



# CHURCHAM PRIMARY SCHOOL

## Complaints Policy

Approved by:	Full Governing Body
Date:	19 May 2022
Next review due by:	May 2023

# Complaints Policy Of Churcham Primary School

Under Section 29 of Education Act 2002 governing bodies of maintained schools are required to establish a general complaints procedure.

## 1. Introduction

Churcham Primary School endeavours to provide the best education possible for all of its pupils in an open and transparent environment. We welcome any feedback that we receive from parents, pupils and third parties, and we accept that not all of this will be positive. Where concerns are raised the school intends for these to be dealt with:

- Fairly
- Openly
- Promptly
- Without Prejudice

In order to do so the Governing Body has approved the following procedure which explains what you should do if you have any concerns about the school. All members of staff will be familiar with the procedure and will be able to assist you.

## 2. Safeguarding

Wherever a complaint indicates that a child's wellbeing or safety is at risk, the school is under a duty to report this immediately to the local authority. Any action taken will be in accordance with the school's safeguarding policy.

## 3. The Complaints Procedure

General Principles:

- This procedure is intended to allow parents, carers and other stakeholders 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 may not consider any complaint raised more than 3 months after the event.

**Concern:**

A concern can be defined as an expression of a worry about possible danger or apparent failure in respect of the school. A matter should be viewed as a concern if it is capable of being resolved locally and does not require a formal response.

(All concerns will be dealt with confidentially, although the staff member may need to take notes if they feel that the matter may need to be taken further or it may arise again in the future. Any such notes will be kept in accordance with the principles of the Data Protection Act 1998. However, such notes would be able to be used to as evidence if further investigation was required, or if the concern became a formal complaint.)

**Complaint:**

A complaint can be defined as an expression of dissatisfaction with the school. It requires a formal response. The school will deal with any matter as a complaint when the person raising the matter requests the matter to be dealt with as a formal complaint or when informal attempts to deal with the concern have been exhausted and the person who raised the concern remains dissatisfied.

**Stage 1 –****Informal Procedure**

If a complainant is concerned about anything to do with the school or the services it provides they should, in the first instance, discuss the matter with their child's class teacher, or the Head Teacher if the concern is about the teacher.

Should a complainant have a concern about the Head Teacher, s/he should first make an informal approach to the Chair of Governors.

**Procedure for dealing with concerns**

The teacher, Head Teacher or Chair will endeavour to resolve the concern informally, during the course of which investigation they may invite a third party in to observe any relevant meetings. The member of staff against whom the complaint has been made will be kept fully informed of the content of the complaint and will be given an opportunity to explain their actions.

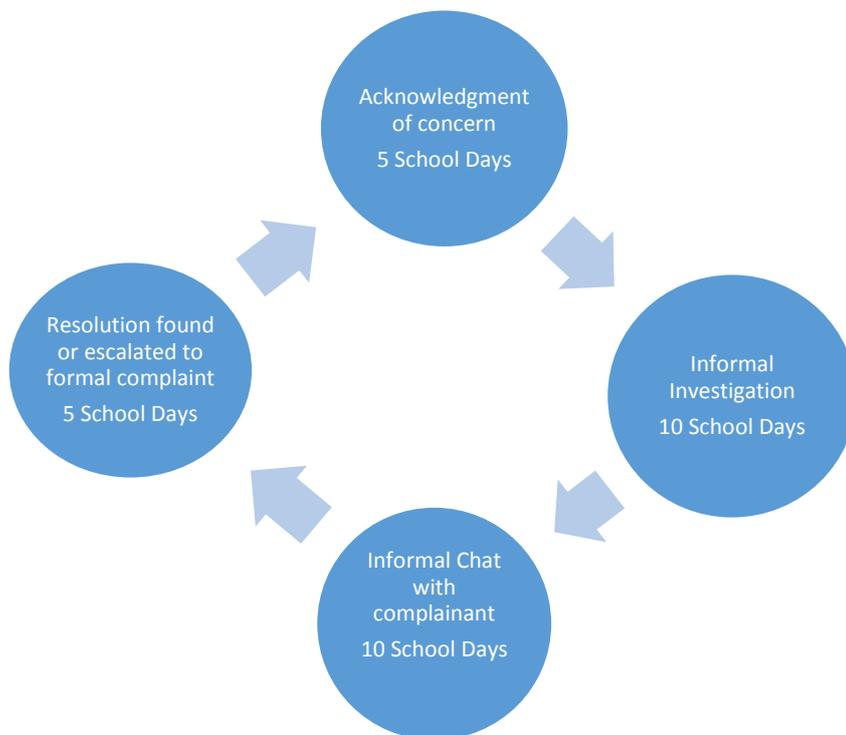
During this period the parent will be regularly updated as to the progress of the investigation.

