure that complaints are handled properly at all stages of the process;

Make sure it's easy to find out how to raise concerns; parents should always know how they can raise concerns or lodge a formal complaint. Your Complaints Procedure should be easily accessible and there is a legal requirement to ensure it is well publicised. It is up to the governing body to decide how to fulfil this requirement. Schools should consider whether they need to make the procedures available in other formats such as large print or languages other than English. Details of the complaints procedure could be included in:

- A leaflet or letter for parents
- School prospectus and the home-school agreement
- School newsletters (occasional reminders)
- School website and posters displayed in public areas of the school
- Documents supplied to community users (e.g. course information or letting agreements)

Set, and stick to, reasonable response times; each stage of the procedure should have clear time scales and where it is not possible to meet these, everyone should be kept informed of progress.

Be consistent and fair; your process must ensure that everyone involved is treated fairly and equally, and efforts are made to meet individual needs where appropriate. If for any reason you take a different approach to your published policy, you must explain the reasons why to everyone involved.

Ensure staff and governors are aware of what to do; all staff and governors should be aware of the procedures so they are equipped to deal with concerns or complaints at the informal level. To be confident in doing so depends on them having clear information about the procedures, reassurances that senior staff are committed to the procedures and are aware of some basic 'do's and don'ts in dealing with people who are upset or angry. All staff and governors should also have clear information about the stages in the process so that parents do not get passed from one member of staff to another. Staff and governors should be able to signpost people to the complaints procedure and, if necessary, explain it.

Take care about confidentially; treat all concerns and complaints with discretion. It is vital that parents feel confident that their complaint will not penalise their child. A complainant will need to be aware that some information may have to be shared with those involved to enable a proper investigation. It is also important that information about anyone else involved is treated sensitively and not shared with anyone else inappropriately. It is usual to disregard anonymous complaints but it should be at the head teacher's or governing body's discretion to decide whether the gravity of an anonymous complaint warrants an investigation.

Set some time limits; to allow for an effective investigation, it is recommended that complaints are brought to the attention of the school as soon as possible. Any matters raised more than 6 months after the event are difficult to investigate. Schools may wish to consider a time limit for bringing complaints, allowing for discretion to waive the time limit in exceptional circumstances.

Remember that the complainant or members of staff may need support; it is important that complainants know that at any stage of the procedure they can be accompanied by a friend, relative or representative and to know where they can go for information, advice and advocacy if required. Staff who may be questioned must feel that they are treated fairly, that they have an opportunity to put their case, and that a friend or representative may accompany them at any stage. There is a crucial balance between protecting the rights and reputation of the individual and investigating a complaint thoroughly and impartially.

The complaints procedure is distinct from formal staff disciplinary proceedings and this must be made clear. There may be occasions where a complaint leads to a disciplinary procedure which puts the complaints process on hold. If so the complainant should be informed of this, without going into details, and updated regularly on likely further delay.

If it becomes clear that it may be necessary to commence disciplinary proceedings against a staff member, the head teacher should seek guidance from Human Resources to ensure that the correct steps are taken. After the disciplinary process is completed it will be necessary to decide what further response to the complainant is required.

Don't ignore or dismiss complaints - try to resolve them early on; at each stage in the procedure consider how a complaint can be resolved, including the use of mediation, if appropriate. It might be sufficient to acknowledge that the complaint is valid in whole or in part. Identify areas of agreement between the parties and check for any misunderstandings. This will help create a positive atmosphere in which to discuss any outstanding issues. In addition, it may be appropriate to offer one or more of the following:

- An admission that the situation could have been handled differently or better (this is not the same as an admission of negligence).
- An apology, either from the headteacher or from the governing body as appropriate (take care over the wording, especially where the complaint has not been found to be valid. Be aware of the difficultly that may arise when asking individuals to apologise – a corporate apology on behalf of the governing body may be more appropriate).
- An explanation of what led to the subject of the complaint and why key actions were taken.
- An undertaking that the event or actions complained of will not recur and details of the steps that have been taken to help ensure this is the case.
- An undertaking to review school policies or practices in the light of the complaint.
- Financial compensation.

