



## **COMPLAINTS POLICY AND PROCEDURES**

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## **PART 1: Managing External Complaints**

### **Scope**

There are no restrictions on the scope of issues that may be the subject of a complaint. All will be investigated, properly considered, and the findings made known to relevant individuals and groups with due respect for the appropriate confidentiality. Many issues may involve lack of information, poor communication or misunderstandings and can be addressed with an appropriate degree of informality. In such cases resolution can be sought at source with a Behaviour Ambassador, teacher, SLT or School Business Manager. If the concern or complaint cannot be immediately and informally addressed then more formal representations need to be made.

### **Who to notify of a general Complaint**

Minor issues may well be discussed directly with any member of the Senior Leadership Team, as all of these will have an overview of the School and how its procedures operate. All pupils also have an allocated Behaviour Ambassador who is in regular contact with parent/carers. They may well be in a position to informally deal with matters of concern or minor forms of complaint and act quickly in order to resolve difficulties.

All complaints, whether verbal or in writing, and whether informal or formal, are recorded in the Complaints Log Book.

### **More serious Complaints**

Where matters of complaint are felt to be more serious the Head Teacher should be contacted directly. At this stage the complaint may have to be in written form. In the absence or involvement of the Head Teacher matters should be referred to the Deputy Head Teacher or Mount Gilbert's Complaints Panel:

**Paul Roberts**

**Sandra Roberts**

If the complaint is about, or directly related to, the Head Teacher then matters should be referred to the School Business Manager or Deputy Head Teacher or the School's Lead Child Protection Officer. In such cases details should also be sent to the Chair of Governors

### **Child Protection (Safeguarding)**

Concerns related to Child Protection can be addressed directly to the school by contacting Kelly Hoggins the school's Safeguarding Officer or the member of the Governing body responsible for safeguarding Sandra Lane.

## Procedure for general complaints (See also Appendix ii)

- \* Staff addressing and resolving informal complaints are responsible for ensuring that the Head Teacher's Personal Assistant is informed of the complaint, in order that it can be entered into the Complaints Log.
- \* Where it has not been possible to resolve a complaint informally a Written Complaint Form (See Appendix i) should be submitted. (This may be scribed by a staff member on behalf of a parent/carer/other party as necessary).
- \* The Complaints Form is submitted to the Head Teacher. Receipt is recorded in the Complaints Log Book and a reference number is allocated by the Head Teacher's Personal Assistant.
- \* The Head Teacher then allocates the complaint to the appropriate Senior Staff Member (See Appendix iii) for resolution, or may choose to resolve the issue herself if appropriate.
- \* Allocation should take place within two working days of receipt of the Complaints Form.
- \* The allocated Senior Staff Member should inform the complainant that he/she has been allocated to resolve the issue. This should occur within two working days of the complaint being allocated.

The Senior Staff Member should:

- (i) outline how he or she plans initially to investigate the issue.
  - (ii) give a realistic estimate of the time this will take, indicating when contact will be made with the complainant to outline progress and discuss resolution. Except in exceptional circumstances and with the express approval of the Head Teacher, this should occur within ten working days of the complaint being allocated.
- \* All actions taken by the Senior Staff Member in investigating and resolving the issue are recorded on the Complaints Form.
  - \* Verbal feedback and a proposed resolution are provided to the complainant (as above). The date of contact is recorded in the Complaints Log Book, and the outcome is confirmed in writing to the complainant.
  - \* Should the complainant be unsatisfied with the proposed resolve, the request for a Complaints Panel to review and address the issue may be made. Such a request should be received by the school within ten days of receipt of the written proposal, and may be made in writing or verbally. The date of request is recorded in the Complaints Log Book.

- \* The Head Teacher is responsible for arranging any Complaints Panel Hearing. The Panel is identified by the Head Teacher and will consist of two Senior Staff Members, and a third person who has no role in the School's Management (i.e. those who are not members of the Senior Leadership Team: See Appendix iii). None of those identified as Panel Members will have had any prior involvement in the issue. The Chairperson will be provided with all the relevant information by the Senior Staff Member initially allocated to resolve the complaint and is responsible for seeking clarification and further information as necessary.
- \* The Panel Hearing will be held at the school at a mutually agreed time, within ten working days of the request being received, except where in exceptional circumstances the complainant agrees with the Head Teacher to extend this period.
- \* The complainant has the right to be accompanied to the Panel Hearing by a supporter.
- \* Panel Meetings are fully minuted, and the outcome confirmed in writing to the complainant within seven working days of the hearing, including details of any findings and recommendations made by the Panel.
- \* The Panel may identify their findings and make recommendations. These should be recorded on the Complaint Form and in minutes.
- \* The date of the Panel Meeting is recorded in the Complaints Log Book.
- \* The school will assume after ten working days of the date of the confirmation letter that the issue is considered resolved unless contact to the contrary is made by the complainant. Resolution will be recorded in the Complaints Log Book and on the Complaint Form which is retained in the Complaint File.
- \* With all due respect for confidentiality, the completed Complaint Form and minutes from the Panel Hearing are copied to the subject(s) of the complaint and the Inclusion Monitoring Group.

