



*Ysgol Gyfun Gymraeg  
Bro Myrddin*

# **Complaints Procedure Policy**

Date reviewed by the Governing Body: 30 March 2017

Signature of Chairperson: \_\_\_\_\_

Date reviewed by the Governing Body: \_\_\_\_\_

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## COMPLAINTS PROCEDURE

Ysgol Bro Myrddin is committed to deal with complaints effectively. We aim to explain any matters you are uncertain of. If possible, we will rectify any mistakes we make and will apologise. We aim to learn from our mistakes and use that experience to improve what we do.

We define a complaint as 'an expression of dissatisfaction in relation to the school or member of its staff that requires a response from the school'.

This complaints procedure supports our commitment and it's a way to ensure that anyone who has an interest in the school can express a concern and be confident that it will receive full consideration and, if it is believed that there is a foundation to your concerns, the matter will be treated appropriately and forthwith.

When you have any concerns or when you make a complaint, we will respond as usual in the way explained below. Sometimes, it is possible that you may have concerns about matters which aren't determined by the school, and in such cases we will let you know to whom you should present a complaint. On other occasions, it is possible that you may have concerns which are covered under other procedures, and in such cases, we will explain how we deal with your concerns.

If the matter is a cause for concern to you or the complaint involves another body as well as the school (for example, the local authority), we will co-operate with it to decide how to deal with the matter that causes concern to you.

If you come to us for the first time, you should give us a chance to respond. If you are unhappy with that response, you may make your complaint by using the procedure that is described below. There are means to settle the majority of concerns quickly, by talking to the relevant individual in the school, without the need to use formal procedures. We encourage you to phone or arrange a meeting to discuss matters first.

We believe that every complainant has the right to have a hearing, to be understood and respected. But school staff and governors have the same right. We expect you to be courteous and polite. We will not tolerate offensive, insulting and unreasonable behaviour. Neither will we tolerate unreasonable phone calls nor cases where matters are pushed in an unreasonable way or disturbed complaints.

We will consider all concerns and complaints in an open and fair way.

The school will respect peoples' rights and feelings every time and will make every effort to secure confidential information.

Maybe we will need to extend timetables to deal with your concerns or complaints after talking to you.

Maybe we will ask the local authority for advice.

Some types of concerns or complaints can raise matters which need to be treated in another way (except for this complaints policy); in such cases, we will explain why and note what steps we will take.

The governing body will keep a record of the documents used to investigate the matter which is a cause for concern to you or your complaint for seven years after dealing with the matter. The minutes will be kept in the school and revised by the governing body after seven years to decide if they need to be kept for a longer period.

Anonymous complaints are recorded but it is a matter for the school to decide on according to its own discretion if the complaint needs investigating, depending on the nature of the complaint.

If considered that the only reason for making the complaint is to cause harm or offence to individuals or the school, the governing body will ensure that minutes of the investigations and steps taken are kept, including the reasons for 'not taking actions'.

The following chart shows the complaints procedure. There are up to three steps, Steps A, B and C. It is possible to solve the majority of complaints during Steps A and B. You may bring a relative or someone with you for support at any stage during the process but you will be expected to speak for yourself. However, if the complainant is a pupil, we acknowledge that it is reasonable for the one who is supporting him/her speaks for and/or gives advice to him/her.