Fear of litigation should not prevent a school from admitting to parents when mistakes have been made, but it is recommended that schools seek advice from the LA if it appears that the parent might take legal action.

Seek guidance when dealing with complainants you consider are behaving unreasonably; In a minority of cases, people pursue their complaints in a way which can either impede the investigation of their complaint or can cause significant resource issues for schools. Separate guidance notes are available to help you deal with unreasonably persistent complainants and unreasonable complaint behaviour. You are advised to contact the Governor Development Service for guidance if necessary.

Record events from an early stage; Complaints that go beyond the initial informal stage should be recorded and monitored by the headteacher and governors. It is recommended that recording should begin at the point when an initial concern or complaint cannot be resolved immediately but needs some investigation and/or consultation with others in school and a subsequent report back to the parent.

Recording at the earliest stage need only be a very basic record of the complaint, giving the date, name of parent and general nature of the complaint. A complaints form or a 'comments and complaints' book could be used.

Progress of the complaint and the final outcome should continue to be recorded.

At the end of any meeting or telephone call, it is important that the member of staff and the complainant have the same understanding of what was discussed and agreed. A brief note of meetings and telephone calls should be kept and a copy of any written responses added to the record.

Good record keeping will help ensure the school can demonstrate it took a complaint seriously and handled it properly if it is later subject to review by governors or the Secretary of State.

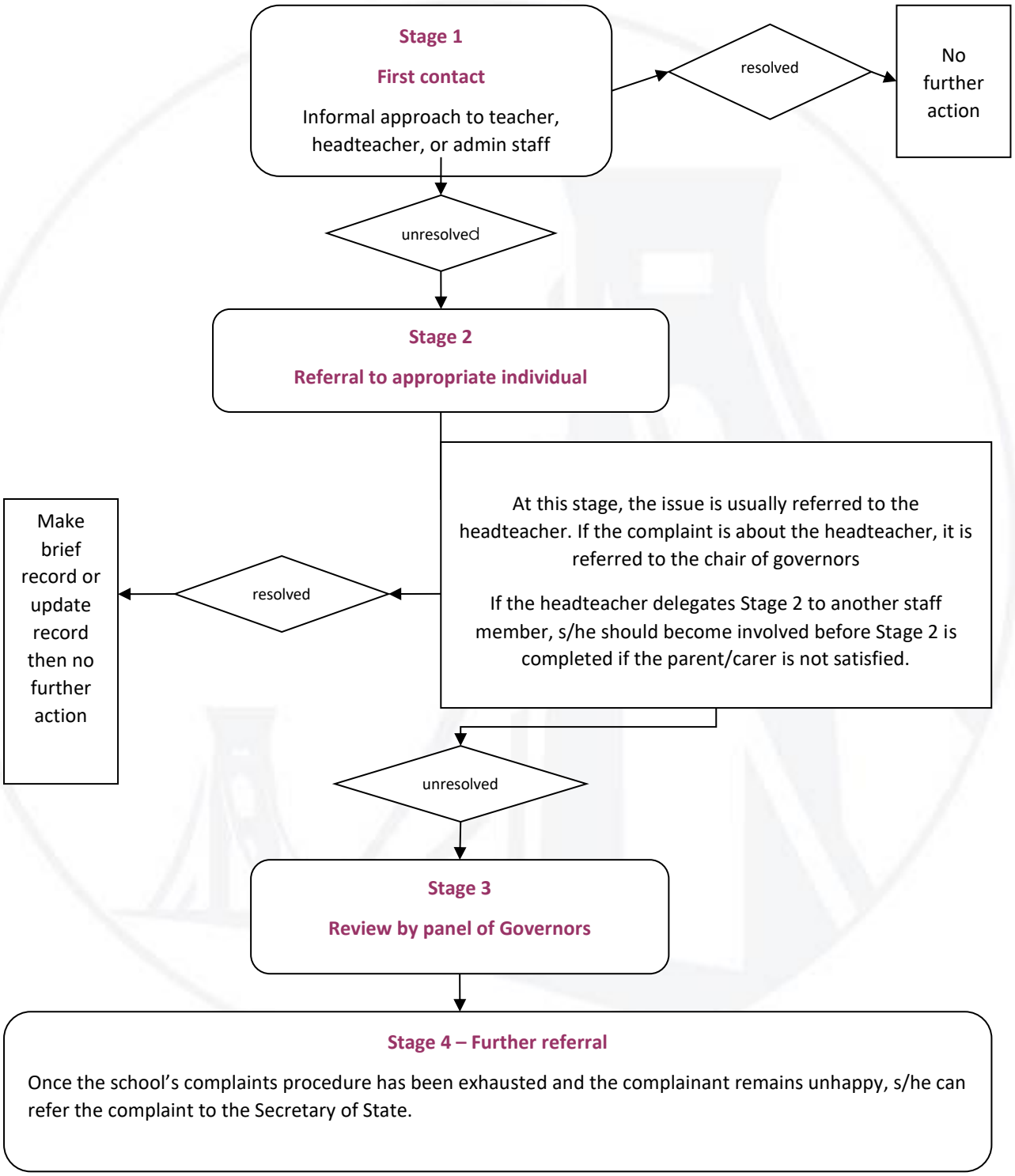
N.B. It is also recommended that schools record when repeated concerns about the same issue are being raised even if they appear relatively trivial in nature and do not go on to become formal complaints. These can then be considered and addressed as appropriate within the normal processes for managing the school.

