



School complaints procedures taken from Northampton County Council

Reviewed in line with LA

Three stages involved in raising concerns or making a complaint

Sometimes things happen which make children or parents unhappy. It is important that parents/carers feel able to raise concerns.

In most cases, concerns and complaints can be resolved by talking to staff at the school. Sometimes parents may wish to raise a more formal complaint.

Schools are responsible for establishing their own complaints procedures. Many will use this approach - but you do need to obtain the school's published procedures and follow the guidance they provide.

Typically there are three main stages involved in raising concerns or making a complaint.

Stage 1 - Initial approach

It is important that **parents contact the school first** with their concerns and talk to a teacher or the headteacher. Most problems can be sorted out in this way easily and informally.

Stage 2 - raise a formal complaint

If you are still unhappy the next stage is to raise a formal complaint by writing to:

- the headteacher
- or chair of the Governing Body if you have already spoken to the headteacher

the headteacher (or nominated member of staff), or the Chair of Governors will investigate your complaint.

After they have looked into the issue, you may be asked to meet with the headteacher or chair of governors or you may get a letter explaining the school's response.

Stage 3 - Appeal to Governors

If you are still unhappy after raising the complaint in Stage 2, you would need to inform the Chair of Governors in writing and request a hearing. The school's complaints procedures may offer the opportunity for your complaint to be heard by a panel of the governing body.

You will be asked to meet with the panel and explain your case. The panel will listen to you and the headteacher, and will inform you in writing of their decision.

Timescales for dealing with your complaint

Ideally, complaints should be dealt with quickly, but if your complaint is complicated or requires detailed investigation, it may take a longer to sort out. The school should let you know how a complaint is being addressed and when you can expect to hear from them.

Other types of complaints

The following types of complaints about education are dealt with in different ways. There are special arrangements under the Education Acts if you want to appeal or complain about:

- admission to schools
- exclusion from school
- school re-organisation proposals
- special education provision
- religious education and collective worship

- national curriculum issues