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Complaints Procedure November 2016

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Signed:  Chair of Governors		

Note:

All schools have a duty to have a complaints procedure and to publicise it to parents and pupils.

This document sets out Kent County Council's guidance for schools on complaints handling.

The guidance does not cover those matters already provided for by existing statutory procedures, which include:

- Admissions to schools
- Child protection
- Collective worship
- Curriculum – including public examinations, school records on individual pupils, etc
- Exclusions
- Grievances by or against staff

- Racial Incidents
- Special educational provision

A complaint can be made by any parent (or person deemed to have parental responsibility) or pupil of a school. They can complain where they feel they have been caused an injustice as a result of and act or omission of a “prescribed function” of a Headteacher, or an act or omission of the Governing Body. It is therefore in everyone’s interest that complaints about our school are resolved at the earliest possible stage. The experience of the first contact between the complainant and the school can be crucial in determining whether the complaint will escalate. To that end, the school must be clear about the procedures they will apply when they receive a complaint.

ASHFORD OAKS PRIMARY SCHOOL

COMPLAINTS PROCEDURE

Aims and Objectives

The school consider any complaint carefully and deal with them in a timely, fair and honest way. We give every opportunity for discussion about the complaint and aim to resolve it through open dialogue and common understanding.

Our Procedure Aims to

- Be easily accessible and publicised
- Be simple to use and understand
- Be unbiased
- Be non-adversarial
- Allow swift handling with fixed time-limits for action and keeping people informed of progress
- Ensure a full and fair investigation by an independent person where necessary
- Respect people’s wish for confidentiality, wherever possible (some information sharing may be necessary to carry out a thorough investigation)
- Address all points of issue, providing an effective response and proper redress, where necessary
- Provide information to the school’s senior management team so services can be improved.

Formal Complaints Procedure

Stage 1

If you feel your concern has not been addressed properly through informal discussions with the member of staff concerned, you should then approach a member of the Senior Leadership Team. If still unresolved to your satisfaction after that, you may wish to invoke this procedure.

This begins when you complete a ‘Complaints Form’, (Appendix 2). If you would like help completing the form, the school will be happy to provide someone unconnected with the complaint to do that.

Return the completed form, to the school’s office, in a sealed envelope addressed to The Headteacher and marked ‘Confidential’. You must return it within **three working days**. The

Headteacher will give you a written receipt for the complaint form within **three working days** after receiving it.

After looking into your concern or complaint, the Headteacher will write to you again, within 10 working days, and detail the results of the investigation. If the complaint remains unresolved to your satisfaction you should write to the school again (within 10 working days) and state the reasons. When the school receive this, Stage 2 of the formal procedure will begin.

Stage 2

Review by the Governing Body

Your 'Letter of Complaint' will be passed to the Chair of Governors (or a Governor nominated by the Governing Body) for review. The Chair of the Governing Body will write to the complainant to acknowledge receipt of the written request for the governing body to review the complaint. The acknowledgement will inform the complainant that three members of the school's governing body will hear the complaint within 20 working days of receiving the complaint. The letter will also explain that the complainant has the right to submit any further documents relevant to the complaint. These must be received in time for the documents to be sent to the three members (see flow chart Appendix 1).

A meeting of the Governors' Complaints Panel will be convened. No governors with prior involvement in the issues complained about will be included on the panel and it may be necessary to use reserves (previously agreed by the Governing Body) to ensure the Panel can meet within the set time. The Panel will give five working days' notice to all those involved of the date, time and place of the meeting. The notification will also inform the complainant of his/her right to be accompanied to the meeting by a friend/advocate/interpreter and explain how the meeting will be conducted and the complainant's right to submit further written evidence to the Panel.

At the panel hearing:

- The complainant will have the opportunity to present their complaint.
- The Headteacher will explain the school's position.
- Those present will have the opportunity to ask questions.
- Panel members will have the opportunity to ask questions of the complainant and the Headteacher.
- The Headteacher will be given the opportunity to make a final statement to the panel.
- The complainant will be given the opportunity to make a final statement to the panel.
- The chair will ask the complainant if he or she feels they have had a fair hearing.

The Chair of the Panel has responsibility to ensure that the meeting is properly minuted.

The Chair of the Panel will explain to the complainant and Headteacher that the Panel will consider its decision and that a written decision will be sent to both parties within 15 working days.

The review may decide your complaint is a disciplinary or capability issue involving a member of staff. If this is the case, we will tell you but cannot tell you which procedure it comes under or the results.

Stage 3

The Secretary of State

If a complainant wishes to go beyond the governors' complaints panel, they should be advised to contact the Secretary of State for Education. More information is available at: www.education.gov.uk/schoolcomplaints.