Learn from complaints**;** As well as addressing an individual's complaints, the process of listening to and resolving complaints will contribute to school improvement. When individual complaints are investigated, schools may identify underlying issues that need to be addressed.

The governing body should monitor the level and nature of complaints and review the outcomes on a regular basis to ensure the effectiveness of the procedure and make changes where necessary. It is important not to name individuals in complaints information shared with the whole governing body

Appendix C: Procedure for handling complaints

Governing bodies are advised to adopt a staged approach to complaints, as follows:



Head Teacher: Mark Oldfield
Acting Deputy Head Teacher: Vikki Richardson
Christ Church CE Primary School (Academy)
Royal Park, Clifton, Bristol, BS8 3AW
T: 0117 377 2830
E: christchurchp@bristol-schools.uk W: www.christchurch.bristol.sch.uk
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Appendix D: Parental Leaflet with instructions for concern /complaint

Christ Church C of E School Clifton

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If you have a concern or complaint

We would like you to tell us about it. We welcome suggestions for improving our work in school. Be assured that no matter what you are wanting to tell us, our support and respect for you and your child in school will not be affected in any way. Please tell us of your concern as soon as possible. It is difficult for us to investigate properly an incident or problem that happened some time ago.

What to do first

Most concerns and complaints can be sorted out quickly by speaking with your child's class teacher/ form tutor.

If you have a complaint that you feel should be looked at by the Headteacher in the first instance you can contact him/her straight away if you prefer. It is usually best to discuss the problem face to face. You may need an appointment to do this, and can make one by ringing or calling into the school office. You can take a friend or relative to the appointment with you if you would like to.

All staff will make every effort to resolve your problem informally. They will make sure that they understand what you feel went wrong, and they will explain their own actions to you. They will ask what you would like the school to do to put things right. Of course, this does not mean that in every case they will come round to your point of view but it will help both you and the school to understand both sides of the issue. It may also help to prevent a similar problem arising again.

What to do next

If you are not satisfied with the teacher's initial response to your questions or concerns (or with the Headteacher's initial reaction if s/he has already been involved) you can make a complaint to the Headteacher. This should be made in writing. Help with this is available from the School Office or the Governing Body.

If your complaint is about an action of the Headteacher personally, then you should refer it to the Chair of Governors by emailing: governors.christchurch.p@bristol-schools.uk.

You may also find it helpful at this stage to have a copy of the full statement of the School Complaints Procedures as this explains in detail what procedures are followed. This is available from the school office or on the school website.

The Headteacher will ask to meet you to discuss the problem. Again you may take a friend or someone else with you if you wish. The Headteacher will conduct a full investigation of the complaint and may interview any members of staff or pupils involved. You will receive a written response to your complaint.

If you are still unhappy

The problem will normally be solved before it reaches this stage. However, if you are still not satisfied you may wish to contact the Chair of the Governing Body to ask for a referral of your complaint to a Governors' Complaints Panel. It will then be heard by a group of three governors who have no previous knowledge of the problem and so will be given a fresh assessment. You will be invited to attend and speak to the panel at a meeting that the Headteacher will also attend. The School Complaints Procedures explains how these meetings operate.

Further Action

Complaints about school problems are almost always settled within schools but in exceptional cases it may be possible to refer the problem to an outside body such as the Secretary of State for Education. Again there are more details about this in the School Complaints Procedure.

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Appendix E: Listening to complaints

When you realise that you are listening to a complaint, try to remember these points:

Don't pass the person on unless you have to	*Try not to keep transferring an angry person from one place/person to another. Make sure you know the contact person for anything you cannot deal with yourself.*
Don't be flippant	*First impressions count. You and the school may be judged on your immediate reaction.*
Treat all complaints seriously	*However small or trivial it may seem to you, the complaint will be an important problem for anyone who takes the trouble to complain.*
Treat every complaint individually	*Even if you have already received several similar complaints the same day, it is probably the person's first chance to have their say.*
Be courteous and patient	*Be sympathetic and helpful, but do not blame other colleagues.*
Say who you are	*If you are unknown to the other person, introduce yourself.*
Ask for their name and use it	*Anonymous complaints are acceptable only where there are special circumstances.*
Take time to find out exactly what the problem is	*It is easy for someone to forget to tell you an important detail, particularly if they are upset or annoyed.*
Don't take the complaint personally	*To an angry or upset person, YOU are the school, and the only one they can put their feelings to right now.*
Stay cool and calm	*Do not argue with the person - be polite and try to find out exactly what the person thinks is going wrong, or has gone wrong.*
Check you are being understood	*Make sure that the person understands what you are saying. Don't use jargon - it can cause confusion and annoyance to someone 'not in the know'.*
Don't rush	*Take your time. Let people have their say, and let off steam if they need to. Listen carefully and sympathetically to their problems before replying and attempting to find a solution or offer a next step.*

Appendix F: Example Complaints record form

This record form may be used to collate details of a complaint or as a prompt during any meeting with the complainant.	
Complainants Name	
Pupil's Name	
Relationship to the Pupil	
Address	
Daytime/ Evening Tel Number	
Outline details of the complaint:	

Head Teacher: Mark Oldfield
Acting Deputy Head Teacher: Vikki Richardson
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What actions, if any, have already been taken to try and resolve the complaint (e.g. Who did the complainant speak to and what was the response)?	
What actions does the complainant wish to see that might resolve the problem?	
Has the complainant provided any paperwork? List documents here and keep copies with this note.	
Date acknowledgement sent By Whom Complaint referred to: Date:	

Head Teacher: Mark Oldfield
Acting Deputy Head Teacher: Vikki Richardson
Christ Church CE Primary School (Academy)
Royal Park, Clifton, Bristol, BS8 3AW
T: 0117 377 2830
E: christchurchp@bristol-schools.uk W:
www.christchurch.bristol.sch.uk
(Company Number 8082405)

Member of the NW24 Teaching Learning Partnership
NW24 Teaching & Learning Partnership

Appendix G: Governing body complaints panel: roles and responsibilities

The clerk to the governors is the contact point for the complainant and is required to:

- set the date, time and venue of the meeting, ensuring that the dates are convenient to all parties and that the venue and proceedings are accessible;
- collate any written material and send it to the parties in advance of the meeting;
- meet and welcome the parties as they arrive at the meeting;
- record the proceedings;
- advise the panel on procedural issues;
- notify all parties of the panel's decision.

The ***chair of the governing body*** or the nominated governor needs to check that the procedure has been correctly applied and, if a meeting is appropriate, liaise with the clerk to arrange the panel.

The ***Chair of the panel*** needs to ensure that:

- the remit of the panel is explained to the parties and each party has the opportunity of putting their case without undue interruption;
- the issues are addressed;
- key findings of fact are made;
- those attending the meeting to give evidence are put at ease;
- the meeting is conducted in a professional, but not overly formal, manner with each party treating the other with respect and courtesy;
- the panel is open minded and acting independently;
- no member of the panel has a vested interest in the outcome of the proceedings or any involvement in an earlier stage of the procedure;
- each side is given the opportunity to state their case and ask questions;
- written material is seen by all parties. If a new issue arises it would be useful to give all parties the opportunity to consider and comment on it.

Checklist for a panel meeting

The panel needs to take the following points into account:

- The meeting should be professional, but not overly formal.
- Witnesses are only required to attend for the part of the meeting in which they give their evidence.
- After introductions, the complainant is invited to explain their complaint, and be followed by their witnesses.
- The head teacher may question both the complainant and the witnesses after each has spoken.
- The head teacher is then invited to explain the school's actions and be followed by the school's witnesses.
- The complainant may question both the head teacher and the witnesses after each has spoken.
- The panel may ask questions at any point.

- The complainant is then invited to sum up their complaint.
- The head teacher is then invited to sum up the school's actions and response to the complaint.
- Both parties leave together while the panel decides on the issues.
- The chair explains that both parties will hear from the panel within a set time scale.

Notification of the panel's decision

The chair of the panel will ensure that all parties to the complaint are notified of the panel's decision, in writing, with the panel's response, within five schooldays of the panel meeting. The letter needs to explain that if the complainant is not satisfied with the outcome of the complaint, they can refer the matter to the Secretary of State. . The letter to complainants advising them of the outcome of the governor's panel should include a statement along the following lines;

'I hope that you are satisfied that your complaint is now resolved and has been dealt with appropriately. However if you feel the matter has not been resolved and you believe the governing body or LA is acting unreasonably or is failing to carry out its legal duties properly you can refer your complaint to the Secretary of State for Education, ***This is done online at:***

www.gov.uk/complain-about-school/state-schools

You should set out in full your concerns and reasons why the complaint is being submitted, attaching/enclosing all previous correspondence relevant to the complaint.

This will be the final stage in the complaint handling process.'

Christ Church C of E School Clifton

Together We Learn

Appendix H: Governor's Complaint Review Panel – example script for Chair when opening the hearing

Welcome everyone, and thank you for attending.

Firstly, I would like to introduce everyone here, my name is …….. I am a Community/Parent/LA Governor at Christ Church Primary School, and I will be chairing this meeting.

My colleagues on the panel are:

-

Also present for the meeting:

- ……. Clerk, who will be taking notes during this meeting.

To clarify, this complaint has now reached stage 3 and this panel of Governors has been convened to evidence provided by ……. and the school.

Can I confirm that all those present have received a copy of this pack information, and I would like to remind everyone present to respect the behaviours and ground rules circulated in the pack, copies provide also here.

This meeting will proceed with the following format:

Firstly I will ask the complainant …….. to summarise the complaint.

After this, there will be an opportunity for …….. to respond and for other witnesses to present evidence to the panel of Governors.

Then there will be an opportunity for the Governors to ask any questions of the parties involved.

At the end of the meeting the panel will need to consider and discuss in private what they have heard and so I will ask those not involved in this decision making process to leave the room.

You will be notified of the decision of the panel in writing, however if you would like to be telephoned today, please give your telephone number to the Clerk who will read the letter to you, not to discuss the process or decision). I hope this is clear. Does anyone have any questions about the process?

(to complainant) May I ask you to begin please by summarising your complaint…….

Head Teacher: Mark Oldfield
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