

**QUEEN ELIZABETH II  
(POMEROY)  
PRIMARY SCHOOL**



**Complaints Procedure  
(2021)**

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Queen Elizabeth II Primary School is dedicated to helping all children develop their full potential – academically, physically and socially- through a close working partnership with parents. We aim to ensure that all children make the most of the educational opportunities and experiences provided. Our priority is addressing the needs of all our children, whatever their ability.

Here at Queen Elizabeth II Primary School, we take complaints very seriously. We have the best interests of all our pupils and their families at the centre of all we do. In this regard, we encourage anyone with a concern to speak to us as soon as possible. If concerns are dealt with at an early stage, then they are more likely to be resolved and there is no unnecessary dissatisfaction.

Many issues can be addressed simply by talking to the relevant staff in school who will be happy to help. Open communication and regular engagement between the school staff and the wide range of users is vital to the effective management of the school.

We welcome open communication with our staff; you can speak to staff by:

- Notes
- Arrange a meeting with the teacher, either before or after school
- Ask the teacher to contact you during the day by phone

If you have any issues, please talk to the teacher as soon as possible. Concerns about matters other than in the classroom should be raised with the Principal. We take all concerns seriously and make every effort to resolve matters as quickly as possible.

## Aims

When dealing with complaints the school will:

- Encourage resolution of all concerns as quickly as possible
- Provide timely responses to concerns and complaints
- Keep you informed of progress
- Ensure a full and fair investigation of your complaint where appropriate
- Have due regard for the rights and responsibilities of all parties involved
- Respect confidentiality
- Fully address complaints and provide an effective response
- Take appropriate action to rectify the issue and prevent it happening again where appropriate
- Be responsive to learning from outcomes which will inform and improve practice within the school

A copy of the Procedure is available on the school's website or is available from the school on request.

## Complaints Procedure – At a Glance

### Stage One

Write to the Principal

### Stage Two

Write to the Chairperson of the Board of Governors

### Time Limit

Please contact the school as soon as possible, unless there are exceptional circumstances, complaints will normally only be considered within 6 months of the complaint to the school.

### Stage One

When making a complaint, contact the school Principal who will arrange for the complaint to be investigated. If the complaint is about the Principal, proceed to Stage Two.

As Mrs Robinson is a teaching Principal, concerns relating to the classroom can be raised verbally and a resolve explored, before embarking on Stage 2. We strongly encourage anyone with a concern to speak to us as soon as possible. Similarly, if a concern arises relating to a member of staff or to a classroom situation, please consider contacting the school to discuss possible solutions. Often resolve can be achieved. If concerns are dealt with in this manner, they are more likely to be resolved and there is no unnecessary dissatisfaction. If your complaint remains unresolved, initiate the complaint at Stage 1. Additionally, in some circumstances it may be more appropriate to initiate the complaint directly at Stage 1.

The school requires complaints to be made in writing at this stage.

Please provide as much information as possible, including:

- Name and contact details
- What the complaint is about
- What has already been done to try to resolve it
- What you would like the school to do to resolve the complaint

The complaint will normally be acknowledged within 10 school working days. This will be a short response and you will be sent a copy of, (or a link to) the school's complaints procedure. A final response will normally be made within 20 school working days of receipt of the complaint. This response will be issued in writing by the Principal and will indicate with reason whether the complaint has been upheld, partially upheld or not upheld. **If, for any reason, the consideration of a complaint takes longer to complete, you will be informed of revised time limits and kept updated on progress.**

**These timeframes may need to be reviewed if complaints are ongoing during school holidays periods.**

If you remain unhappy with the outcome at Stage One, the complaint may be progressed to Stage Two which is overseen by the Board of Governors.

## **Stage Two**

If the complaint is unresolved after Stage One, write to the Chairperson of the Board of Governors (care of the school and marked "Private & Confidential"). The Chairperson will convene a committee to review the complaint.

Please provide clear information and include the following:

- Reason(s) why you disagree with the stage one findings
- Any aspect in which you think that the school's complaints procedure was not fully followed

The chairperson of the committee will normally acknowledge the complaint as soon as possible but at least within 10 school working days. A final response will normally be made within 20 school working days from the date of receipt of the second letter. The response will be issued by the chairperson of the committee and will indicate, with reasons, whether the complaint has been upheld, partially upheld or not upheld.

If, for any reason, the review of a complaint takes longer to complete, complainants will be informed of revised time limits and kept updated on progress. These time frames may need to be reviewed if complaints are ongoing during school holiday periods.

## **Northern Ireland Public Services Ombudsman (NIPSO)**

If following Stage Two you remain dissatisfied with the outcome of your complaint, you can refer the matter to the Office of the Northern Ireland Public Service Ombudsman (NIPSO)

The Ombudsman provides a free, independent and impartial service for handling complaints about schools in Northern Ireland. You have the right to complain to the Ombudsman if you feel that you have been treated unfairly or have received a poor service from a school and your complaint has not been resolved to your satisfaction.

A complaint should normally be referred to NIPSO within six months of the final response from the school. The school must advise in its concluding letter that the complaint may be referred to the NIPSO if you remain dissatisfied.

Contact details for NIPSO are:

Northern Ireland Public Services Ombudsman  
Office of the Northern Ireland Public Services Ombudsman  
Progressive House  
33 Wellington Place  
Belfast  
BT1 6HN

Freepost: Freepost NIPSO

Telephone: 028 90233821

Freephone: 0800343424

E-mail: [nipso@nipso.org.uk](mailto:nipso@nipso.org.uk)

Web: [www.nipso.org.uk](http://www.nipso.org.uk)

### **Scope of Complaints Procedure**

A complaint is described as an expression of dissatisfaction with our work.

1.1 The Complaints Procedure sets out how any expression of dissatisfaction relating to the school will be managed. By taking concerns raised seriously at the earliest possible stage, it is hoped that issues can be resolved quickly and effectively.

#### **Some examples of complaints dealt with**

Not following school policy

Communication delays/lack of communication

Difficulties in staff/pupil relationships

#### **1.2 Complaints with separate established procedures**

Some examples of statutory procedures and appeals mechanisms are listed below. The list is not exhaustive. The Principal/Chair of Governors will advise on the appropriate procedure to use when the complaint is raised.

Matters may still be referred to NIPSO, if it is felt that maladministration has occurred

Exceptions	Contact
Admission/Expulsions/Exclusion of Children from School	<a href="http://www.eani.org.uk">www.eani.org.uk</a> Director of Operation & Estates, Sara Long
Statutory Assessments of Special Educational Needs (SEN)	<a href="http://www.eani.org.uk">www.eani.org.uk</a> Director of Children & Young People's Services Dr Clare Mangan
School Development Proposals	<a href="http://www.eani.org.uk">www.eani.org.uk</a> Director of Education John Collings
Child Protection/Safeguarding	<a href="http://www.eani.org.uk">www.eani.org.uk</a> Director of Children & Young People's Services Dr Clare Mangan

- 1.3 The school will not normally investigate anonymous complaints, unless deemed by the Chairperson of the Board of Governors to be of a serious nature. The decision of whether to deal with such complaints will be at the discretion of the Board of Governors.

## **What to Expect Under this Procedure**

### **2.1 Your rights as a person making a complaint**

In dealing with a complaint we will ensure:

Fair treatment

Courtesy

A timely response

Accurate advice

Respect for privacy – complaints will be treated as confidentially as possible allowing for the possibility of consultation with other appropriate parties about the complaint

Clear decisions for the reason

### **2.2 Your responsibilities as a person making a complaint**

In making a complaint it is important to:

Raise issues in a timely manner

Treat our staff with respect and courtesy

Provide accurate and concise information in relation to the issues raised

Use these procedures fully and engage with them at the appropriate levels

### **2.3 Rights of parties involved during the investigation**

Where a meeting is arranged the complainant may be accompanied but not represented by another person.

This procedure does not take away from the statutory rights of any of the participants.

*Complainant:* should be informed that they may be accompanied but not represented by another person during the process e.g. spouse, friend, family member or interpreter, provided this person is not offering legal representation or acting in an official capacity.

*Staff Members:* should be informed that they may be accompanied or represented by another person during the process e.g. union representative, colleague.

It may be appropriate to seek a written statement if a person is unable to meet for any reason.

Parties should normally be informed when a complaint is made against them and be able to see relevant correspondence.

## **2.4 Timeframes**

Where concerns are raised with the relevant Teacher or Principal, a response will normally be provided during the meeting or within an agreed timeframe.

Stage One – normally acknowledge within 10 school working days, response normally within 20 school working days

Stage Two – normally acknowledge within 10 school working days, response normally within 20 school working days

If, for any reason, the review of a complaint takes longer to complete, you will be informed of revised time limits and kept updated on progress.

These timeframes may need to be reviewed if complaints are ongoing during school holiday periods.

## **2.5 Equality**

The school requires complaints to be made in writing. Where this may present difficulties, please contact the school which will make reasonable arrangements to support the complainant with this process.

## **2.6 Unreasonable Complaints**

The school is committed to dealing with all complaints fairly and impartially and to providing a high quality service to those who complain.

There will be occasions when, despite all stages of the complaints procedure having been completed and the complaint having been reviewed by the Ombudsman, the complainant remains dissatisfied. If they try to re-open the same issue, the Chair of Governors will inform them that the procedure has been completed and that the matter is now closed. If the complainant repeatedly continues to contact the school with the same issue it may choose not to respond.