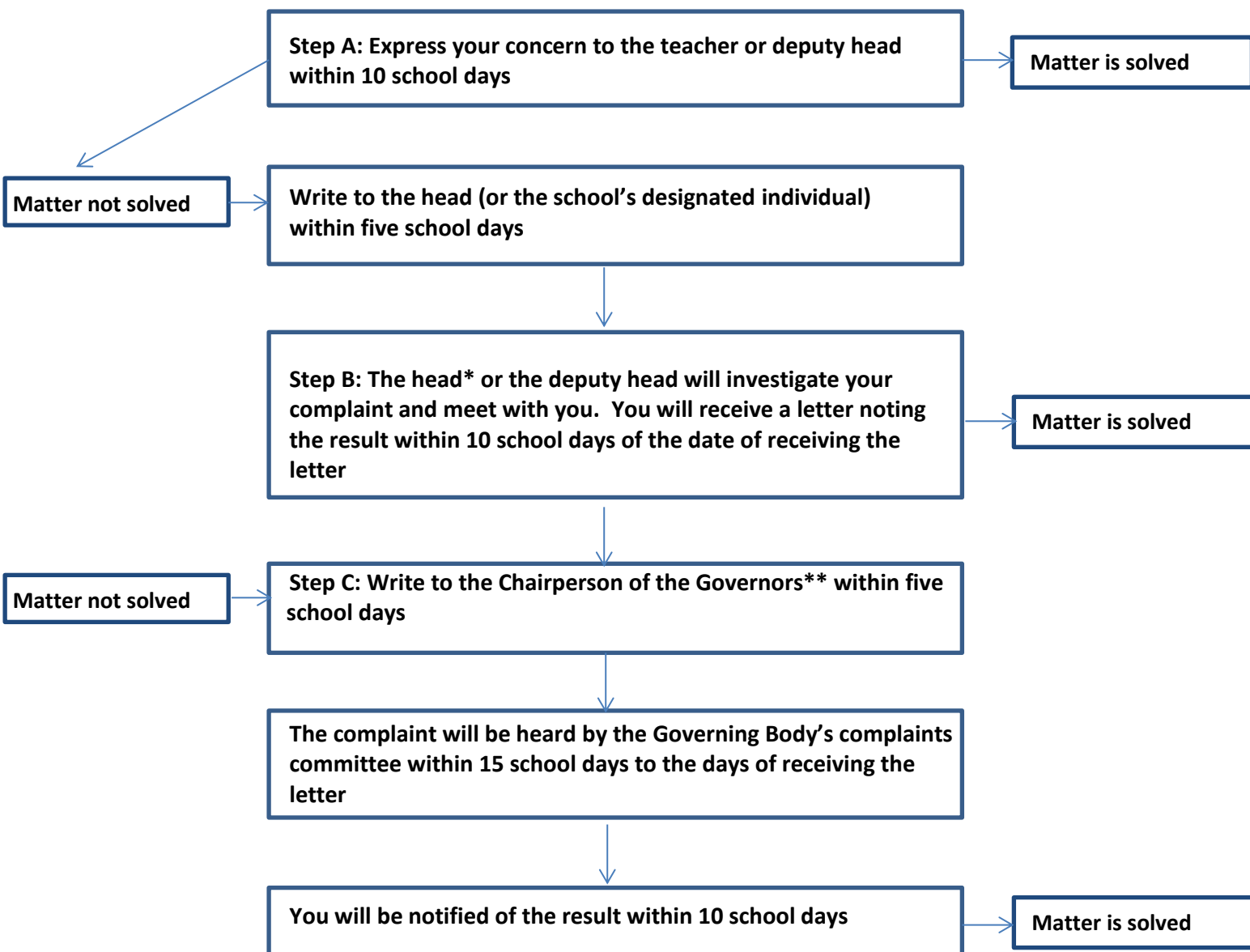
To the possible degrees, the matter that is of concern to you or your complaint will be treated confidentially. However, on occasions, it may be necessary for the individual dealing with your concern or complaint consider if there is a need to inform anyone else in the school about the matter or complaint in order to deal with it appropriately.

If you are a pupil under 16 years old and wish to express a concern or make a complaint, we will ask for your permission before contacting your parent/parents/guardian/guardians. If you are a pupil under 16 years old and are part of a complaint in any other way, we might ask your parent/parents or your guardian/guardians to be present in any conversations or interviews with you.



### Appendage A: A summary of how to deal with concerns or complaints

This procedure is followed if a concern or complaint about the school is presented, as long as the concern or complaint is not relevant to other statutory procedures.



*\*If the complaint is to do with the head, you should write to the chairperson of the governing body.*

*\*\* If the complaint is to do with the governors' chairperson; you should write to the vice-chairperson.*

*The timetables shown are targets and they are flexible; it is of benefit to everyone that the complaint is solved as soon as possible. The school will work with you to ensure that the time allocated to deal with a matter that causes concern to you or your complaint is reasonable and it helps to get an answer to the problem.*

## Step A

If there is a matter that is causing concern to you, it can often be solved quickly by talking to a teacher or head of year or deputy head. You should express your concern as soon as possible; usually, we would expect you to express your concern within 10 school days of any incident. The more you delay, the harder it will be for those who deal with the matter effectively.

