



# St Peter's Church of England (VC) Primary School

## Complaints Policy

*As a Rights Respecting School we recognise Article 5 'parental guidance and a child's evolving capacities' and Article 18 'parental responsibilities and state assistance' from the UN Convention of the Rights of the Child.*

### GENERAL PRINCIPLES

This procedure is intended to allow parent's and guardian's concerns or complaints to be raised relating to the School, or the services that it provides.

An anonymous concern or complaint will not be investigated under this procedure, unless the Chair of Governors accepts that there are exceptional circumstances, for example, a Child Protection issue.

To allow for a proper investigation, concerns or complaints should be brought to the attention of the School as soon as possible. In general, any matter raised more than 3 months after the event to which the complaint refers, will not be considered.

### RAISING A CONCERN OR COMPLAINT

#### Informal Stage

It is normally appropriate to communicate directly with the member of staff concerned. This may be by letter, by telephone, by email or in person by appointment. Many concerns can be resolved by simple clarification or the provision of information and it is anticipated that most complaints will be resolved by this informal stage. If the complaint remains unresolved, it should be raised with the Headteacher to investigate and respond to the complainant.

In the case of serious concerns, it may be appropriate to address them directly to the Headteacher [or to the Chair of the governing body, if the complaint is about the Headteacher].

The School will endeavour to give prompt feedback in response to any complaint received.

If there is uncertainty about who to contact, the School Office or the Clerk to the Governing Body can advise.

#### Formal Stage

If the concern or complaint is not resolved at the informal stage, the complaint must be put in writing and passed on to the Head teacher, [or to the Clerk to the Governing Body, for the attention of the Chair, if the complaint is about the Headteacher] who will be responsible for ensuring that it is investigated appropriately.

The letter of complaint should include all the details that might assist the investigation, such as names of potential witnesses, dates and times of events, and copies of relevant documents.

It is very important that a clear statement of the actions that the complainant would like the school to take to resolve the concern are included in the letter. Without this, it is much more difficult to proceed.

The completed letter should be placed in a sealed envelope and given to the Headteacher or to the Clerk to the Governing Body, as appropriate.

The Headteacher [or Chair] may invite the complainant to a meeting to clarify the concerns and to seek an informal resolution. If that invitation is accepted, the complainant may be accompanied by a friend, to assist in explaining the nature of the concerns.

It is possible that the complaint will be resolved at this stage.

If the complainant is not satisfied with the response or with the manner in which the process has been followed the complaint can be referred to the Governing Body for review. Any such request must be made in writing to the Clerk to the Governing Body within 10 school days of receiving notice of the outcome and include a statement specifying any perceived failures in following the procedure. In this case, the procedure described below will be followed.

### **Review Process**

Any review of the process followed by the school or of the investigation of the complaint will be conducted by a panel of 3 members of the Governing body. This will usually take place within 10 school days of receipt of the request.

The review will normally be conducted through a consideration of written submissions, but reasonable requests to make oral representations will be considered sympathetically.

The panel will first receive written evidence from the complainant and review it in full.

The panel will then invite representatives of the school [usually the Headteacher or the Chair of the Governing Body panel that has considered the matter], as appropriate, to make a response to the complaint.

The panel may also choose to invite the complainant or any other witnesses it feels relevant to a meeting at this stage, in order to gain further information/clarification concerning the complaint.

The panel may also have access to the records kept of the process followed.

The complainant and the School representative[s] will be informed in writing of the outcome, usually within 5 school days of the panel meeting.

For most complaints the decision of the Governors is the last step in the procedure.

However, should the complainant still not be satisfied with the response of the School & Governing Body the complainant can choose to contact the Secretary of State for Education.

### **Secretary of State for Education,**

Department of Education,

Castle View Hse,

East Lane,

Runcorn,

Cheshire.

WA7 2GJ.

Tel: 0370 000 2288 Typetalk: 18001 0370 000 2288 Fax: 01928 738248

**Agreement, Review and Amendments.** This policy must be agreed by governors and staff and reviewed at least annually or sooner when there is an occurrence that warrants an amendment.



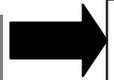
## Appendixes

Appendix 1	Flow Chart Complaint/Concern under Headteacher's Responsibility
Appendix 2	Flow Chart Complaint/Concern under Governing Body's Responsibility
Appendix 3	Complaint Form

**Concern - Informal**  
Please raise your concerns with your child's classroom teacher, who will try and resolve the issue.



Resolved ?



**Yes - No further action**



**No**  
Please raise your concerns with the Head Teacher who will try and resolve the issue.



Resolved?



**Yes - No further action**



**No.**  
**Formal - Stage 1**  
You will be given copies of the complaints procedure and complaint form and offered support in completing the form. You will have 5 (school) days to complete and return the form.



**Formal - Stage 1**  
**Form received by school**  
Is complaint about areas of Headteacher's responsibility or Governing Body's responsibility?



**Headteacher's responsibility -**  
Headteacher deals with matter or designates senior member of staff and writes to you with the outcome of the process normally within 10 (school) working days of receiving the complaint. If this date is not possible, the school will write to you giving a revised date for a response, normally within 20 working days.



Resolved?



**Yes. No further action**

**No.** Complainant wishes to move to Stage 2 of the procedure and notifies the school in writing within 10 (school) working days.

**Formal - Stage 2**

Complaint form passes to the *Chair of Governors* or nominated complaints governor who will make contact with the complainant within 5 (school) working days with a timetable, detailing the expected timescale for reviewing the complaint. This will be dependant on the complexity of the complaint.