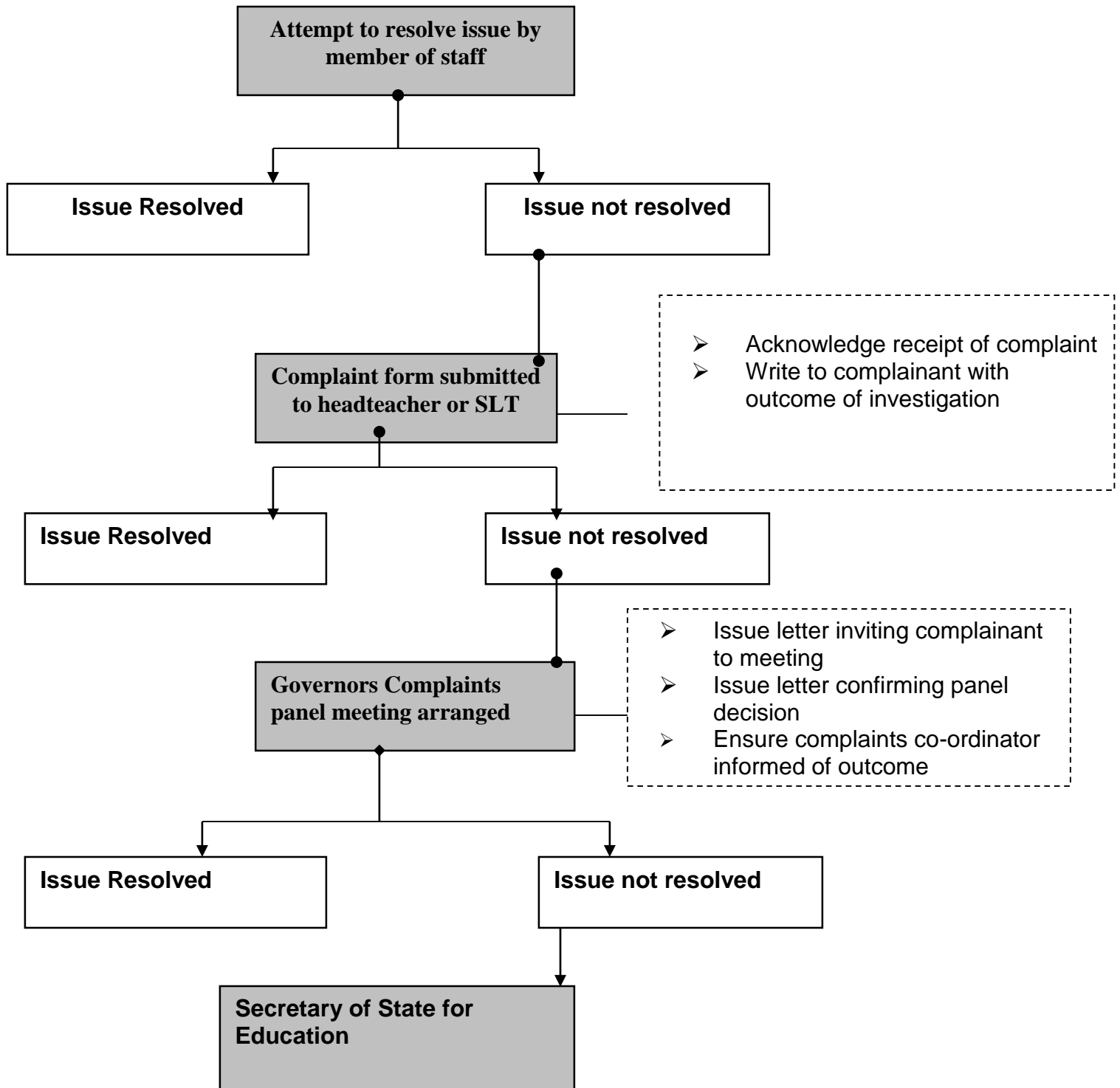
Monitoring and Review

To ensure the school are dealing with complaints properly, the Governing Body check this procedure regularly. As the Headteacher logs all formal complaints received by the school and records the results, the Governing Body examine the log and considers the need for any changes to the procedure.

Availability

A copy of this procedure is available to all parents on request.

Flowchart of complaints



Complaint Form

Please complete and return in a sealed envelope to the School Office, marked for the confidential attention of the Head Teacher/Chair of Governors.

Your name:
Pupil's name:
Your relationship to the pupil:
Address: Postcode: Day time telephone number: Evening telephone number: Mobile telephone number:
Please give details of your complaint.
What action, if any, have you already taken to try and resolve your complaint. (Who did you speak to and what was the response)?
What actions do you feel might resolve the problem at this stage?

Are you attaching any paperwork? If so, please give details.

Signature:

Date:

For official use:

Date acknowledgement sent:

By whom:

Complaint referred to:

Date: