

Fox Ashburnham Federation Complaints Policy and Procedure

From time to time, usually based on misunderstanding or absence of dialogue, though sometimes as a result of the school's human error, a person may wish to make a complaint. Some complaints are minor and can be easily remedied. Sometimes complaints are more complex. Complaints may be made by parents or carers but also by a member of the wider community or a representative of an ex-pupil. The Fox Ashburnham governing body and leadership takes all complaints seriously and seeks to resolve them.

We aim to:

- Follow the guidance of the [DfE School Complaints Procedure](#). This policy should be read in conjunction with that document.
- Provide an effective and efficient process, which is fair to parents and carers and where the resolution is in the best interests of pupils.
- Resolve concerns and complaints informally where at all possible.
- Resolve complaints with alacrity having considered all available evidence.
- Ensure that any resolution in no way compromises the efficiency of the school or teaching and learning of the school community or compromises equality of opportunity for all.
- Handle all complaints with sensitivity and ensure confidentiality to the extent it is possible and appropriate to do so.
- Resolve complaints in the most straightforward manner possible and avoid escalation.

This policy does not apply to:

- Complaints from governors or disputes between governors.
- Admissions, statutory assessments of Special Educational Needs (SEN), or matters related to Education, Health and Care Plans (EHC), school exclusions, child protection, or school re-organisation proposals. These are covered by separate processes. See the DfE School Complaints procedure for more information.
- Complaints or grievances from staff or ex-employees or related to individual or collective staff disputes, which are dealt with a separate staff complaints policy.
- Complaints about the Local Authority, its employees, or its services.

Informal Stage

If you have a concern it should first be raised with the person with whom it has directly arisen. Should this not remedy matters then it should be raised with the head teacher. If you have a concern about the head teacher you may email the Chair of Governors to discuss your concern informally. Wherever possible we will aim to resolve your complaint at the informal stage.

Formal Stage

If you are not satisfied with the resolution achieved at the informal stage or the way a concern has been addressed, then you may email or write to

the Chair of Governors stating that you are making a formal complaint. Please include the following information:

1. Details of your complaint
2. What action, if any, have you already taken to try and resolve your concern. (Who did you speak to and what was the response)?
3. What actions do you feel would put things right?

The Chair of Governors will aim to reply to you within 3 working days specifying:

- The person who will look into your complaint.
- How they will contact you and by when.
- What the next stages might be.

Formal Complaint Stages

The following represents the most likely recommended stages for a complaint (if the complaint is about the head teacher go straight to stage 3. If the complaint is about the Chair of Governors, then it will be heard at stage 3 by the Vice-Chair).

1. Complaint heard by a relevant member of staff and/or member of the Leadership Team designated to the task.
2. Complaint heard by the Head teacher.
3. Complaint heard by the Chair of Governors or their delegate.
4. Complaint heard in person by a panel of two Governors.

At each stage the person handling the complaint will:

- Acknowledge receipt of the complaint.
- Write to you with the outcome of investigation within 10 working days. If the complaint is complex and requires further investigation you will be notified of this within the same time period.
- Ask if the complaint may be closed and if not, offer information on how to move to the next stage.
- Inform the complaints coordinator of the outcome.

If you raise again an issue that has already been taken through the complaints procedure, after the school has taken every reasonable step to address your need and you been given a clear statement of the school's position, the school reserves the right upon consultation with the governing body not to respond further.

If you have exhausted the school's internal complaints stages without resolution, you may lodge your complaint with the Secretary of State for Education by writing to:

The School Complaints Unit (SCU) at:
Department for Education
2nd Floor, Piccadilly Gate
Manchester
M1 2WD

Or via their online complaints form:

<https://www.gov.uk/complain-about-school>

Learning from complaints

Once the school's internal complaints process has been closed your complaint will be discussed (with respect for confidentiality) at the following Full Governing Body meeting.

The Governors along with the leadership team will discuss what lessons have been learned and what actions might be necessary so that services can be improved.