If you are a pupil, you can express your concerns to your school council representative, your class tutor or your head of year or deputy head. This will not prevent you from presenting a complaint at a later date if you feel that the matter(s) raised by you are not treated appropriately.

Usually, we will try to let you know what we have done or intend to do about the matter that causes concern to you within 10 school days, and if this not possible, we will talk to you and agree with you on an expected timetable.

The individual responsible for keeping an eye on the means of going about dealing with the matter that has caused you a concern or your complaint will give you the recent information about the progress that is made. The individual will also keep a record of the matter that is causing concern to you in order to refer to that record in the future.

## Step B

Usually, we would expect the matter that is causing concern to you to be resolved informally. If you feel that the initial matter that caused concern to you has not been treated appropriately, you should present your complaint to the head in writing.

We would expect you to aim at doing this **within five school days to the date you receive a response to the matter that has caused you concern, and that because it is of benefit to everyone that a complaint is solved as soon as possible**. Enclosed is a form (**Appendage A**) that could be useful for you. If you are a pupil, we will explain the form to you, help you to fill it in and give you a copy.

If the concern **involves** the head, you should present your complaint in writing to the chair of governors, sending it to the school address, asking him/her to investigate the complaint.

In every case, the deputy head can help you to put your complaint on paper if needed.

If you are a part of a complaint in any way, the deputy head will explain what will happen and the type of support that is available to you.

The deputy head will invite you to discuss your complaint in a meeting. Timetables to deal with your complaint are agreed with you. We will try to meet with you and explain what will happen, usually within 10 school days of the letter reaching you. The deputy head will complete the investigation and will inform you of the result in writing.

## Step C

It is rare for the complaint to go further. However, if you still feel that the complaint has not been treated fairly, you should write, through the school's address, to the chair of the governors outlining your reasons for asking the governing body to consider your complaint. You will not need to write all the details of your complaint again.

If you prefer, instead of sending a letter or email, you can talk to the chair of governors or the deputy head, who will make note of what is discussed and what will solve the problem in your opinion. Usually, we would expect you to do this within five school days of receiving an answer from the school. We ask you to read the notes, or listen to the notes being read, and signed as a valid record of what was said. We will let you know how we will deal with the complaint and send you a letter to confirm this. The complaints committee will usually hold a meeting with you within 15 school days of receiving your letter.

The letter will also tell you when the complaints committee should receive all the evidence and documents for consideration. Everyone who is part of the complaint will see the evidence and documents before the meeting, and we will ensure that everyone's rights in respect of information privacy are protected. The letter will also record what we have agreed with you with respect to where and when the next meeting will be held and what will happen. Maybe the timetable will need to be changed in order for everyone to be present in the meeting, in order to collect information or ask for advice. In such cases, the individual who deals with the complaint will agree on a new date for a meeting with you.

Ordinarily, in order to deal with the complaint as soon as possible, the complaints committee will not re-arrange the meeting more than once. If you will ask for the meeting to be re-arranged more than once, the committee may be of the opinion that it would be reasonable to make a decision on the complaint in your absence in order to avoid unnecessary delay.

We will write to you within 10 school days of the meeting to explain the outcome of the governing body's complaints committee considerations. We will keep record of every conversation and discussion in order to refer to them in future and in order for the full governing body to review them. These records are kept for at least seven years.

The governing body's complaints committee will hold the final decision on complaints.

## Special circumstances

When a complaint is made about any of the following people or groups/bodies, the complaints procedure will be used in a different way.

- i. **Governors or group of governors:** The matter causing concern or complaint will be referred to the chair of governors who will conduct the investigation. Otherwise, the chairperson can delegate the matter to another governor who will conduct the investigation. Step B and the consecutive steps of the complaints procedure will be used.
- ii. **Chair of Governors or the head and chair of governors:** The vice-chairperson of governors will be notified and will investigate the complaint or delegate it to another governor. Step B and consecutive steps in the complaints procedure will be used.
- iii. **Chairperson of governors and vice-chairperson of governors:** The complaint will be referred to the governing body's clerk who will notify the complaints committee's chairperson. Step C of the complaints procedure will be used.
- iv. **The full governing body:** The complaint will be referred to the governing body's clerk who will notify the head, chair of governors and the local authority. