

Ysgol Heulfan



Complaints Procedure

Introduction

Ysgol Heulfan is committed to dealing with complaints effectively. We aim to clarify any issues you are unsure about. If possible, we will correct any mistakes we have made and we will apologise. We aim to learn from mistakes and use that experience to improve what we do.

We use a zero tolerance approach to all forms of bullying and harassment, and we promote a respectful relationship between learners, parents, staff and Governors.

Our definition of a complaint is 'an expression of dissatisfaction in relation to the school, a member of its staff or the Governing Body which requires a response from the school'.

This Complaints Procedure supports our commitment and is a way of ensuring that anyone with an interest in the school can express a concern and be confident that it will be fully considered and, if it is believed that there are grounds for your concerns, that the matter will be dealt with appropriately and without delay.

When to use this procedure

When you have any concerns or make a complaint, we will usually respond in the way explained below. Sometimes, you may have concerns about matters that are not decided by the school, and in such cases we will tell you who you should make a complaint to. At other times, you may have concerns about matters dealt with under other procedures, and in such cases, we will explain how your concerns will be dealt with.

If your concern or complaint involves another body as well as the school (for example, the Local Authority), we will work with them to decide how to deal with the matter which causes you anxiety.

Have you asked us yet?

If you are coming to us for the first time, you should give us a chance to respond. If you are not happy with our response, then you can make your complaint using the procedure we describe below. Most matters of concern can be settled quickly, by talking to the relevant person at the school, without the need to use a formal procedure.

What we expect from you

We believe that all complainants have the right to be heard, to be understood and respected. School staff and Governors have the same right. We expect you to be polite and courteous. We will not tolerate aggressive, abusive or unreasonable behaviour.

We will also not tolerate unreasonable demands or cases where a matter is pushed in an unreasonable manner, or tiresome complaints. We have a separate policy to manage situations where we find someone's actions to be unacceptable.

How we will go about answering the matter of concern to you or your complaint

We will consider all your concerns and complaints in an open and fair way.

The school will always respect people's rights and feelings, and make every effort to protect confidential information.

Timescales for dealing with your concerns or complaints may need to be extended and we will let you know.

We may seek advice from the Local Authority where appropriate. Some types of concerns or complaints may raise issues that need to be dealt with in another way (apart from this complaints policy); in such cases, we will explain why and state what action we will take.

Anonymous complaints will be recorded but it will be up to the school at its discretion to decide whether or not to investigate the complaint, depending on the nature of the complaint.

Addressing the matter of concern to you or your complaint

There are up to three stages, Stages A, B and C. Most complaints can be resolved during Stages A or B. You can bring a relative or companion to support you at any time during the process but we expect you to speak for yourself, unless you need special help. However, if the complainant is a pupil, we recognise that it is reasonable for the person accompanying them to speak on their behalf and/or advise them.

As far as possible, the matter of your concern or your complaint will be dealt with confidentially. However, at times, the person dealing with the matter of concern to you or your complaint may need to consider whether anyone else in the school needs to be informed about the matter or the complaint in order to deal with the case appropriately.

If you are a pupil under the age of 16 and you want to express a concern or make a complaint, we will ask for your permission before contacting your parent(s) or carer(s). If you are a pupil under the age of 16 and you are involved in a complaint in any other way, we may ask your parent(s) or carer(s) to be present at any conversation or interview with you.

Stage A

If there is an issue that is causing you concern, you can often resolve it quickly by talking to a teacher or to one of the Assistant Headteachers. You should express your concern as soon as possible; normally, we would expect you to express your concern within 10 school days of any incident.

The longer you delay, the more difficult it will be for those dealing with the issue to deal with it effectively.

If you are a pupil, you can express your concerns to your representative on the School Council, your Class Teacher or member of staff chosen to deal with pupils' concerns. This will not prevent you from making a complaint later if you feel that the issue(s) you raised have not been dealt with appropriately.

We will normally try to let you know what we have done or plan to do about the issue that is causing you concern within 10 school days, but if this is not possible, we will speak to you and agree a revised timetable with you.

The person responsible for keeping track of how the issue that has caused you concern or your complaint is being dealt with will keep you up to date on the progress being made. The individual will also keep a record of the matter of concern to you so that that record can be referred to in the future.

Stage B

In most cases, we would expect the matter of your concern to be resolved informally. If you feel that the initial issue which caused you concern has not been dealt with appropriately, you should submit your complaint in writing to the Headteacher.

We would expect you to aim to do this within a period of five school days from the date you get a response to the matter that has caused you concern, and that because it is in everyone's interest that a complaint is resolved as soon as possible. You may find the form in Appendix A useful. If you are a pupil, we will explain the form to you, help you fill it in and give you a copy.

If your complaint concerns the Headteacher, you should submit your complaint in writing to the Chair of Governors, sending it to the school's address, asking him/her to investigate your complaint.

In all cases, one of the Assistant Headteachers or another member of staff can help you put your complaint on paper if necessary.

If you are involved in a complaint in any way, one of the Assistant Headteachers will explain what will happen and the type of support available to you.

The Headteacher will invite you to discuss your complaint in a meeting. Timescales for dealing with your complaint will be agreed with you. We will try to meet with you and explain what will happen, usually within 10 school days of the date your letter was received. The Headteacher will complete the investigation and inform you in writing of the outcome.

Stage C

However, if you still feel that your complaint has not been handled fairly, you should write, via the school's address, to the Chair of Governors outlining your reasons for asking the Governing Body's Complaints Committee to consider your complaint. You do not have to write all the details of your complaint again.

If you need help, instead of sending a letter or email, you can speak to the Chair of Governors or the Headteacher who will set out what will be discussed and what would solve the problem in your opinion. Normally, we would expect you to do this within five school days of the date you receive the school's response. We will let you know how we will deal with the complaint and send you a letter to confirm this. The Complaints Committee will normally hold a meeting with you within 15 school days of receiving your letter.

The letter will also tell you when the Complaints Committee should receive all the documents for consideration. Everyone who is part of the complaint will see the documentation before the meeting, and we will ensure that people's rights in terms of privacy of information are protected. The letter will also record what we have agreed with you about where and when the meeting will take place and what will happen. It may be necessary to change the schedule to ensure that everyone can attend the meeting, to gather information or to get advice. In such a case, the person dealing with the complaint will agree a new date for the meeting with you.

Normally, in order to deal with the complaint as quickly as possible, the Complaints Committee will not rearrange the meeting more than once. If you ask to rearrange the meeting more than once, the Committee may consider it reasonable to make a decision on the complaint in your absence to avoid unnecessary delay.

Our aim is to write to you within 10 school days of the meeting to explain the outcome of the Governing Body's Complaints Committee considerations.

The Governing Body's Complaints Committee will make the final decision on complaints.

Special circumstances

When a complaint is made about any of the following people or groups/bodies, the Complaints Procedure will be used in a different way.

A Governor or group of Governors:

- The matter that causes concern or the complaint is referred to the Chair of Governors who will carry out the investigation. Otherwise, the Chairperson can delegate the matter to another Governor who will carry out the investigation. Stage B and subsequent stages of the Complaints Procedure will be used.

The Headteacher:

- The matter that causes concern or the complaint is referred to the Chair of Governors and he/she will carry out the investigation or will, possibly, delegate the matter to another Governor. Stage B and subsequent stages of the Complaints Procedure will be used.

Chair of Governors or Headteacher and Chair of Governors:

- The Vice Chair of Governors will be notified and will investigate the complaint or delegate it to another Governor. Stage B and subsequent stages of the Complaints Procedure will be used.

Chair of Governors and Vice Chair of Governors:

- The complaint will be directed to the Clerk of the Governing Body who will inform the Chair of the Complaints Committee. Step C of the Complaints Procedure will be used.

The entire Governing Body:

- The complaint will be directed to the Clerk of the Governing Body who will inform the Headteacher, Chair of Governors and the Local Authority.
- As a rule, the authorities will agree on arrangements with the Governing Body to carry out an independent investigation into the complaint.

Our commitment to you

In all cases, the school and the Governing Body will ensure that complaints are handled in an open and fair way, without bias.

We will take your concerns and complaints seriously and, if we have made any mistakes, we will try to learn from them.

If you need help to voice your concerns, we will try to assist you. If you are a young person and you need additional support, the Welsh Government has established MEIC, which is a national helpline that offers advocacy and advice services for children and young people. Advice and support is also available from the Children's Commissioner for Wales.

MEIC can be contacted by freephone: 0808 802 3456, or text message: 84001. This service is available 24 hours a day.

The Children's Commissioner for Wales can be contacted by freephone: 0808 801 1000 (Monday to Friday between 9am and 5pm), text message: 80 800 (put COM at the start of your message) or email: advice@childcomwales.org.uk .

The Governing Body has reviewed this policy on 14th December 2022.

Adopted by the staff and ratified by the Governing Body.



For and on behalf of the Governing Body:

Headteacher: *J Thomas Haigh*

Date: Autumn Term 2022

Due for revision: Autumn Term 2025



Appendix A: Model Complaint Form

The person who experienced the problem should normally fill in this form. If you are making a complaint on behalf of someone else, please fill in Section B also. Please note that before taking forward the complaint we will need to be satisfied that you have the authority to act on behalf of the person concerned.

If you are a pupil, the school will help you complete this form, will explain it to you and will give you a copy of it when it is completed.

Your details

Surname:

Forename(s):

Address and postcode:

Daytime phone number/Mobile phone number:

Email address:

If you are making a complaint on behalf of someone else, what are their details?

Their name in full Address and postcode:

What is your relationship to them?

Why are you making a complaint on their behalf?

About your complaint (continue your answers on separate sheets of paper if necessary)

Name of the school you are complaining about:

What do you think they did wrong or did not do?

Describe how you have been affected.

When did you first become aware of the problem?

If it is more than three months since you first became aware of the problem, please give the reason why you have not complained before.

What do you think should be done to put matters right?

Have you already put your complaint to a member of staff? If so, please give brief details about how and when you did so.

Signature of complainant:

Date:

Signature if you are making a complaint on behalf of someone else

Signature:

Date:

Please send this form and any documents to support your complaint to:

The Headteacher

Ysgol Heulfan

Sunny View

Gwersyllt

Wrexham

LL11 4HS

Official Use

Date acknowledgement sent:

By whom:

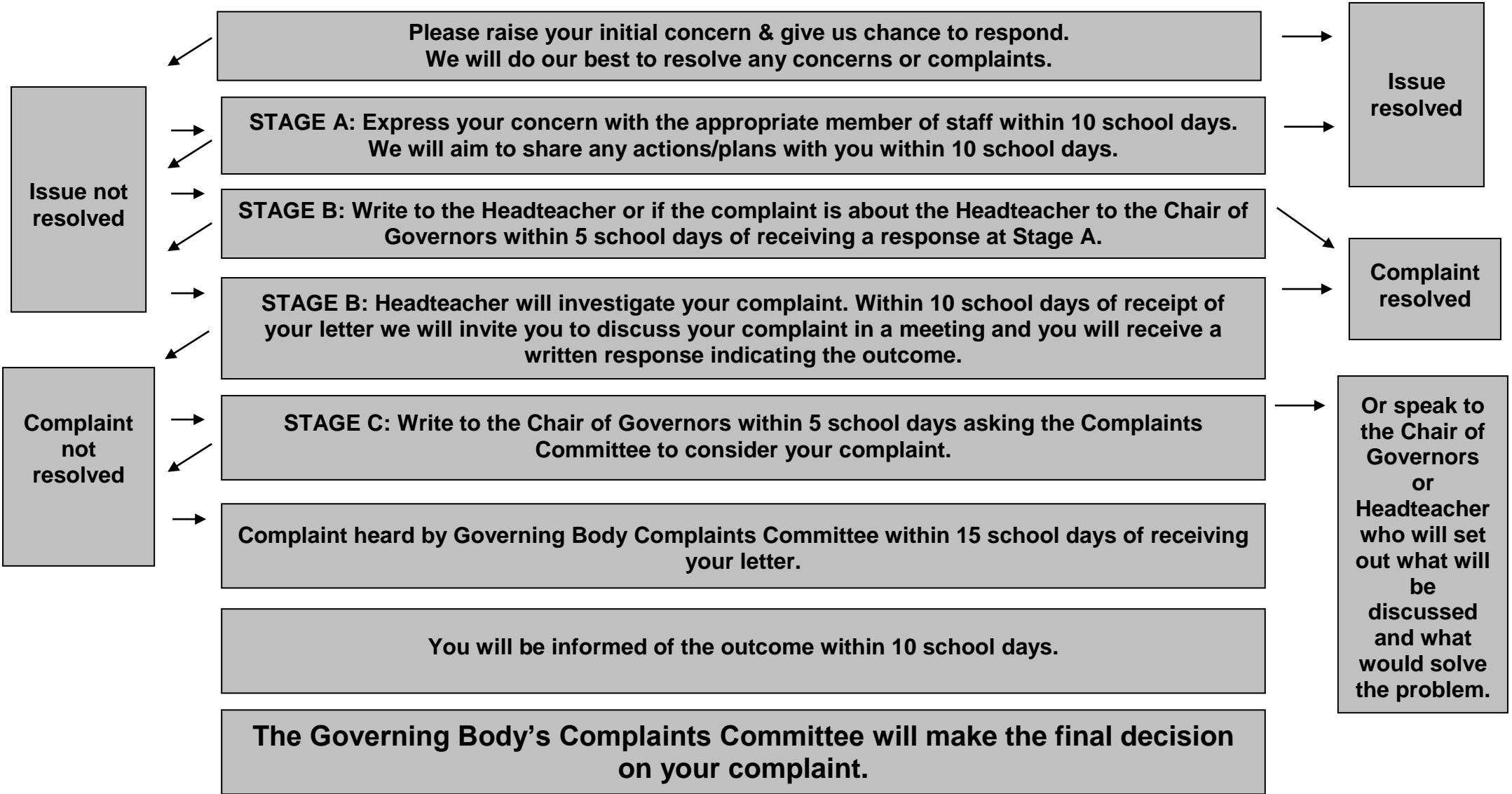
Complaint referred to:

Date:



This procedure will be followed in the event of a concern or complaint about the school, provided that the concern or complaint does not fall under other statutory procedures.

Appendix B: Summary of dealing with concerns or complaints



All timescales shown are targets and are flexible. The school will work with you to ensure that the time allowed to deal with your concern or complaint is reasonable and helps to achieve an answer to the problem.