**Resolved?**

**Yes.** No further action

**No.**

Complainant is given copy of Procedure for *Governing Body Complaints Panel Hearing*. A governor complaints panel is set up to consider the complaint within 10 (school) working days of the complaint being passed to the *Governing Body*. It consists of 3 governors, with no prior knowledge of the complaint, who will consider written and verbal submissions from the complainant and the Headteacher

The panel meets to consider the complaint and make a final decision on behalf of the *Governing Body*.

Panel writes to complainant with its conclusion within 5 (school) working days of the meeting

**Resolved?**

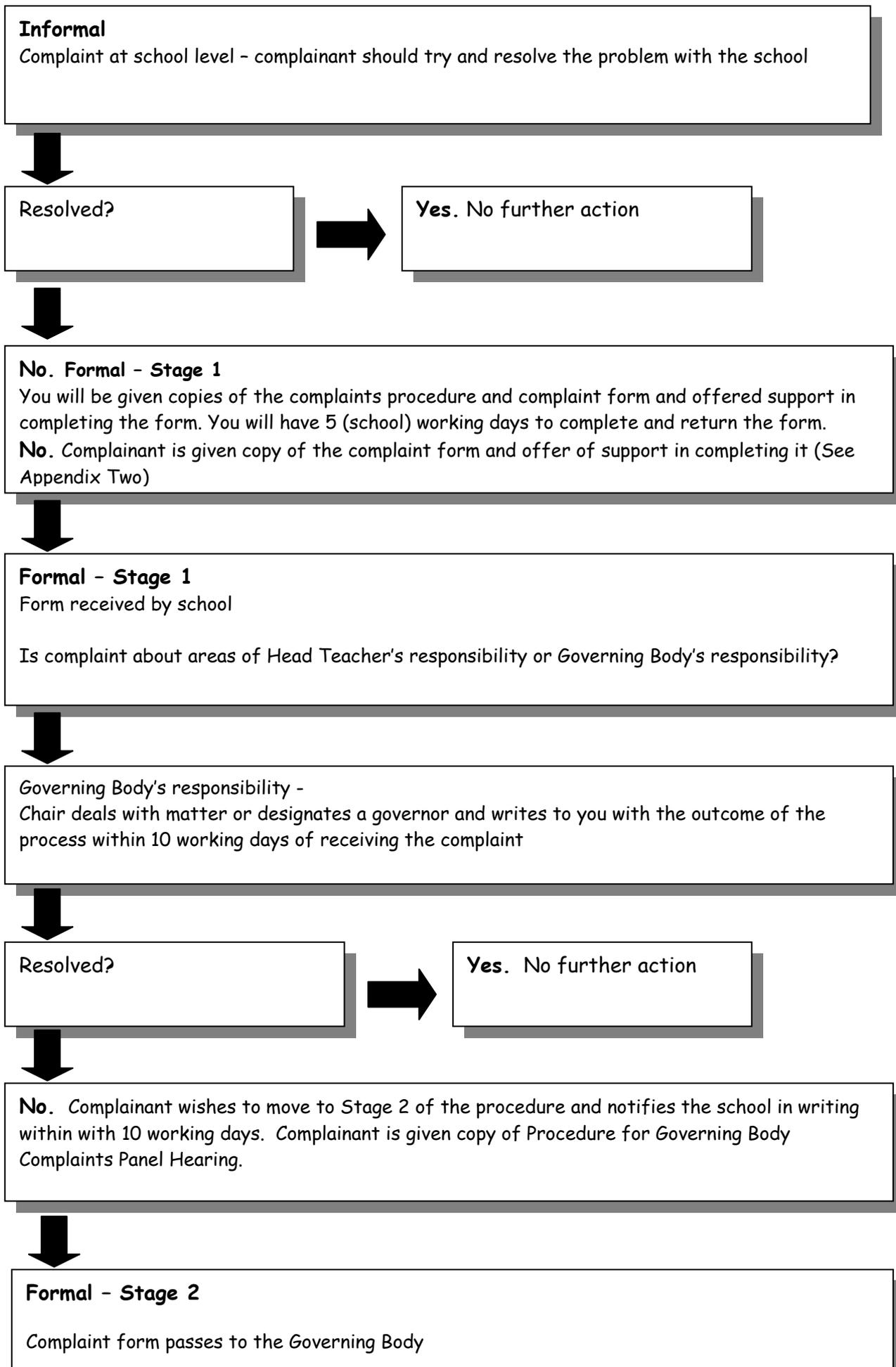
**Yes.** No further action

**No.**

The complainant may decide to write to the *Secretary of State for Education*, if they feel the school has acted unreasonably or not followed the correct procedures

# Complaint/Concern under Governing Body's Responsibility

## Appendix 2





A governor complaints panel is set up to consider the complaint within 20 working days of the complaint being passed to the *Governing Body*. (See Procedure for a *Governing Body Complaints Panel* hearing). It consists of 3 governors, with no prior knowledge of the complaint, who will consider written and verbal submissions from the complainant and Chairman of *Governors* (or designated governor)



The panel meets to consider the complaint and make a final decision on behalf of the *Governing Body*.



Panel writes to complainant with its conclusion within 15 working days of the meeting



**Resolved?**



**Yes.** No further action



**No.** The complainant may decide to write to the *Secretary of State for Education*, if they feel the school has acted unreasonably or not followed the correct procedures

**Complaints Form**

Please complete and return to ..... who will acknowledge receipt and explain what action will be taken.	
Your Name	
Pupil's Name	
Your relationship to the Pupil	
Address	
Postcode	
Daytime Tel Number	
Evening Tel Number	
Please give details of your complaint here	
What actions, if any have you taken to try and resolve your complaint	
What actions do you feel might resolve the problem?	
Are you attaching any paperwork?	
Signature	
Date	
<b>For Office Use only</b>	
Date acknowledgement sent	By Whom
Complaint referred to:	Date: