



ASHLAWN SCHOOL
‘A High Performing Specialist Academy’

COMPLAINTS PROCEDURE

Policy & Procedure Number	AP010
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Introduction

1. Ashlawn School Academy Trust are proud of the relationship they have with parents and other members of the community. Unfortunately, from time to time, concerns or disagreements can arise.
2. Your query may concern the curriculum for which the Governors have important responsibilities. You may just have a concern about a particular incident which you understand has happened at the school.
3. Whatever the issue, the important thing is to talk to someone at the school as soon as you can. It may be all that you need to do to solve the problem. If you are still unhappy after that, this document tells you how you can take the matter further. It tells you what will happen and whom to contact.
4. Problems are more easily resolved if they are raised as soon as possible after something has happened. The formal procedure only covers complaints about incidents which have happened in the previous three months. This may not apply if there are obvious reasons why the incident could not have been taken up earlier.
5. There are some complaints that cannot be followed up through these procedures. Separate procedures exist for complaints, for instance, on staff conduct, admission to or exclusion from school, statements of special educational need, and on religious education and collective worship. If you inform the school in the first instance of your concern, we can advise you if it is a matter which will be dealt with in a different way.

Informal Stage: Stage 1

6. If you have a query, discuss it with the Head Teacher or another senior member of staff. They will either respond immediately or as soon as they have the necessary information. You will be given a date by which they will get back to you.

The school can be contacted on 01788 573425, email info@ashlawn.org.uk or by writing to Ashlawn School, Ashlawn Road, Hillmorton, Rugby, Warwickshire CV22 5ET.

7. If you contact a member of the school's governing body they will ask you to contact the Head Teacher or the appropriate member of staff. This is to help you start at the right place and leave the Governors free to possibly be involved at a later stage.
8. If your complaint is against the Head Teacher then you should contact the Chair of Governors in the first instance by contacting the Clerk to Governors on 01788 573425, email burnst@ashlawn.org.uk or by writing to Tracey Burns, Clerk to Governors, Ashlawn School, Ashlawn Road, Hillmorton, Rugby, Warwickshire CV22 5ET.

Formal Stage: Stage 2

9. Most complaints will have been resolved by this stage. If you are still unhappy the next step is to make a formal complaint to the governing body.
10. You can write a letter or use the form at the end of this booklet to record your complaint.

11. You should send your complaint to the school's Chair of Governors. You may wish to keep a photocopy of the letter to use later. Your complaint will normally be investigated within 20 school days of the Chair of Governors acknowledging receipt of your letter.
12. The Chair of Governors or a nominated Governor will review the complaint to be certain that the matter has been dealt with at Stage 1.
13. Your complaint will be acknowledged and a hearing will be arranged within school hours. You will be given the opportunity to supply further information in writing at least 5 school days before the hearing.
14. The Clerk to the Governors will confirm in writing the time, date and venue for the hearing. You may take a friend or an interpreter, should one be required.
15. Four school days before the hearing the Clerk will send you any papers submitted for the consideration of the Panel including the original complaint.
16. At the hearing the Chair of the Panel will introduce the Panel members to you and remind you of the following process for the hearing.
17. An opportunity for you to speak to the Panel about your complaint.
18. The Governors on the Panel may ask you questions about what you have said or written.
19. You will be invited to make a final comment and indicate how you might hope the matter would be resolved.
20. You will then leave the hearing and the school will write to you with the outcome as detailed in Paragraph 26 below.
21. The Panel will invite the Head Teacher to join them in order to outline the school's position.
22. The Governors on the Panel may ask the Head Teacher questions about what has been said or put in writing.
23. The Head Teacher will have an opportunity to make a final statement.
24. The Head Teacher will leave the hearing.
25. The Panel will discuss what they have heard and reach a decision.
26. The Chair of the Panel will write to you and the Head Teacher within three school days of the hearing to let you know the outcome.
27. The letter from the Chair of the Panel will tell you how to proceed if you are not satisfied with the outcome.

Formal Stage: Stage 3

28. If you are not satisfied with the outcome of Stage 2, you may write again to the Chair of Governors stating which part of the process you are not happy with.
29. This complaint will normally be investigated within 20 school days of the Chair of Governors

acknowledging receipt of your letter.

30. Following the investigation by the Chair of Governors, you will receive a letter detailing the outcome of this investigation.
31. The letter from the Chair of Governors will tell you how to proceed if you are still not satisfied with this outcome.

Independent Review: Stage 4

32. If you are not satisfied with the outcome of Stage 3, you may request an Independent Review meeting.
33. The Independent Review Panel will consist of at least three people who were not directly involved in the matters detailed in the complaint, one of whom is independent of the management and running of the school.
34. Your request will be acknowledged and you will be asked to suggest dates and times for the Independent Review. You will be given the opportunity to supply further information in writing at least 5 school days before the review.
35. The Clerk to the Governors will confirm in writing the time, date and venue for the review. You may take a friend or an interpreter, should one be required.
36. Four school days before the review the Clerk will send you any papers submitted for the consideration of the Panel including the original complaint.
37. At the review the Chair of the Panel will introduce the Panel members to you and remind you of the following process for the review.
38. An opportunity for you to speak to the Panel about your complaint.
39. The Panel may ask you questions about what you have said or written.
40. You will be invited to make a final comment and indicate how you might hope the matter would be resolved.
41. You will then leave the review and the school will write to you with the outcome as detailed in Paragraph 46 below.
42. The Panel may ask the Head Teacher questions about what has been said or put in writing.
43. The Head Teacher will have an opportunity to make a final statement.
44. The Head Teacher will leave the hearing.
45. The Panel will discuss what they have heard and reach a decision.
46. The Chair of the Panel will write to you and the Head Teacher within three school days of the review to let you know the outcome.
47. The letter from the Chair of the Panel will tell you how to proceed if you are not satisfied with the outcome.

The Secretary of State: Stage 5

48. If you are still not happy, you can address your complaint to the Secretary of State, Department for Education and Skills, Sanctuary Buildings, Great Smith Street, London, SW1P 3BT. You should put your complaint in writing and enclose copies of your original complaint and any other relevant papers. A copy should also be sent to the Chair of Governors at the school.
49. The Secretary of State will inform you of how your complaint will be handled.
50. Ashlawn School will not consider any complaints when more than 12 months has elapsed since the date of the decision at Independent Review.

Complaint Form

Please use black ink if possible. Please continue on a separate sheet of paper if necessary.

1. Child's name (if applicable)

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2. Address

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..... Post Code.....

3. Telephone number: at home

 at work.....

If you do not have a telephone but a friend or neighbour is prepared for their number to be used please provide their name and number.

Friend / neighbour's name.....

Telephone number.....

4. Brief details of the problem

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6. To what date or period of time does your complaint relate?

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7. To whom have you already complained informally and when?

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8. Please give details of any more information you have to back up your complaint, such as letters and reports. If you cannot send photocopies, please send the original paper, which will be photocopied and returned to you.

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9. Do you have a solution that you wish to suggest?

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Signed Date