



Complaints Policy

Polisi Cwynion

Article 5 (Parental Guidance and a Child's Evolving Capacities)

Governments must respect the rights and responsibilities of parents and carers to provide guidance and direction to their child as they grow up.



Reviewed :

Signatures:

Headteacher - Delyth Goodfellow

Chair of Governing Body - Vanessa Hooper

Ysgol y Castell is a primary school at the heart of the local community. It strives to provide the best possible education for the children in its care. It is staffed by established and respected teachers who are not only qualified and expert in their own field, but are teachers because they care for children and wish to help them in every way possible.

Nevertheless, as in any organisation, misunderstandings can, from time to time, arise which may lead to a parent wishing to express some concern. A concern is not a complaint and should not be treated as such by the parent or the school. Only a very small number of concerns raised by parents need to be investigated using the formal procedure.

Any concern should always be raised with the Headteacher in the first instance where every effort should be made to resolve the difficulty. When concerns are addressed and resolved, there should be no need for a formal complaint. An initial request for action or an enquiry is not a complaint. However, failure to respond could give rise to a complaint.

There is a staged approach for dealing with complaints. The principle is to deal with as many of the complaints as possible at the earliest stages.

There are three stages at the school level.

Stage 1	Informal Stage	The intention is that the vast majority of concerns/ complaints will be resolved informally.
Stage 2	Headteacher's investigation	A formal investigation by the Headteacher upon receipt of a written notification that a complaint has not been satisfactorily resolved informally.
Stage 3	Governing Body Review	A formal procedure, invoked following receipt of written notification that stages one and two have not satisfied the parents, when the Governing Body seeks to establish the facts of the situation, to resolve the complaint if possible and to recommend action to prevent re-occurrence of the complaint where appropriate.

In addition there are two further stages available when a complainant is dissatisfied with the outcomes of the Governing Body review. The purpose of these stages is to review the way in which the complaint has been handled; they are not re-hearings of the substantive complaint.

Stage 4	County Council Review	Review of procedures
Stage 5	National Assembly Review	Review of procedures

A number of other procedures already exist. There are special arrangements for dealing with the following matters which must not be dealt with under the complaints procedure.

The existing special arrangements are for dealing with:-

- Complaints about what your child is taught at school (the National curriculum), religious education and collective worship and the school's provision of information.

- Appeals against decisions about your child's special educational needs.
- If you are not offered a place in the school of your choice, or if your child is suspended or excluded from school.

(The school will tell you how to appeal if these situations arise.)
- If you think your child has been given an incorrect grade in a public examination.

INFORMAL COMPLAINT

THE HEADTEACHER

- If you are worried about something concerning your child at school, you should first ask to discuss the difficulty with the Headteacher. You can do this by phoning the Head, writing a letter or making an appointment to meet.
- It may be suggested to you by the Headteacher that it would be more appropriate for you, first, to talk with another member of staff, or one of the teachers, in which case you should do this.
- If, however, having spoken with a teacher or, for example, the Deputy Head, you are still dissatisfied, you should then ask to meet the Headteacher.
- If the discussions with the Headteacher cannot resolve your complaint, then you will be told of your right to make a formal complaint and how it can be made.

FORMAL COMPLAINT

If you wish to make a formal complaint to the governing body, you should write to the Chair of Governors outlining your concerns and the steps you have already taken. Your complaint will then be referred to the relevant committee or to the Headteacher where appropriate.

Once a decision has been made by the relevant committee, you will be informed in writing and given details of your right to appeal if the decision is against you.

If the matter remains unresolved, it may be referred to the LA and ultimately the Welsh Assembly.

ROLE OF THE LOCAL AUTHORITY

LAs do not have a statutory role in resolving complaints about schools – the statutory responsibility rests with the governing body. The procedures may allow for an additional stage for the LA. The Welsh Assembly Government's view is that the involvement of the LA in a further stage would be for the purpose of reviewing the procedure used to reach a decision, not to review the decision itself or to act as an appeal mechanism.

Stages for handling complaints

