



Complaints Policy

March 2026

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Preface

This Complaints Policy sets out the formal procedures for raising and managing complaints at Jubilee Primary School. The procedures outlined in this policy are designed to ensure that all complaints are handled consistently, fairly, and in accordance with statutory requirements.

All stages of the complaints process must be followed as set out in this policy. Adherence to the specified stages, timescales, and procedures for submitting complaints is essential to ensure that matters can be addressed effectively.

Complainants are expected to engage fully with the process and to follow the correct sequence of steps. Complaints that do not comply with the requirements outlined in this policy may not be considered.

This approach ensures fairness to all parties, maintains the integrity of the process, and enables Jubilee Primary School to address concerns in an efficient, transparent, and consistent manner.

1. General Principles

Jubilee Primary School is dedicated to providing the best possible education and support for all its pupils, and is committed to working in close partnership with all members of the school community in order to do so. The school places great value on the role which parents and carers can play in supporting children's learning. Staff and Trustees actively encourage a positive relationship between the school and the families of children who attend the school. We also desire to have good relations with our neighbours and the wider community. However, we recognise that on occasions an individual may have a complaint against a member of staff or the school itself.

When a complaint occurs the following principles will apply:

- Treat complainants with respect and courtesy
- Resolution of problems will be by informal means wherever possible
- Each complaint will be handled by the most appropriate member of staff
- Procedures will be impartial and non-adversarial
- Address all the points at issue and provide an effective and prompt response
- Complaints will be dealt with effectively and as swiftly as possible
- Confidentiality will be respected at all times
- All complaints will be investigated fairly and in a timely way
- Ensure that any decisions we make are lawful, rational, reasonable, fair and proportionate, in line with the principles of administrative law
- Keep complainants informed of the progress of the complaints process

- All complaints will be, wherever possible, resolved and relationships will be repaired
- All information gathered will be evaluated to help us to improve our practice
- Complainants must not approach individual governors about the complaint.

Where any concerns are raised, we aim to resolve these as quickly and as efficiently as possible. Usually concerns that are raised can be resolved swiftly through the school's day to day communication between parents and staff. However, for those situations where this is not the case, we have a more formal process to investigate and deal with complaints as detailed below. The school will aim to give the complainant the opportunity to complete the complaints procedure in full.

We will try to resolve every concern, difficulty or complaint in a positive way with the aim of putting right a matter which may have gone wrong and, where necessary, reviewing the school's systems and procedures in the light of the matters raised.

2. Definition and Scope

A concern is defined as '*an expression of worry or doubt over an issue considered to be important for which reassurances are sought*'. The school will resolve concerns through day-to-day communication as far as possible.

A complaint is defined as '*an expression of dissatisfaction however made, about actions taken or a lack of action*'. The school intends to resolve complaints informally where possible, at the earliest possible stage. There may be occasions when complainants would like to raise their concerns formally. This policy outlines the procedure relating to handling such complaints.

Who can raise a complaint?

Complaints may come from any person or organisation that has an interest in the school. This procedure will apply to most general complaints received by the school. It is not intended to cover those matters for which there is a specific statutory process to object, complain or appeal. The arrangements do not cover complaints about the actions of individual teachers or the Headteacher which could involve disciplinary procedures. If, in the course of considering a complaint, the Board of Trustees decides that disciplinary proceedings should be initiated, they will take separate action as appropriate. Where there is provision for a statutory appeals procedure in respect of any particular kind of complaint, that statutory procedure must be followed (for example, appeals against the special education provision specified in an Education and Healthcare Plan, admissions to schools, and suspensions).

This policy does not cover complaints procedures relating to:

- Admissions
- Safeguarding matters

- Exclusion
- Whistle-blowing
- Staff grievances
- Staff discipline

Please see our separate policies for procedures relating to these types of complaint.

Arrangements for handling complaints from parents of children with SEND about the school's support are within the scope of this policy. Such complaints should first be made to the class teacher/Mrs Biddlecombe (SENCo) / Mrs Nadesan (Headteacher); they will then be referred to this complaints policy. Our SEND policy and information report includes information about the rights of parents of pupils with disabilities who believe that our school has discriminated against their child.

Complaints about services provided by other providers who use school premises or facilities should be directed to the provider concerned.

3. Legislation and guidance

This document meets the requirements set out in part 7 of the schedule to the Education (Independent School Standards) Regulations 2014, which states that we must have and make available a written procedure to deal with complaints from parents of pupils at the school.

