



SKIS Complaints Policy 2019-20

Introduction

Your views are welcomed. In the spirit of true partnership between home, school and the community, you are encouraged to say what you think should go on within the school. Schools aim for high standards but sometimes things can go wrong or expectations are not met.

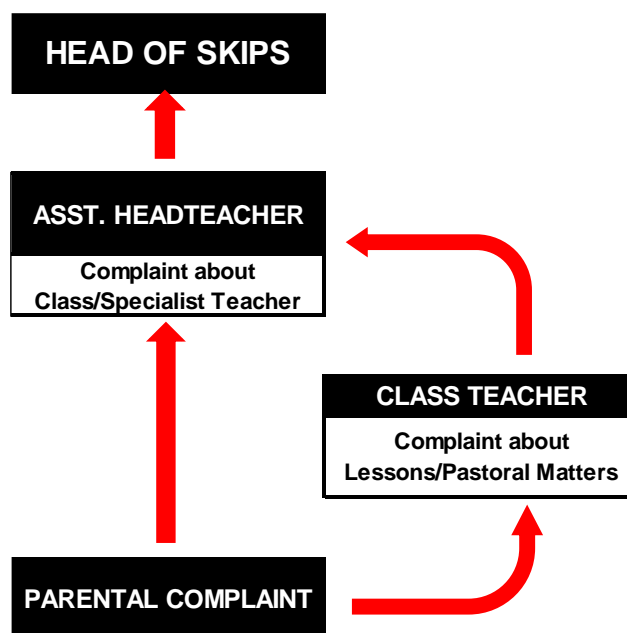
What is a complaint?

A complaint is an expression of dissatisfaction or disquiet which may be about an event that has happened, failed to happen or the way in which something was handled.

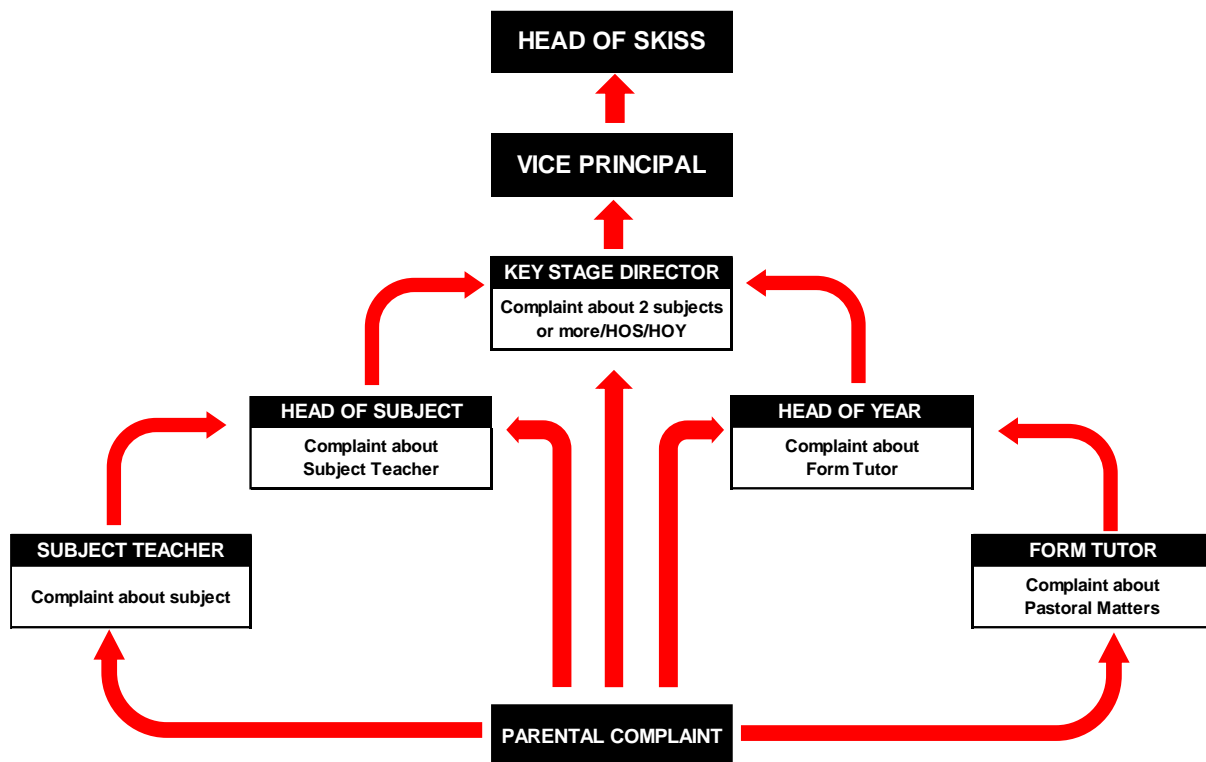
The vast majority of concerns can be resolved informally. It is in everyone's best interests that complaints are resolved at the earliest possible stage. This can usually be achieved through discussion and good communication. However, if you are not satisfied with the outcome, a formal procedure (as outlined in this policy) would then need to be followed when attempts to resolve the issue are unsuccessful.

Informal Process

Primary School Complaint Flowchart



Secondary School Complaint Flowchart



Formal Complaints Procedure

Before moving to the formal Complaints Procedure, it is recommended that the complainant reads the Student Handbook or any relevant school policy documents, so that it is clear which policy or school aspect the complaint relates to.

For complaints to be investigated fully you need to give full information and not make them anonymously.

What can you expect?

- There are set response times for each stage of the complaints procedure.
- A complaint register should be maintained for formal complaints (see below).
- Conversations and correspondence should be handled with discretion, but you need to be aware that some information may have to be shared with others involved in the complaint procedure.
- Raising a concern or making a complaint should not affect the relationship between the school and you or your child.
- When investigating your complaint the school should talk to your child, witnesses and others involved quickly.
- The school and the governors have a duty to act properly and investigate complaints impartially. Once investigations are complete the person making the complaint should receive a written response from the school within 20 school days.

Advice

- Many concerns can be resolved quickly with goodwill, often by making early contact with the class /subject/ Form teacher.
- Remember the more information you have the better able you will be to discuss the matter. Fact find by asking the school for information. Obtain copies of relevant policies from the school e.g. behaviour policy (including anti-bullying and exclusion), Inclusion policy, health and safety policy etc. Schools are very busy so please make an appointment for discussion through the school office. It helps to outline the purpose and how long you think you may need with the staff member/head teacher. Cover all the relevant points, but be as brief as you can. Avoid writing long letters or emails. Make it easy to read by using bullet points or headings. Include dates, times, names etc and explain clearly what your complaint is, what effect the issue is having on your child or you and what you would like to see happen. Keep it factual and avoid making judgements or hearsay. If more information is needed from you the person investigating your complaint will contact you.
- Sometimes it helps to take a friend with you. You may forget something if you are doing all the talking, they can do the listening for you and record main points and agreed action.
- Try to keep calm! Avoid confrontation – it will cloud the issue.
- Remember to ask “what happens next?”.

Complaint against a member of staff

- The complaint procedure is distinct from any formal disciplinary proceedings for staff. If a complaint did result in a disciplinary procedure, then the complaint would be put on hold and you should be advised of the delay and updated every three weeks.
- If a complaint is made against a member of staff they will be informed and have the opportunity to respond.
- The governing body will form a complaints panel as described below:
- Parents, carers or pupils who wish to pursue a complaint regarding a school issue can refer the complaint to a review committee of governors, known as a complaints panel. This should be formed from at least three people who have had no prior involvement with the complaint.
- The Principal should not be a member of the panel.
- Governors should be mindful of equality issues when looking at the composition of a complaints panel.
- The governors review hearing is the last stage of the complaints process.

Complaint against the Principal

- The complaint procedure is distinct from any formal disciplinary proceedings for staff. If a complaint did result in a disciplinary procedure, then the complaint would be put on hold and you should be advised of the delay and updated every three weeks.
- If a complaint is made against the Principal, he/she will be informed and have the opportunity to respond.
- A complaint against the Principal should be put in writing to the Chair of the Board of Governors.
- The governing body will form a complaints panel as described below:
- Parents, carers or pupils who wish to pursue a complaint regarding a school issue can refer the complaint to a review committee of governors, known as a complaints panel. This should be formed from at least three people who have had no prior involvement with the complaint.
- Governors should be mindful of equality issues when looking at the composition of a complaints' panel.
- The governors review hearing is the last stage of the complaints process.

Complaint Procedure

Stage 1. Informal

Your expression of concern should be made to the school at the earliest opportunity.

First talk to the teacher most closely concerned to clarify the facts and resolve through discussion. Follow the informal escalation process before making a formal complaint.

Stage 2: Formal Complaint

If you are not satisfied with the outcome at Stage 1 you may wish to make a formal complaint. This should be done in writing to the Principal, unless your complaint is against the Principal, in which case you need to write to the Chair of the Board of Governors. Your complaint should be acknowledged within three school days.

The investigation should be carried out and the outcome communicated to you within 20 school days. The written response should include a full explanation of the decision and the reasons for it (if additional time is required to formulate a response this should be explained to you). Where appropriate the response should include what action the school will take to resolve the complaint.

The Principal/Chair of BOG may delegate the task of collating the information to another member of staff but not the decision on the action to be taken.

Once a decision has been reached, the Principal/Chair of BOG should ensure that you are clear about the action taken and what to do if you remain dissatisfied (see below).

When the Principal/Chair of BOG receives your written complaint, it may be decided to refer the matter immediately to a governing body complaint panel.

Stage 3: Governing body

Complaints rarely reach this formal level but should you need to, you should make a formal complaint to the Chair of Governors within 10 school days of the decision from the school. This needs to be sent in a sealed envelope via the school office; for the attention of the Chair of Governors.

Your letter to the chair needs to set out details of your complaint including why you remain dissatisfied and what outcomes you are seeking. The chair will then set up a panel of governors to consider the complaint.

A governing body complaints panel should normally consist of three people, none of whom should have been previously involved in your complaint and one of whom should be independent of the school. They should let you know when your complaint is to be considered. If a meeting with you and others involved is considered appropriate, you should be given seven days' notice. The complaints panel should make their decision in private and write to you with their findings and any recommendations within seven school days.

This is the final stage of the school complaints procedure.