

Grangefield School Complaints Policy

School Complaints Procedure

General Principles:

- This procedure is intended to allow you to raise a concern or complaint relating to the school, or the services that it provides
- An anonymous concern or complaint will not be investigated under this procedure, unless there are exceptional circumstances
- To allow for a proper investigation, concerns or complaints should be brought to the attention of the school as soon as possible. In general, the school will not consider any complaint that was raised more than 3 months after the event

Raising a concern or complaint

Informal Stage

It is normally appropriate to communicate directly with the member of staff concerned. This may be by letter, by telephone or in person by appointment. Many concerns can be resolved by simple clarification or the provision of information and it is anticipated that most complaints will be resolved by this informal stage.

In the case of serious concerns, it may be appropriate to address them directly to the Head Teacher (or to the Chair of the Governors Complaint Panel, if the complaint is about the Head Teacher).

If you are uncertain about whom to contact, please seek advice from the school office or the Clerk to the Governing Body.

Formal Stage

Stage One:

If your concern is not resolved at the informal stage you must put the complaint in writing and pass it to the Head Teacher, who will be responsible for ensuring that it is investigated appropriately. A Complaint Form is provided to help you.

You should include details that might help the investigation, such as names of potential witnesses, dates and times of events, and copies of relevant documents.

It is very important that you include a clear statement about what you hope might reasonably contribute to a resolution of the problem at this stage. Without this, it is much more difficult to proceed.

Please pass the completed form, in a sealed envelope to the Head teacher.

The Head Teacher may invite you to a meeting to discuss your complaint and to seek a resolution. If you accept that invitation, a friend may accompany you if you wish to help you in explaining the nature of your complaint. In any case, you should learn in writing, usually within 5 working days of the school receiving your formal complaint, of how the school intends to proceed. This notification should include an indication of the anticipated timescale.

Stage Two:

It is possible that your complaint will be resolved through a meeting with the Head Teacher. If not the matter should be referred to the Governors Complaints Panel. A Complaints Panel Request Form is provided to help you. Please pass the completed form, in a sealed envelope to the Clerk to the Governors, for the attention of the Governors Complaints Panel.

The Chair of the Governors Complaints panel may invite you to a meeting to discuss your complaint and to seek a resolution. Again, if you accept that invitation, a friend may accompany you to help you explain the nature of your complaint. In any case, you should learn in writing, usually within 5 working days of the Chair of the Governors Complaints Panel receiving your formal complaint, of how the school intends to proceed. The notification should include an indication of anticipated timescale.

Complaint against the Head Teacher

If your concern is not resolved at the informal stage, and it is about the head teacher, you must put the complaint in writing. A Complaint Form is provided to help you.

You should include details that might help the investigation, such as names of potential witnesses, dates and times of events, and copies of relevant documents.

It is very important that you include a clear statement about what you hope might reasonably contribute to a resolution of the problem at this stage. Without this, it is much more difficult to proceed.

Please pass the completed form, in a sealed envelope to the Clerk to the Governors, for the attention of the Governors Complaints Panel, who will be responsible for ensuring that it is investigated appropriately.

The Complaints Panel may invite you to a meeting to discuss your complaint and to seek a resolution. If you accept that invitation, a friend may accompany you if you wish to help you in explaining the nature of your complaint. In any case, you should learn in writing, usually within 5 days of the school receiving your formal complaint, of how the school intends to proceed. This notification should include an indication of the anticipated timescale.

Following the completion of the process

If you are not satisfied with the way in which the process has been followed, you can request that the Governing Body Procedure Review Panel reviews the process followed by the school in handling the complaint. You must make this request in writing to the clerk to the governing body, within 10 school days of receiving notice of the outcome, and include a statement specifying any perceived failures to follow the procedure. The procedure described below will be followed. A Procedure Review Panel Request form is provided for your convenience.

Review Process

A panel of three members of the governing body will conduct any review of the process followed by the school. This will usually take place within 10 school days of receipt of your request.

The governors on the Procedure Review Panel will normally consider written submissions, but will sympathetically consider any reasonable requests to make oral representations.

The panel will first receive written evidence from the complainant of perceived failures to follow the procedure.

The panel will then invite representatives of the school (Usually the Head Teacher or the Chair of the Complaints Panel), as appropriate.

The panel may also have access to the records kept of the process followed.

You, and the school representatives, will be informed in writing of the outcome, usually within 5 school days of the panel meeting.

The matter will then be closed as far as the school is concerned.

If you believe that the Governing Body has acted illegally or arbitrarily in handling the complaint, then you may make representations to the Secretary of State for Education.

This Complaints Policy is based on the model complaints policy included in the 'Guidance and Model Procedure for handling complaints in schools September 2011' produced by Gloucestershire County Council

This Policy will be reviewed annually.

Date of next review : May 2017.

Grangefield School Complaint Form

This form is for use when you wish to make a formal complaint to the school.

Please complete this form and return it to Head Teacher (or Clerk to the Governing Body if the complaint is about the Head Teacher), who will acknowledge its receipt and inform you of the next stage in the procedure.

Your name:

Your Address:

Daytime telephone number:

Evening telephone number:

Relationship with school eg parent of a child on the school's roll :

Child's name (if relevant to your complaint):

Please give concise details of your complaint, (including dates, names of witnesses etc), to allow the matter to be fully investigated:

You may continue on separate paper, or attach additional documents, if you wish.

Number of additional pages attached:

What action, if any, have you already taken to try to resolve your complaint? (ie whom have you spoken with or written to and what was the outcome?)