It is also based on guidance published by the Education and Skills Funding Agency (ESFA) on creating a complaints procedure that complies with the above regulations, and refers to good practice guidance on setting up complaints procedures from the Department for Education (DfE). This policy complies with our funding agreement and articles of association.

In addition, it addresses duties set out in the [Early Years Foundation Stage statutory framework](#) with regards to dealing with complaints about the school's fulfilment of Early Years Foundation Stage requirements.

School will investigate all written complaints relating to the school's fulfilment of the Early Years Foundation Stage requirements, and notify the complainant of the outcome within the response timeframe given in this policy. This timeframe is more stringent than the one indicated in the EYFS statutory framework.

4. Timescales for submitting a complaint

To enable a proper investigation, concerns or complaints should be brought to the attention of the school as soon as possible, usually within three months of the incident or event to which the complaint relates. The school reserves the right to refuse to investigate a concern or complaint outside of this timescale if it appears reasonable and fair to do so, having regard to the circumstances surrounding the complaint.

5. Confidentiality

All complaint information will be handled sensitively, telling only those who need to know and following any relevant data protection requirements.

6. School Complaints Procedure

(Not complaints against the Headteacher or Trustees)

The complaint procedure is designed to ensure that concerns and complaints are properly investigated and are given careful and fair consideration.

The school has three stages to its complaints procedure. The aim is to resolve the complaint, to the satisfaction of the complainant, at the earliest possible stage.

Where the following procedure refers to the Headteacher, they may delegate any of these functions to a member of the senior leadership team, if appropriate. In exceptional circumstances, the Headteacher may commission an independent investigator to undertake an investigation on behalf of the school.

Stage 1: Raising a Concern/Informal Complaint

The complainant should raise the complaint as soon as possible with the relevant member of staff or the headteacher as appropriate, either in person or by letter, telephone or email. If the complainant is unclear who to contact or how to contact them, they should contact the school office. The school will acknowledge informal complaints within five school days, and investigate and provide a response within five school days as an approximation of the timescales that will be considered, where necessary.

The school will take informal concerns seriously and make every effort to resolve the matter quickly. It may be the case that the provision or clarification of information will resolve the issue.

The informal stage will involve a meeting between the complainant and the member of staff, as appropriate.

If the complaint is not resolved informally, it will be escalated to a formal complaint.

Stage 2: Formal complaint to the Headteacher

If a concern is not resolved at the informal stage, a formal complaint can be made to the Headteacher, within 10 school days of Stage 1 being concluded. The complaint should usually be made in writing indicating the desired outcome from the complaint (a form is enclosed for this purpose – Appendix A).

Formal complaints can be raised by letter, email or by a third party acting on behalf of the complainant.

The complainant should provide details such as relevant dates, times, and the names of witnesses of events, alongside copies of any relevant documents, and what they feel would resolve the complaint, using Appendix A. If complainants need

assistance raising a formal complaint, they can contact the school office by telephone or email.

The complaint will be acknowledged within five school days and will include an indicative date for a written response. The Headteacher will be responsible for ensuring that the complaint is investigated appropriately. The headteacher (or designated member of the senior leadership team) will call a meeting to clarify concerns, and seek a resolution. The complainant may be accompanied to this meeting, and should inform the school of the identity of their companion in advance.

In certain circumstances, the school may need to refuse a request for a particular individual to attend any such meeting – for example, if there is a conflict of interest. If this is the case, the school will notify the complainant as soon as they are aware, so that the complainant has the opportunity to arrange alternative accompaniment.

The headteacher (or other person appointed by the headteacher for this purpose) will then conduct their own investigation. Dependent upon the nature of the issues raised, the matter will either continue to be dealt with through the school complaints procedure, or by other procedures such as the disciplinary or safeguarding procedures. On conclusion of the investigation the Headteacher will provide a written conclusion of the investigation in relation to the complaint and information on any outcome(s). The response should also inform the complainant of the next stage of the procedure, should the complainant be dissatisfied with the outcome.

If the complainant wishes to proceed to the next stage of the procedure, they should inform the clerk to the Board of Trustees within 10 school days.

If the complaint is about the Headteacher, refer your formal written complaint to the Chair of Trustees to be dealt with under Stage 3 of this procedure.

Stage 3: Formal complaint to the complaints panel hearing

Complaints can be escalated to the Board of Trustees by writing to the Clerk to the Governing Body within 10 school days of the date of the letter providing the outcome of Stage 2.

The clerk will need the details of the complaint as set out above, as well as details from the complainant on how they feel the previous stage of the procedure has not addressed their complaint sufficiently, and what they feel would resolve the complaint.

The Clerk will write to acknowledge receipt of the complaint within five school days. The letter will explain the process which is to be followed and information about how the panel will operate. The complainant is allowed to attend the panel hearing and be accompanied by a suitable companion if they wish.

The Clerk will convene a complaints panel and ask for details of the appeal and any relevant supporting evidence.

The panel will usually comprise of at least three people not directly involved in the matters detailed in the complaint, one of whom must be independent of the management and running of the school. If this is not possible for any reason, then alternative arrangements will be made and communicated to the complainant.

The panel will have access to the existing record of the complaint's progress. At the review panel meeting, the complainant and representatives from the school, as appropriate, will be present. Each will have an opportunity to set out written or oral submissions prior to the meeting.

At the meeting, each individual will have the opportunity to give statements and present their evidence, and witnesses will be called, as appropriate, to present their evidence.

The panel, the complainant and the school representative(s) will be given the chance to ask and reply to questions. Once the complainant and school representative(s) have presented their cases, they will be asked to leave and evidence will then be considered.

The remit of the complaints appeal panel is to:

- 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;
- The panel will then put together its findings and recommendations from the case. The panel will also provide copies of the minutes of the hearing and the findings and recommendations to the complainant and, where relevant, the individual who is the subject of the complaint, and make a copy available for inspection by the proprietor and Headteacher.

The complainant will be notified in writing of the panel's decision, usually within five school days. The letter will confirm the end of the school's and Trustees' involvement with the complaint and explain any further rights of appeal.

7. Complaints against the Headteacher, a Trustee or the Board of Trustees

Complaints made against the Headteacher or any member of the Board of Trustees should be directed to the clerk to the Board of Trustees in the first instance. The Clerk will acknowledge receipt of the complaint within five school days. The letter will explain the process that will be followed and the expected timescale for response.

If the complaint is about the Headteacher or one member of the Board of Trustees (including the chair or vice-chair), a suitably skilled and impartial Trustee will carry out the steps at stage 2 (set out in section 6 above).

The Chair of Trustees will consider complaints about the Headteacher or an individual Trustee, and the vice chair will consider complaints against the chair. If for any reason this is not appropriate then another Trustee will be nominated. If the complaint is jointly about the chair and vice-chair, the entire Board of Trustees or the majority of the Board of Trustees, an independent investigator will carry out the steps in stage 2 (set out in section 6 above). They will be appointed by the Board of Trustees, and will write a formal response at the end of their investigation.

If the complainant is dissatisfied with the outcome at Stage 2 and wishes to take the matter further, they can escalate the complaint to Stage 3 – a panel hearing consisting of at least three people who were not jointly involved in the matters detailed in the complaint with one panel member who is independent of the management and running of the school. This is the final stage of the complaints procedure.

On conclusion of the investigation, the complainant will receive a written response detailing all appropriate information in relation to the complaint and information on any outcome(s). There will be no further right of appeal for complaints against an individual Trustee.

8. Further rights of appeal

If you have completed the school procedure and are not satisfied about the handling of the complaint, you may have the right to refer your complaint to the Education and Skills Funding Agency (ESFA).

Complaints to the ESFA must be submitted online through the school's complaints form or by post to Ministerial and Public Communications Division, Department for Education, Piccadilly Gate, Store Street, Manchester, M1 2WD

The ESFA will usually only consider complaints about schools that fall into any of the following three areas:

- Where there is undue delay or the school did not comply with its own complaints procedure when considering a complaint.
- Where the school is in breach of its funding agreement with the Secretary of State.
- Where a school has failed to comply with any other legal obligation.

The ESFA will not overturn a school's decision about a complaint. However, if they find a school did not deal with a complaint properly they will request the complaint is looked at again.

9. Dealing with persistent or serial complaints

Unreasonably persistent complaints

Where a complainant tries to re-open an issue with the school after the complaints procedure has been fully exhausted and the school has done everything it reasonably can in response to the complaint, the Chair of Trustees (or other appropriate person in the case of a complaint about the chair) will inform the complainant that the matter is closed.

If the complainant subsequently contacts the school again about the same issue, the school can choose not to respond. The normal circumstance in which we will not respond is if:

- The school has taken every reasonable step to address the complainant's needs
- The complainant has been given a clear statement of the school's position and their options (if any)
- The complainant is contacting the school repeatedly but making substantially the same points each time
- We have reason to believe the individual is contacting the school with the intention of causing disruption or inconvenience
- The individual's letters/emails/telephone calls are often or always abusive or aggressive
- The individual makes insulting personal comments about, or threats towards, school staff.

