

Complaints Policy & Procedure

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SLT Member Responsible	Director of Finance & Resources

Policy

It is the policy of Brooksbank School to deal with all complaints in a prompt and fair manner. In order to do this, it follows the procedure laid out below.

General Complaints Procedure for dealing with School Complaints

Aims

The aim of this procedure is to set out clear guidelines in the event of a complaint. It gives a structured opportunity for all concerned to express and resolve concerns at an early stage.

Stage One

Any person who has a concern / complaint should make contact with the appropriate member of staff. The member of staff concerned should

- Take down all the relevant details
- Ensure they have contact details for the person concerned
- Confirm that they will carry out an initial investigation and report back
- Investigate the complaint

After investigation if they are able to resolve the issue, they should do so and report back to the person. If they are not able to resolve the issue, the complaint should be passed to the relevant member of the senior team and the person informed of this action. If no satisfactory solution has been found within 10 working days, the complainant may refer the complaint in writing to the Headteacher (Stage Two - Level One), or the Chair of Governors (Stage Two - Level Two) if the complaint is about the Headteacher.

If required, the complainant will be given assistance in order that they may make the complaint in writing.

Stage Two - Level One: Investigation by the Headteacher (if complaint is not about the Headteacher)

Once the complaint is made in writing, it should be acknowledged within three working days. The written acknowledgement should outline the process that will be undertaken and give a target date for the response to the complaint. This should normally be within ten working days. If this proves impossible, a letter should be sent explaining the reason for the delay and a revised target date should be set.

The Headteacher should provide an opportunity for the complainant to meet him/her to provide any further information relevant to the complaint. Depending on the reason for the complaint, statements from witnesses may be required. Written records should be kept of all meetings, phone calls and other documentation.

When all the relevant facts have been established, the Headteacher should produce a written response to the complainant. This response should include:

- A full explanation of the decision
- Reasons for the decision

- Action to be taken by the school, if applicable
- Advice that, should complainant wish to take matter further, they must write to the Chair of the Governing Body within 10 working days of the receipt of the decision

Stage Two – Level Two: Investigation by the Chair of Governors

(If the Chair of Governors has been involved at an earlier stage the complaint must be referred to the Governing Body's Complaints Panel)

The received written complaint should be acknowledged within three working days of receipt. The written acknowledgement should outline the process that will be undertaken and give a target date for the response to the complaint. This should normally be within fifteen working days. If this proves impossible, a letter should be sent explaining the reason for the delay and a revised target date should be set.

The Chair of Governors should provide an opportunity for the complainant to meet him/her to provide any further information relevant to the complaint. Depending on the reason for the complaint, statements from witnesses may be required. Written records should be kept of all meetings, phone calls and other documentation.

When all the relevant facts have been established, the Chair of Governors should produce a written response to the complainant. This response should include:

- A full explanation of the decision
- Reasons for the decision
- Action to be taken by the school if applicable
- Advice that, should complainant wish to take matter further, they must notify the Chair of the Governing Body within 10 working days of the receipt of the decision

Stage Three

It is only possible to move to stage three if the complainant has:

- Made the initial complaint within two months of the incident occurring
- Sought to resolve the issue through Stages One & Two
- Allowed a reasonable time for the investigation of the concern
- Accepted any reasonable offer by the school to discuss the results of the investigation
- Taken part in any process of mediation offered by the school

A Complaints Committee will need to be convened. This committee will deal with formal complaints that have not been resolved earlier.

The committee will include at least one person who is independent of the management and governance of the school (e.g. from the Local Authority or an appropriate colleague from another school) and none of the committee will have been directly involved with matters detailed in the complaint up to that point.

The complainant may be accompanied at the hearing, if they wish.

Having heard the complaint as per the procedure, the Chair of the Complaints Committee will instruct the Clerk to the Committee to write to all the relevant parties detailing the outcome within five working days of the meeting. This might include the person that the complainant complained about.

Records of formal complaints will be kept by the school detailing whether formal complaints progressed to a committee hearing or not and the actions taken by the school as a result of those complaints (regardless of whether those complaints are upheld).

Copies of the complaint records and correspondence detailing the outcomes and recommendations will be held at the school in line with Data Protection Act guidelines and be made available to the Secretary of State or appropriate school inspecting body, if requested by them.

No further appeal to the governing body is available in the matter of the complaint. If the outcome of the investigation finds that there is a personnel disciplinary issue, the matter must be referred to the appropriate committee and the school's agreed disciplinary procedures followed. In respect of a grievance arising from the member of staff, this should be heard separately under the existing grievance procedure.

Stage Four

Should the person remain unhappy with the outcome of the appeal, they may write to:

The Academies Central Unit (academy complaints)

Education Funding Agency

Cheylsmore House

Quinton Road

Coventry

Or e-mail academy.questions@education.gsi.gov.uk

A complaint about a member of the Governing Body should be referred to the Complaints Committee of the Governing Body and the appropriate procedures followed.

Special Educational Needs Complaints Procedure

If you have SEN concerns regarding any matter with a student or situation, please contact Mrs Helen Shenton (SENCo) in the first instance, to try and resolve the complaint.

Please put your concerns in writing so a full investigation can take place. The most appropriate member of staff will report back.

Mrs Zandra Puddephatt (Deputy Head) is the line manager for the SEN Department and she would be the second stage in the process.

Mrs Linda Furness is the SEN Governor and she would be Stage 3 in the process, if required.