



SCHOOL COMPLAINT POLICY

Ysgol Llandygai

The purpose of this procedure is to provide a means of resolving complaints made against the Governing Body or members of staff of the school, or complaints about more general matters such as the management of the school, its curriculum, administration, policies or procedures. The Governors trust that it explains to all members of the school community:-

- The principles of the procedure and who is responsible for carrying out each part.
- The procedures to be followed.
- Timescales to be followed and how complaints will be recorded and monitored.

Principles

It is intended that this procedure should be:-

- Fair.
- Applied consistently.
- Capable of allowing complaints to be resolved as quickly and effectively as possible.

Use of Information

It is the view of the Governing Body of Ysgol Llandygai that complaints should be kept confidential with the only the complainant, the person who is the subject of the complaint, and those involved in investigating or making a decision on the complaint being aware of its detail and the content of any correspondence. The Governors believe that any person who is the subject of any complaint is entitled to know the substance of the accusation made against him/her and its outcome.

At all times, the school will endeavour to keep the complainant and the subject of the complaint informed as to the progress of any investigation and any resulting decision.

Anonymous complaints will not be investigated by the school. Should any anonymous complainant make an allegation that a criminal offence has been committed or that a child is at risk of serious harm, the complainant will be advised to contact the police or Gwynedd Social Services.

Allegation of Criminal Activity or Child Protection Issues

The referral of allegations against members of staff which may be matters falling to be dealt with under Child Protection Procedures are covered by nationally agreed guidelines adopted by the Local Education Authority. If the allegation concerns alleged criminal activity, the person dealing with the complaint should consider whether to refer the matter to the police having taken advice from the Education Authority.

Procedure for dealing with complaints

Attempts should be made to resolve all complaints **informally** in the first instance.

Dealing with complaints from persons other than members of staff

Initially complaints may be made either verbally or in writing and should be referred to the head teacher. If verbal the complainant should be given the opportunity to meet the head teacher, if so desired, with the aim of achieving a resolution within ten school days. The member of staff who is the subject of the complaint should be advised to seek advice of his/her trade union/association representative. The complainant should be informed of the outcome of the complaint. The head teacher should keep a record, which consists of the name of the complainant, the date of the receipt of the complaint, a brief description of the complaint, action taken to resolve it and any issues for action. A copy will be made available to the subject of the complaint.

Where it is not possible to resolve a complaint at this stage or where the complainant remains dissatisfied with the outcome, he or she should be informed that the complaint must be put in writing and the complainant given a copy of the School's Complaint Procedure by the head teacher. Upon receipt of the complaint, the Head teacher will acknowledge it in writing and will seek to provide a formal response within ten school days. When this is not possible, the complainant will be informed and given a revised timetable for resolution of the complaint.

In cases where the complainant still remains dissatisfied or where complaints are made about the conduct of the Head teacher, these complaints will be dealt with by the Chair of the Governing Body. In each case, it is deemed that the subject of the complaint is the Head teacher.

Upon considering the complaint, the Chair of the Governing Body may decide that the matter is capable of being dealt with by him/her alone, or may decide to call a meeting of the Discipline Committee who will act as the school's Complaints Committee. In such case, the Chair will ask the Clerk to acknowledge the complaint within five school days and to arrange a hearing to hear the complaint within fifteen school days of the receipt of the complaint. The Head teacher and the complainant shall be entitled to attend and both parties must submit any written evidence which it is intended to present to the meeting at least five school days before the date of the hearing. The committee will not consider any documentation submitted after this date.

Where a complaint has originated from a pupil, it is expected that his or her parent will be aware of its detail and will be able to put the complaint in writing on the child's behalf once the formal stage of the procedure has been reached.

When the committee has considered all the evidence, it will deliberate and reach a decision in private. If a representative of the LEA is present to give advice, he or she will leave once the advice has been given.

The committee's decision will cover:-

- Whether or not the complaint is upheld.
- Any action to be taken by the Governing Body, Head teacher and/or members of staff in light of the decision.
- Any recommendation for changes to school policies or procedures to be considered by the Head teacher or full Governing Body as appropriate.

The committee's decision should be sent in writing to the complainant within five school days. The letter to the complainant will make clear that the complaint has been thoroughly investigated and that the matter will not be reopened. Any subsequent complaint from the same person will only be dealt with if it is demonstrably different from matters raised under a previous complaint.

Complaints from staff

Members of staff with a complaint should in the first instance seek to resolve the matter informally, if necessary with the assistance of the Deputy Head teacher. When an informal resolution is not possible or where the complaint is against the Deputy Head teacher it should be raised with a member of the Head teacher who will again seek to deal with the matter informally in the first instance.

Where an informal resolution is not possible or where the complainant remains dissatisfied, the complaint must be put in writing by the complainant. Receipt will be acknowledged within five working days. The Head teacher will arrange for the matter to be investigated. He may decide to call a hearing at which both the complainant and the subject of the complaint shall be required to attend. Both parties will have the right to be represented by a friend or trade union representative. The hearing will be held within fifteen working days of receipt of the written complaint and both parties must submit any written evidence which it is intended to present to the meeting at least five school days before the date of the hearing. The Head teacher will not consider any documentation submitted after this date.

Having considered the evidence, the Head teacher may come to one of the following decisions:-

- The complaint is unsubstantiated.
- The complaint may best be dealt with by issuing informal advice to one or more parties.
- The matter should be dealt with under the school's Disciplinary Procedures.

A complainant who remains dissatisfied at the manner in which his/her complaint has been handled will be advised that he/she may have recourse to the school's Grievance Procedure, if so desired.

Investigating complaints

When a complaint is referred from any source to the Head teacher, she will arrange for the matter to be investigated by one of the school's Deputy Head teachers. The Governors believe it is important that any decision, particularly which may lead to disciplinary action against a member of staff, should be undertaken by a person other than the one who has undertaken the investigation, in order to avoid any conflict between the Head teacher acting as judge and jury. Where the complaint is against the Head teacher, it will be investigated by the Chair of the First Committee and where the complaint is against the Chair of Governors, it will be investigated by the Vice Chair. Complaints against the whole Governing Body will be forwarded to the Local Education Authority by the Clerk.

Withdrawal of complaints.

Where a complaint has been submitted in writing, if the complainant decides to withdraw it, then the withdrawal must be in writing as well.

Record keeping

Records of all formal complaints will be kept for three years from the date of receipt. Records of informal complaints will be destroyed at the end of the academic year in which they were concluded.

Monitoring

The Governors may require the Head teacher and/or the Chair of the First Committee to report to them periodically on the number of written complaints received, how many were dealt with within the timescales specified, how many were resolved by the Head teacher, how many by the Chair of the First commit and how many proceeded to hearing.

Policy Adopted: Summer 2012

Chair of Governors: Dr Einir Young

Head teacher: C Hughes

Complaint Record Form

Name of Pupil:**Year:**

Name of Complainant (If Different from Above)

Date of Receipt:.....

Nature of Complaint

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Action Taken

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Signed