



POLICY FOR RESOLVING COMPLAINTS

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HENLOW CHURCH OF ENGLAND ACADEMY



POLICY FOR RESOLVING COMPLAINTS

Statement of Intent

Henlow Church of England Academy aims to resolve all complaints at the earliest possible stage and is dedicated to continuing to provide the highest quality of education possible throughout the procedure.

From time to time parents naturally have concerns about an aspect of their child's education. Often those concerns will resolve themselves, but on occasions parents may feel that the issue will need the school's help to be resolved.

As partners in your children's education the school wishes to work with you in the resolution of problems and this policy is designed to show what steps may be taken.

Once a complaint has been made, it can be resolved or withdrawn at any stage.

An Informal Concern

On most occasions these can be resolved immediately by speaking to your child's class teacher. It will be necessary for you to make an appointment at a time which is convenient to both of you.

Please let the teacher know the nature of your concern when making an appointment so that they may investigate further on your behalf if necessary.

The purpose of the meeting should be to establish a solution or to agree a plan of action to resolve the concern. If the meeting fails to do so then you should make an appointment to see the Year Leader.

The Year Leader will normally make further investigations on your behalf and meet with you to suggest a workable solution. If you feel that the matter is not satisfactorily resolved, you may request a meeting with the appropriate Deputy Head (Pupil Engagement / Curriculum Design and Pupil Progress) and then, if still not resolved, the Headteacher. If the meeting with the Headteacher does not resolve the situation you might wish to consider making the matter the subject of a formal complaint.

A Formal Complaint

If the concern is not resolved at the informal stage complaints can be emailed to the Headteacher (cearp@henlow.cbeds.co.uk). Complaints must also be put in writing and delivered by post or by hand to the school. The Headteacher will either investigate the matter or delegate this responsibility to a senior colleague. The complaint should include details which might assist the investigation such as names of potential witnesses, dates and times of events and copies of relevant documents.

On the conclusion of the investigation, the Headteacher will write to the complainant with the outcome of the investigation. If the outcome of the investigation results in the implementation of staff disciplinary procedures, such procedures will remain strictly confidential.

This process will be completed within 15 school days. If a complaint is received during a school holiday period, then every effort will be made to deal with this within 15 days of return to school. Where the situation is recognised as complex, and it is deemed to be unable to be resolved within this timescale, the Headteacher will contact the complainant to inform them of the revised target date via a written notification. The Headteacher may meet with the complainant to clarify the matter.

If the complainant is not satisfied with the manner in which the process has been followed or if the complaint is about the Headteacher, then in confidence, a full written complaint will need to be made to the Chair of Governors via the Clerk to the Governing Body (clerk@henlowacademy.co.uk). Communication by email should be followed up in writing and addressed to the Chair of Governors at the school address, delivered by hand or post. The Chair will write to you to confirm receipt of your letter, normally within 5 school days, and will investigate the matter fully unless there are exceptional circumstances which delay the investigation. In this case, the complainant will be informed of the reason for the delay and be told when they are likely to receive a formal response to their complaint.

On conclusion of the investigation, the Chair of Governors will write to the complainant with the result of the investigation. In some circumstances, the Chair may ask another governor to carry out the investigation on their behalf.

There will be occasions when the school has considered a complaint in accordance with its complaints procedure, but this has failed to resolve the matter. The complaint should be made in writing to the Chair of Governors via the Clerk, within 10 school days.

Written acknowledgement of the complaint will be made within 5 school days. This will inform the complainant that a Complaints Appeal Panel will be convened to consider the complaint within 20 school days.

This Panel will be made up of at least three members of the Governing Body.

Prior to the hearing, the Chair of Governors will have written to the complainant informing them of how the review will be conducted. The Headteacher will also have a copy of this letter.

The complainant will receive a written response explaining the final outcome within 15 school days. This letter will also explain whether there are any further rights of appeal and to whom they need to be addressed.

If a complainant believes that the Governing Body has acted illegally or arbitrarily in handling the complaint, then the complainant may make representation to the Secretary of State for Education. Where a complaint is judged by the Governing Body to be vexatious, the complainant will be informed that their complaint will be accepted and will not be investigated.

Please note that complaints regarding the following are not included in this document: Admissions; National Curriculum; Child Protection; Academy Exclusions; Special Educational Needs and Disabilities and complaints about governors. For further guidance on these matters parents are advised to contact the Department of Education (<https://www.gov.uk/complain-about-school>).

Review of the procedure

The complaints procedure will be reviewed every 2 years, taking into account the latest guidance issued by the DfE.