What do you hope might reasonably contribute to a resolution of the problem at this stage?

Signature:

Date:

School Use

Received by:

Acknowledgement sent by:

Complaint referred to:

Name Date

Name Date

Name Date

Grangefield School Complaints Panel Request Form

This form is for use when you wish to refer your complaint to the Complaints Panel. (Stage Two)

Please complete this form and return it to the Clerk to the Governing body, who will acknowledge its receipt and inform you of the next stage in the procedure.

Your name:

Your Address:

Daytime telephone number:

Evening telephone number:

I submitted a formal complaint to the school on

Date:

My complaint was submitted to

Name:

And I have received a response from

Name:

I have attached copies of my formal complaint and of the responses of the school.

I am dissatisfied with the outcome because:

You may continue on separate paper, or attach additional documents, if you wish.

Number of additional pages attached:

What do you hope might reasonably contribute to a resolution of the problem at this stage?

Signature:

Date:

School Use

Received by:

Acknowledgement sent by:

Complaint referred to:

Name Date

Name Date

Name Date

Grangefield School Procedure Review Panel Request Form

Please complete this form and return it to Head Teacher (or Clerk to the Governing body), who will acknowledge its receipt and inform you of the next stage in the procedure.

This form is for use when you wish to request a review of the PROCEDURE used to handle your complaint. It does not review the original complaint.

Your name:

Your Address:

Daytime telephone number:

Evening telephone number:

I submitted a formal complaint to the school on

Date:

My complaint was submitted to

Name:

And I have received a response from

Name:

I have attached copies of my formal complaint and of the responses of the school.

I am dissatisfied with the way in which the procedure was carried out because:

You may continue on separate paper, or attach additional documents, if you wish.

Number of additional pages attached:

What do you hope might reasonably contribute to a resolution of the problem at this stage?

Signature:

Date:

School Use

Received by:

Acknowledgement sent by:

Complaint referred to:

Name

Date

Name

Date

Name

Date

Grangefield School Policy for Handling Unreasonably Persistent, Harassing or Abusive Complainants

The Head Teacher and Governing Body are fully committed to the improvement of our school. We welcome feedback and will always try to resolve any concerns as quickly as possible. There is a procedure for parents and other stakeholders to use if they wish to make a formal complaint.

Sometimes, however, individuals treat staff and others in a way that is unacceptable in the pursuit of complaints or other issues. Whilst we recognise that some complaints may relate to serious and distressing incidents, we will not accept threatening or harassing behaviour towards any members of the school community.

What do we mean by ‘an unreasonably persistent complainant’?

An unreasonably persistent complainant may be anyone who engages in unreasonable behaviour when making a complaint. This will include persons who pursue complaints in an unreasonable manner.

Unreasonable behaviour may include:

Actions that are

- out of proportion to the nature of the complaint, or
- persistent – even when the complaints procedure has been exhausted, or
- personally harassing, or
- unjustifiably repetitious

An insistence on

- pursuing unjustified complaints and/or
- unrealistic outcomes to justified complaints
- pursuing justifiable complaints in an unreasonable manner eg using abusive or threatening language; or making complaints in public; or refusing to attend appointments to discuss the complaint

What is ‘harassment’?

We regard harassment as the unreasonable pursuit of issues or complaints, particularly if the matter appears to be pursued in a way intended to cause personal distress rather than to seek a resolution. Behaviour may fall within the scope of this policy if:

- it appears to be deliberately targeted at one or more members of school staff or others, without good cause.
- the way in which a complaint or other issues is pursued (as opposed to the complaint itself) causes undue distress to school staff or others.
- it has a significant and disproportionate adverse effect on the school community.

What does the school expect of any person wishing to raise a complaint?

The school expects anyone who wishes to raise a complaint with the school to:

- treat all members of the school community with courtesy and respect.
- respect the needs of children and staff within the school.
- avoid the use of violence, or threats of violence, towards people or property.
- recognise the time constraints under which members of staff in schools work and allow the school a reasonable time to respond to a complaint.
- follow the school's complaints procedure.

Schools' responses to unreasonably persistent complaints or harassment

This policy is intended to be used in conjunction with the school's complaints procedure. Taken together, these documents set out how we will always seek to work with parents and other stakeholders with a legitimate complaint to resolve a difficulty.

However, in cases of unreasonably persistent complaints or harassment, the school may take some or all of the following steps, as appropriate:

- Inform the complainant informally that his/her behaviour is now considered by the school to be unreasonable or unacceptable, and request a changed approach.
- Inform the complainant in writing that the school considers his/her behaviour to fall under the terms of the Unreasonably Persistent Complaints/ Harassment Policy.
- Require all future meetings with a member of staff to be conducted with a second person present. In the interests of all parties, notes of these meetings may be taken.
- Inform the complainant that, except in emergencies, the school will respond only to written communication and that these may be required to be channelled through the Governing body.

Physical or verbal aggression

The governing body will not tolerate any form of physical or verbal aggression against members of the school community. If there is evidence of any such aggression the school may:

- ban the individual from entering the school site, with immediate effect.
- request an Anti-Social Behaviour Order (ASBO).
- prosecute under Anti-Harassment legislation.
- call the police to remove the individual from the premises, under powers provided by the Education Act 1996.

Legitimate new complaints will always be considered, even if the person making them is (or has been) subject to the Unreasonably Persistent Complaints/ Harassment Policy. The school nevertheless reserves the right not to respond to communications from individuals subject to the policy.