**What to do if the matter is not resolved through informal discussion:**

Where a complainant feels that a situation has not been resolved or that their concern is of a sufficiently serious nature a formal complaint should be made in writing, using the attached

form, addressed to: the Head Teacher if a member of staff is involved: the Chair of Governors if the Head Teacher or a Governor is involved.

Timeline for Informal Procedure:



Churcham Primary School will endeavour to abide by the timeframes indicated for each stage but acknowledges that in some circumstances, this is not always possible due to the complexity of information needed to review a complaint or difficulties regarding individual's availability to deal with the complaint, for example. If it becomes apparent that it is not possible to complete any stage of the complaints procedure within a given timeframe, the individual responsible for handling the complaint will contact the complainant as soon as possible and come to an agreed timeframe that works for all parties involved.

## Stage 2 - Formal Procedure

### How to take the matter further:

If the concern is not resolved at the informal stage a complainant must put the complaint in writing and pass it to the Head Teacher, (or to office, for the attention of the Chair, if the complaint is about the Head Teacher) who will be responsible for ensuring that it is investigated appropriately.

Please use the Complaint Form attached.

It is very important that the complainant is encouraged to include a clear statement of the actions that they would like the school to take to resolve the concern. Without this, it is much more difficult to proceed.

The Head Teacher (or Chair) may invite the complainant to a meeting to discuss the complaint and to seek a resolution. If the parent accepts that invitation, s/he may be accompanied by a friend, if they wish, to support them in explaining the nature of the complaint.

It is possible that the complaint will be resolved through a meeting with the Head Teacher (or Chair). If not arrangements will be made for the matter to be referred to the Chair of Governors. In any case the complainant should be informed in writing, usually within 10 school days of the school receiving the formal complaint, of how the school intends to proceed. This notification should include an indication of the anticipated timescale.

The Chair of Governors will convene a panel consisting of three other governors who will look at the information provided by the complainant. Then the Chair of panel will invite the complainant to a meeting to discuss the resolution agreed by the committee. Again, if the complainant accepts that invitation, a friend may accompany them. In any case, the complainant will be informed in writing, usually within 20 school days of the Chair of the committee receiving the formal complaint, of the outcome of the investigation.

The panel can:

- Dismiss the complaint in whole or in part;
- Uphold the complaint in whole or in part;
- Decide on the appropriate action to be taken to resolve the complaint;
- Recommend changes to the school's systems or procedures to ensure that problems of a similar nature do not recur.

### **Stage 3**

If the complainant has completed stage 1 and stage 2 and remains dissatisfied then they have the right to refer the complaint to the Secretary of State (address below). The Secretary of State has a duty to consider all complaints raised but will only intervene where the governing body has acted unlawfully or unreasonably and where it is expedient or practical to do so.

Further information can be obtained from the SCU by calling the National Helpline on 0370 000 2288 or going online at: [www.education.gov.uk/help/contactus](http://www.education.gov.uk/help/contactus) or by writing to:

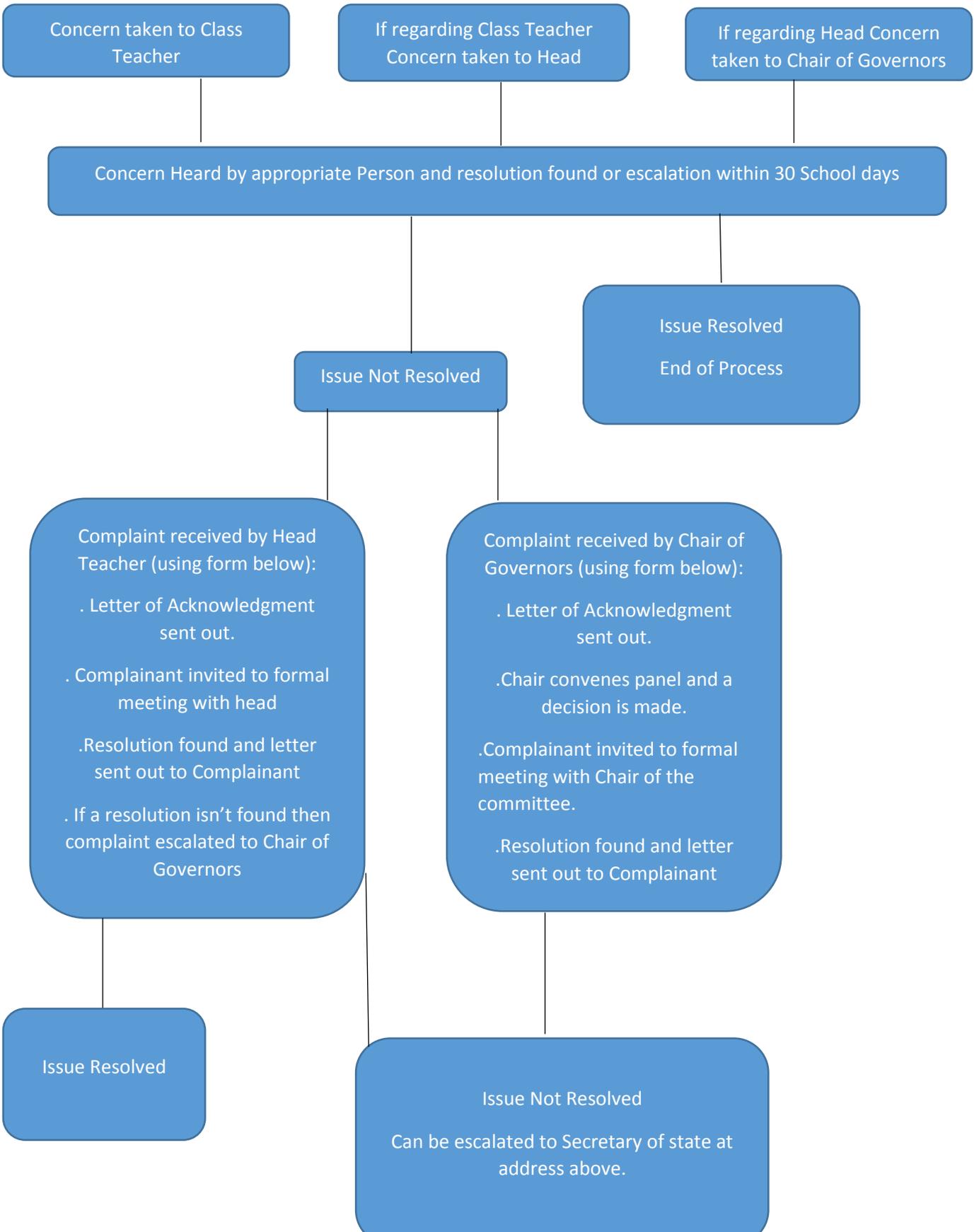
Department for Education  
School Complaints Unit  
2nd Floor, Piccadilly Gate  
Store Street  
Manchester

**Equalities.**

This policy has been written to take into account the needs of all regardless of age, disability, race, religion, belief and gender.

In respect of adults this list also includes gender reassignment, marriage & civil partnership, pregnancy, maternity or paternity and sexual orientation.

Concerns and Complaints Flow Chart



Please complete this form and return it to Head teacher (or in an envelope addressed to the Chair Of Governors), who will acknowledge its receipt and inform you of the next stage in the procedure.

Your Name	
Your Address	
Telephone Number	
Email	

Relationship with school e.g. 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 who have you spoken with or written to and what was the outcome?)

What actions do you feel might resolve the problem at this stage?

Signature:

Date