



The majority of issues raised by parents, pupils or the community are concerns rather than complaints. The school is committed to taking concerns seriously. The prime aim of the school's policy is to resolve the complaint as fairly and speedily as possible. As a Walsall Education Authority school, Elmore Green Primary School follows the council's complaints procedure (https://e3e97886-7b51-4703-a91f-dc7d39f267a1.filesusr.com/ugd/e5b70e_91e7b3b241e545ce9b9c86b957f1e926.pdf)

The following outlines the stages that can be used to resolve complaints. The complaints procedure has three main stages;

Stage 1 - Informal - You should contact the school to make an appointment to discuss your concern informally with staff member. The school will arrange a discussion with the most appropriate person to deal with your concerns.

Stage 2 - Formal - Your complaint is dealt formally by the Chair of Governors.

Stage 3 - Formal - Your complaint is heard by Governing Body's Complaints Panel.

Stage 1 - Raising a concern

Concerns can be raised with the school at any time and will usually result in a speedy response, which will resolve the concern. The school requests that parents make their first contact with their child's class teacher.

Sometimes the concern raised will require investigation, or discussion with others, in which case you will receive an initial response within a day or two and, if required, a subsequent substantive response.

If your concern is not dealt with, please contact the Head Teacher. The vast majority of concerns will be satisfactorily dealt with in this way. However, if you are not satisfied with the result at Stage 1, please write to the Chair of Governors within 10 days as set out below.

Stage 2 - Formal Complaint

If you wish to make a formal complaint, please write to the Chair of Governors (care of the school), stating that you wish to make a formal complaint. Your letter should state details of the complaint and the outcome that you are seeking. The Chair of Governors will acknowledge receipt of the complaint and will then investigate the complaint with the school. The investigation will be undertaken by the Chair of Governors or a person appointed by the Chair and acting on the Chair's behalf.



The nature of investigation will vary according to the complaint but may involve;

- establishing what has happened so far, and who has been involved;
- clarifying the nature of the complaint and what remains unresolved;
- meeting with the complainant or contacting them (via telephone or in writing) if further information or clarification is necessary;
- clarifying what the complainant feels would put things right;
- interviewing those involved in the matter and/or those complained of, allowing them to be accompanied if they wish;
- conducting the investigation with an open mind and be prepared to persist in the questioning;
- keeping notes of the interview.

The Chair will write to the complainant following the investigation and will outline their findings.

If you remain dissatisfied, you will need to let the school know within 10 school working days of receiving the Chair's findings on the complaint. Your complaint will then be considered by a panel of *Governors* at Stage 3.

Stage 3 - Formal Complaint

The final stage of the complaints procedure may involve a panel of *Governors*. This requires a meeting of the 'Governors Complaints Panel' and this hearing is the last school-based stage of the complaints process. The aim of the panel hearing is to seek to impartially resolve the complaint and to achieve reconciliation between the school and the complaint. The hearing will normally take place within 20 school working days of the receipt of the written request. The panel will consider the investigation undertaken at Stage 2, and will also consider the representations of the complainant and a representative of the school.

All parties will be notified of the panel's decision in writing within 10 school working days after the date of the hearing. The *Governors'* panel hearing is the last school-based stage of the complaints process.

If you believe that the *Governing Body* has acted unreasonably or has failed to carry out its statutory duties, you may take your complaint to the *Secretary of State* for Education. The *Secretary of State* must be satisfied that a decision is unreasonable in the sense that no reasonable authority, acting with due regard to its statutory responsibilities, would have reached that decision.

When all elements of the complaints procedure have been completed, the school will consider the matter to be closed and will not enter into further discussions pertaining to the original complaint.



Elmore Green Primary School is committed to dealing with all complaints fairly and impartially, and to providing a high quality service to those who complain. We will not normally limit the contact complainants have with our school. However, we do not expect our staff to tolerate unacceptable behaviour and will take action to protect staff from that behaviour, including that which is abusive, intimidatory, offensive or that is believed to be harassing or threatening.

Elmore Green Primary School defines unreasonable behaviour as that which hinders our consideration of complaints because of the frequency or nature of the complainant's contact with the school, such as, if the complainant:

- refuses to articulate their complaint or specify the grounds of a complaint or the outcomes sought by raising the complaint, despite offers of assistance
- refuses to co-operate with the complaints investigation process
- refuses to accept that certain issues are not within the scope of the complaints procedure
- insists on the complaint being dealt with in ways which are incompatible with the complaints procedure or with good practice
- introduces trivial or irrelevant information which they expect to be taken into account and commented on
- raises large numbers of detailed but unimportant questions, and insists they are fully answered, often immediately and to their own timescales
- makes unjustified complaints about staff who are trying to deal with the issues, and seeks to have them replaced
- changes the basis of the complaint as the investigation proceeds
- repeatedly makes the same complaint (despite previous investigations or responses concluding that the complaint is groundless or has been addressed)
- refuses to accept the findings of the investigation into that complaint where the school's complaint procedure has been fully and properly implemented and completed including referral to the Department for Education
- seeks an unrealistic outcome
- makes excessive demands on school time by frequent, lengthy and complicated contact with staff regarding the complaint in person, in writing (as letters or messages), by email and by telephone while the complaint is being dealt with
- uses threats to intimidate
- uses abusive, offensive or discriminatory language or violence
- knowingly provides falsified information
- publishes unacceptable information on social media or other public forums.

Complainants should try to limit their communication with the school that relates to their complaint, while the complaint is being progressed. It is not helpful if repeated



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correspondence is sent (either by letter, phone, email or messages), as it could delay the outcome being reached.

Whenever possible, the Head Teacher or Chair of Governors will discuss any concerns with the complainant informally before applying the decision that the complainant is now being judged as 'unreasonable'.

If the behaviour continues, the Head Teacher will write to the complainant explaining that their behaviour is unreasonable and ask them to change it. For complainants who excessively contact Elmore Green Primary School, causing a significant level of disruption, we may specify methods of communication and limit the number of contacts in a formal arrangement. This arrangement will be reviewed termly.

In response to any serious incident of aggression or violence, we will immediately inform the police and communicate our actions in writing. This will include seeking legal advice and may include barring an individual from any contact with Elmore Green Primary School or its staff, including permission to enter the school site.



Flowchart – Summary of dealing with Complaints

