

Schools complaint procedure

you have a concern or complaint

What you should do

Discuss your concerns with the class teacher or other relevant member of staff (which may be the headteacher). This will usually resolve the issue.

What will happen

The member of staff concerned will deal with your issues or make sure you have the information you need if you feel you want to take the matter further

If you are not satisfied with the response

Complain to the headteacher, either verbally or in writing.

Your complaint will be acknowledged and a meeting held within 5 school days with a full written response within 15 school days

If you are not satisfied with the headteacher's response or if your complaint is about a headteacher

Complain to the chair of governors in writing

Your complaint will be acknowledged within 7 school days with a full response within 20 school days

If the complaint is not resolved

Write to the clerk of the governing body requesting that your complaint be heard by a complaints committee of governors

The complaints committee will meet within 10 school days from receipt of your letter. The committee's decision is final and you will be told of its findings within 5 school days of the hearing.

If you are not satisfied that your complaint has been properly dealt with

Write to the council Children & Learning department's customer support officer giving evidence that the school did not follow its complaints procedure

The customer support officer will acknowledge your letter within 3 working days and tell you what will be done. The department can only investigate inappropriate procedure, not re-visit the complaint itself. A response will be made within 10 working days.

If you are not satisfied with the response

Write to the Secretary of State for Education and Skills, or the Local Government Ombudsman

The Secretary of State may intervene if a governing body or a council has not carried out a statutory duty or has acted unreasonably. The ombudsman only investigates issues of maladministration.

A guide for parents

working
together
to sort out
your concerns



Schools complaints procedure

اس معلومات کا ترجمہ اردو زبان میں دستیاب ہے۔
এই তথ্যের অনুবাদ বাংলা ভাষায় ও পাওয়া যায়।
આ માહિતીનું ભાષાંતર ગુજરાતી ભાષામાં મળી શકશે.

Concerns and complaints

This leaflet will help you with any concern or worry that you might have about your child's education. It is best to tackle any concerns quickly and effectively.

Schools

Schools want what is best for your child, and want to sort out your concerns quickly. You can usually do this by speaking to a member of the school staff. Of course this does not mean that in every case they will come round to your point of view but it will help you, and the school, to understand both sides of the problem.

Even with goodwill on both sides, some concerns are not sorted out easily. It is for this reason that schools have a complaints procedure and most schools will have either adopted the procedure shown on the back of this leaflet, or have developed a similar one of their own. School governing bodies are ultimately responsible for resolving your complaint. They are required by law to publish a set of written procedures for dealing with certain educational related complaints and you will usually find these in the school prospectus. The purpose of any procedure is to make sure that all parental concerns will be dealt with promptly and fairly and reduce any negative effect it has on educating the pupil or pupils involved, at school or at home.

These procedures usually follow the same general process and you should first raise your concern

- with your child's teacher or head of year
- if you aren't satisfied you can then raise the issue with the headteacher
- if you are still not satisfied after speaking to the headteacher, you can make a formal complaint in writing to the chair of governors
- a committee of governors will then hear you complaint and you will normally receive the reply from them (in writing) within 10 school days of the hearing.

You may wish to speak to a governor for advice and they may pass your concern on to the headteacher but they then cannot be involved at a later stage.

If the council, receives a complaint about a school, it will normally pass it straight on to that school and will only become involved in exceptional circumstances, and then not until the

schools own procedures have been exhausted. The council has limited powers of intervention and is not able to investigate your complaint all over again and will only investigate whether the school and governing body has dealt with the complaint properly in accordance with its own procedures. The council will, however, investigate any complaints about schools at the request of the governing body.

Children & Learning departmental complaints

All complaints about a service you have received from the children & learning department itself will be dealt with in line with the council complaints procedure.

There are three stages to this, **informal**, **formal** and **review** but the principles are very similar and these are:

- that all complaints will be recorded
- that all complaints will be acknowledged, in writing, within 3 working days of receipt
- that a response will be made within 10 working days
- that if the complaint cannot be resolved within 20 working days,

the complainant will be told the reasons in writing and offered an opportunity to progress to the next stage where a more senior manager will be the officer responsible for ensuring that the complaint is investigated and reported

- that if the complainant is still unhappy, the corporate director will be responsible for ensuring that the complaint is reviewed and reporting the results.

In addition, the ombudsman will consider complaints that have been through the council's procedure and which constitute some form of maladministration that has caused a loss, or injury. However, the ombudsman cannot question what the council has done simply because the complainant does not agree with the outcome.

If you would like further information about the procedure, or any advice or assistance about a concern or complaint, please contact the department's

Customer support officer
tel: 01582 546747
Children & Learning Department
Unity House, 111 Stuart Street,
Luton Beds LU1 5NP