Unreasonable behaviour which is abusive, offensive or threatening may constitute an unreasonably persistent complaint.

Once the school has decided that it is appropriate to stop responding, the complainant will be informed in writing, either by letter or email.

The school will ensure when making this decision that complainants making any new complaint are heard, and that the school acts reasonably.

Duplicate complaints

If we have resolved a complaint under this procedure and receive a duplicate complaint on the same subject from a partner, family member or other individual, we will assess whether there are aspects that we hadn't previously considered, or any new information we need to take into account.

If we are satisfied that there are no new aspects, we will:

- Tell the new complainant that we have already investigated and responded to this issue, and the local process is complete
- Direct them to the DfE if they are dissatisfied with our original handling of the complaint

If there are new aspects, we will follow this procedure again.

Complaint campaigns

Where the school receives a large volume of complaints about the same topic or subject, especially if these come from complainants unconnected with the school, the school may respond to these complaints by:

- Publishing a single response on the school website
- Sending a template response to all of the complainants

If complainants are not satisfied with the school's response, or wish to pursue the complaint further, the normal procedures will apply.

10. Record-keeping

The school will record the progress of all complaints, including information about actions taken at all stages, the stage at which the complaint was resolved, and the final outcome. The records will also include copies of letters and emails, and notes relating to meetings and phone calls.

This material will be treated as confidential and held centrally, and will be viewed only by those involved in investigating the complaint or on the review panel.

This is except where the Secretary of State (or someone acting on their behalf) or the complainant requests access to records of a complaint through a freedom of information (FOI) request or through a subject access request under the terms of the Data Protection Act , or where the material must be made available during a school inspection.

Records of complaints will be kept securely, only for as long as necessary and in line with our General Data Protection Policy and privacy notices. The details of the complaint, including the names of individuals involved, will not be shared with the whole governing body in case a review panel needs to be organised at a later point. Where the governing body is aware of the substance of the complaint before the review panel stage, the school will (where reasonably practicable) arrange for an independent panel to hear the complaint.

Our aim is to address complaints in a timely and efficient manner. However, there may be occasions when we are unable to achieve the timescale indicated. In this event, we will write to you outlining the reason for the delay and provide new timescales for the conclusion of that part of the process.

11. Complaints received outside of term time

We will consider complaints made outside of term time to have been received on the first school day after the holiday period.

Approval by the Board of Trustees and policy review date:

Changes since last policy version

Version/Date	Page	Amendment
V9 March 2026		No changes
V8 March 2025	3	Complainants must not approach individual governors about the complaint
V7.1 February 2024	4	Changed 'exclusions' to 'suspension
V7 March 2023		Dates in the title and footer
V6 Spring 2022	5	Included school's legal obligation in terms of Early Years Foundation Stage requirements.
V6 Spring 2022	5-7	Stages written in third person
V5 March 2021	4	Name of SENCo changed
V5 March 2021	8	Stages in this section revised based on guidance from the DfE on Complaints procedures.

Approval

This policy was reviewed and accepted by the Board of Trustees at its meeting in March 2026.

This policy is due for review in March 2027.

Appendix A - Stage 1 Complaints Resolution Form

Before progressing to Stage 2 of our complaints process, please complete this form to help us fully understand and address your concern.

1. Your Details

Full Name: _____

Address: _____

Contact Number: _____

Email Address: _____

Relationship to the School (e.g., parent, carer, member of public):

2. Details of Your Complaint

Please provide a summary of your concern:

.....
.....
.....

Who have you already spoken to about this issue? (Include names and roles if possible):

.....
.....

What steps have been taken to resolve your complaint at Stage 1?

(e.g., meetings, discussions, correspondence)

.....
.....

What response did you receive at Stage 1? (Summarise the outcome and who provided it):

.....
.....

3. Reason for Progressing to Stage 2

Why do you feel your complaint has not been resolved at Stage 1?

.....
.....

What outcome are you seeking from Stage 2?

.....
.....
.....

4. Supporting Documents

Please list and attach any relevant documents or correspondence:

(e.g., emails, letters, meeting notes)

.....
.....
.....

5. Declaration

I confirm that I have attempted to resolve my complaint at Stage 1 and wish to progress to Stage 2.

- Signature: _____
- Date: _____

Please return this form to the school office or email it to [insert school email address].

We will acknowledge receipt and inform you of next steps within 5 school days.

If you need any help completing this form, please contact the school office.