

Complaints Policy

How to make a complaint

First

If you have a concern about anything we do, or if you wish to make a complaint, you can do this by telephone, in person or in writing (by letter or email). We hope that most complaints can be settled quickly and informally, either by putting matters right or by giving you an explanation. If there is something you are not happy about, or you don't understand why we are doing something in a particular way, please come in and discuss it with the relevant member of Staff, such as the Special Educational Needs Co-ordinator (SENCo) if it is about Special Needs.

We know that it can feel uncomfortable to question or challenge, but if you don't tell us what is worrying you we cannot explain what we are doing or try to put it right. If the first person you talk to cannot help you then speak to the Headteacher. Make an appointment with centre admin to make sure the Headteacher is available. You should be able to sort out your worries but sometimes this is not possible. In this case there is a next step.

If your complaint amounts to, or includes, an allegation against a member of staff, this may need to be considered under the Local Authority's Disciplinary Procedure for employees, rather than the Complaints Procedure. You will be advised if these procedures are to be used in dealing with your complaint.

Second

If you are not satisfied you can complain formally by filling in a form, which is available from centre admin and online. Address the form to the Chair of the Management Committee. Centre admin will tell you who this is and pass on any written correspondence. The Chair will then arrange for your complaint to be investigated and considered and will reply within 10 working days to give you a progress report and tell you what will happen next. This is likely to involve a Panel of Committee Members. When your complaint has been fully investigated you will be told of the outcome in writing.

If you wish to make a complaint about the Headteacher you should go directly to the Chair of the Management Committee.

Third

Most complaints are the responsibility of the Management Committee of the centre and will be resolved by them. A small number of complaints may not be resolved by this process.

If you consider that the problem has still not been resolved then you have the right to make a complaint in writing to the Local Authority County Lead for Behaviour & Alternative Provision, Integrated Services for Learning (ISL):

Martin Smith, Mundells, Welwyn Garden City, AL7 1FT
01707 292330

In the case of complaints about **Special Educational Needs**, you can complain further to the Local Authority. This should be done by writing to the Complaints Manager in the Customer Service Team at the address on the back page.

It should be noted however that if you wish to pursue this route, you must do so within 28 days of receiving the written outcome of the hearing into your complaint. After 28 days, neither the school nor the Local Authority is under any obligation to investigate or progress your complaint any further.

Useful contacts

Advisory Centre for Education (ACE)

1C Aberdeen Studios, 22 Highbury Grove, London, N5 2EA
Free Advice Line 2-5pm, Monday to Friday
Web: www.ace-ed.org.uk
Email: enquiries@ace-ed.org.uk
Phone: **0808 800 5793**

Children's Legal Centre

University of Essex, Wivenhoe Park, Colchester, Essex, CO4 3SQ
Free Advice Service, 2-5pm
Web: www.childrenslegalcentre.com
Email: clc@essex.ac.uk
Phone: **01206 873820**

Complaints Team

Customer Service Team, Room 164, County Hall, Hertford, SG13 8DF

Web: www.hertsdirect.org/your-council/hcc/childserv/comments/

Email: cs.complaints@hertscc.gov.uk

Phone: **01992 588542**

Special Educational Needs, Disability Information Advice & Support Service (SENDIASS)

Room 152, County Hall, Hertford SG13 8DF

Web: www.hertsdirect.org/SEND

Email: sendiass@hertfordshire.gov.uk

Phone: **01992 555847**

The Special Educational Needs, Disability Information Advice & Support Service provides impartial information and offers guidance on Special Educational Needs to Parents, Carers and Professionals.

Parentline Plus

520 Highgate Studios

53-79 Highgate Road

Kentish Town

London, NW5 1TL

Web: www.parentlineplus.org.uk

Phone: **0808 800 2222**

Complaint Form

Please complete and return to who will acknowledge receipt and explain what action will be taken.

Your name:

Student's name:

Your relationship to the student:

Address:

Tel No: (daytime) (evening)

Please give details of your complaint (continue on a separate sheet if necessary)

What action, if any, have you already taken to try and resolve your complaint (who did you speak to and what was the response)?

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

Are you attaching any paperwork? If so please give details.

Signature _____

Date _____