## **PART 2: Managing Pupil Complaints**

Pupils have a strong and supportive system for making complaints. This is fully explained within the pupils' Integration Meeting. Forms and information booklets are displayed in School Reception, on pupil information boards in main corridor and are freely available from the school office and form tutors. Staff will assist pupils in the completion of complaint forms as necessary. Appendix iv contains the Pupil Complaint Form that describes the manner in which complaints from pupils are managed and outlines responsibilities. Any person may make a complaint on behalf of a pupil. Appendix v contains the guidelines for Pupil Complaints Panel Meetings.

## **FURTHER INFORMATION AND MONITORING**

Pupil complaints are recorded in the Pupil Complaints Log. The HT's PA is responsible for the regular monitoring of the Pupil Complaints System.

Any serious complaint about the School or its employees shall be reported to the Governing Body at the next Full Governing Body meeting.

The Head Teacher will regularly review all records of complaints and take any necessary further follow-up action in relation to individual cases. A report will be forwarded to Governors on an annual basis.

An annual audit of complaints detailing the number of complaints received by the school and indicating the level at which they are resolved is undertaken, and is available upon request. The audit is numerical and does not contain confidential details (See Appendix vi). More detailed analysis will be used to develop and inform practice.

There will be a specific opportunity at all Pupil Reviews for any matters of discontent, however minor, to be raised by parents/carers, placing authorities or any other outside agency.

All visitors to the school have the opportunity to complete a 'service questionnaire' that also provides a medium for raising any concern.

### **Please Remember**

Complaints may well be constructive for the School; it is important for all concerns to be shared in order for our service to young people to be constantly appraised. Mount Gilbert School welcomes views and comments from pupils, parents and carers, agencies, national inspectorate bodies, employees and the public.

**MOUNT GILBERT SCHOOL COMPLAINTS FORM**

Ref No: \_\_\_\_\_

Name of person(s) making complaint: \_\_\_\_\_

Connection with the School, *e.g. parent, Social Worker, neighbour*: \_\_\_\_\_

Contact details: Address: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Telephone Numbers: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Have you previously informed or discussed your complaint with any staff member at Mount Gilbert School? YES [ ] NO [ ]

Has any attempt at informal resolution been made: YES [ ] NO [ ]

If YES please give details:-

<u>Date</u>	<u>Time</u>	<u>Name of Staff Member</u>	<u>Method (Phone/letter/meeting etc)</u>
_____	_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____	_____

Details of complaint (Please ensure that you include details of all relevant dates/times/locations/correspondence/names : use additional sheet if required)

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

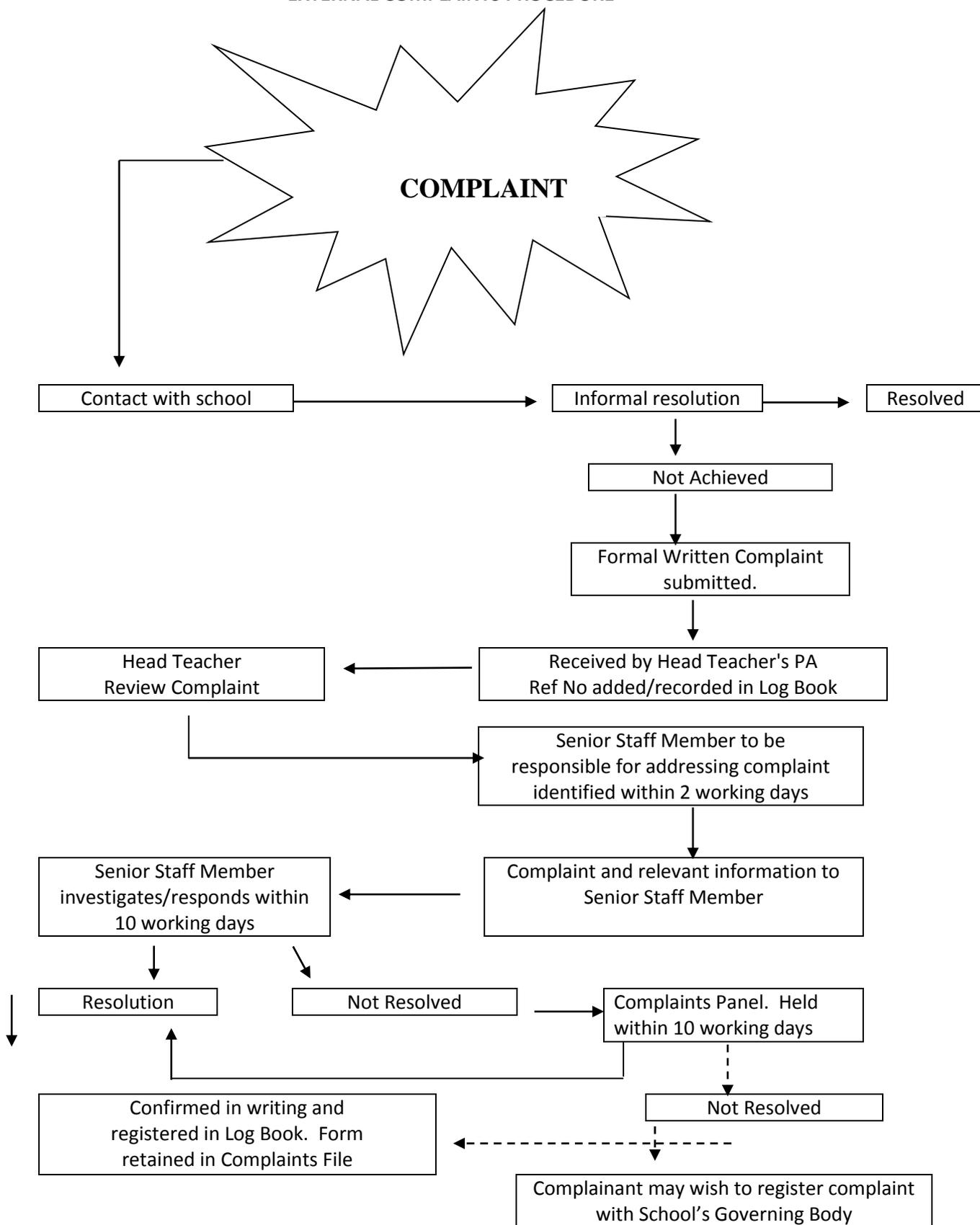
Form Completed By:  
Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Signature: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Please tick as appropriate: I am the person making the complaint [ ]  
I am completing the form on behalf of  
the complainant [ ]

Details of action and resolution/outcome on reverse  
PLEASE FORWARD TO HEAD TEACHER'S OFFICE, MOUNT GILBERT SCHOOL, HINKSHAY ROAD,  
DAWLEY, TELFORD TF4 3PP



**EXTERNAL COMPLAINTS PROCEDURE**



**CONTACTS****Senior Management Team**

Lisa Lyon	Head Teacher
Caroline Bedford	Deputy Head Teacher
Karen James	School Business Manager
Adam Spellman	Acting Assistant Head Teacher
Kelly-Leigh Doody	Assistant Head Teacher
Kelly Hoggins	Safeguarding Officer

**Behaviour ambassadors**

Katie Wellsbury	Lisa Saunders	Matthew Watton	
Tayher Miles	Olivia Molloy	Zoe Thomason	Jessica Hayward

**Department for Education and Skills****Telford & Wrekin Council Social Services**

Highfield House  
Wellington  
Telford  
TF2 1QX  
Tel. 01952 387500

# COMPLAINTS



This chart is to show you what to do if you're not happy about something that's happened, either with staff or another pupil.



PROBLEM

TELL STAFF

NOT SORTED

SORTED

**Kelly**

## Complaints Form

... will deal with your form if it's about Child Protection but if it's a complaint she'll pass it to ..

A member of staff will help you fill in your form if you wish. Your form is then given to Kelly

Remember it's always important to tell someone if you're not happy about something

**Paul**

... he'll speak to the person involved in the problem and then he'll speak to you ...



NOT SORTED

## Complaints Panel

Three members of staff will meet and discuss your complaint

NOT SORTED

SORTED

You may "appeal" against the panels decision. You will need to speak to The Head Teacher, a School Governor, your Social worker or Family Support Worker

**PUPIL COMPLAINTS FORM**

Ref No: \_\_\_\_\_

Pupil's Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Date and time of problem: \_\_\_\_\_ Where did the problem occur? \_\_\_\_\_

Which people were involved? \_\_\_\_\_

What is the problem? \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

What action did the staff take? \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Which member of staff is helping you fill in this form? \_\_\_\_\_

Your signature: \_\_\_\_\_ Staff signature: \_\_\_\_\_

Received by Kelly Hoggins: \_\_\_\_\_ Date/time: \_\_\_\_\_

Actioned: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Received by Paul Gamble: \_\_\_\_\_ Date/time: \_\_\_\_\_

Actioned: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\* Problem sorted – Pupil's signature: \_\_\_\_\_ Date/time: \_\_\_\_\_

\* Not sorted – referred to Complaints Panel: \_\_\_\_\_ Date/time: \_\_\_\_\_

## **PUPIL COMPLAINTS PANEL – GUIDELINES**

### Purpose of Panel

A Complaints Panel is convened with the intention of resolving issues for the child, when the Pupil Complaints Manager has been unable to do so.

### Members of Panel

The Panel Meeting (date/time/members/venue) will be arranged by the Pupil Complaints Manager and the Head Teacher.

The panel should consist of three senior members of staff, one of whom chairs the meeting. One panel member should be allocated to take minutes.

### Preparation

The panel should be provided with available and accurate information by the Pupil Complaints Manager to facilitate an objective overview of the matter in question. The panel should receive this documentation at least an hour before the meeting.

### Hearing

- \* All parties must be assured of the panel's confidentiality.
- \* Should the child choose to attend, with or without a staff representative (i.e. the person who has completed the complaints form for/with them), they should be given the opportunity to explain the situation and to add supporting information, if they wish to do so.
- \* The panel may ask questions but must be sensitive to the child, who may be anxious.
- \* Where the child chooses not to attend but is represented by a staff member, the panel must recognise that they may only ask questions of that staff member that they would ask of the child.
- \* Any speculative details, i.e. information not relating directly to the complaint should not be considered.
- \* The panel should aim to be entirely objective and try to discount historical/previous knowledge of the individuals concerned.

### Panel Outcomes

The panel may recommend a number of options which it feels will help resolve the issue for the child. They should recognise that an element of “Repair and Rebuild” work will almost certainly need to take place. This should be guided by the child’s readiness to participate in the process. If this is possible and acceptable to the child, the Pupil Complaints Manager can facilitate a restorative circle or restorative conference.

All recommendations must be verified by the Pupil Complaints Manager and the Head Teacher.

The panel may decide that it is unable to resolve the issue and may opt to pass it back to the Complaints Manager. Alternatively, the panel may conclude that the matter in question is beyond its remit and refer the issue on to the Head Teacher for further action.

### Feedback Process

- \* Minutes of the Complaints Panel will be passed on to the Pupil Complaints Manager who will retain the minutes with the other documentation relating to the complaint.
- \* The Chairperson of the meeting will feedback outcomes to the Pupil Complaints Manager, who will then be responsible for notifying:
  1. the Head Teacher, who will be responsible for taking any other appropriate action;
  2. the child (and where appropriate, the staff representative);
  3. any staff involved in the issue.
- \* The responsibility of the panel then ends and panel members should not respond to any requests for justification of outcomes by parties involved. All matters should remain confidential.

## ANNUAL COMPLAINTS AUDIT SUMMARY

COMPLAINANT	Total No of Informal Complaints	Total No of Formal Complaints	Total No of Informal Resolve	Total No of Formal Resolve by Senior Staff	Total No Complaints Panel	Total No Appeal (Pupil Procedure)	Total No External Referral	Total Currently Unresolved
Parents/Carers								
Placing Agencies								
Others								
Pupils								



## COMPLAINTS POLICY AND PROCEDURES

### KEY POINTS

- ☞ The School has a written Complaints Procedure for dealing with complaints from parents/carers, other adults and pupils.
- ☞ Copies of the procedure are available on request.
- ☞ Complaints may initially be considered informally.
- ☞ Formal complaints may be made in writing if informal resolution is not possible.
- ☞ A Senior Staff Member investigates and responds to complaints.
- ☞ A Complaints Panel may be held where it has not been possible to resolve a complaint. One Panel Member will be independent of the School's Management.
- ☞ The Panel may make findings and recommendations in writing, which are available to the Governor responsible for monitoring complaints, the Complainant(s) and the subject(s) of the complaint.
- ☞ A written record of all complaints is maintained in the Complaints Log Book and Complaint File.
- ☞ Records of Complaints and their resolve are treated with the necessary confidentiality.

## **LINKED DOCUMENTS**

- ▶ Statement of Purpose.
- ▶ Pupil Welcome Brochure.
- ▶ Grievance Procedure.
- ▶ Behaviour Management Policy.
- ▶ Child Protection Policy.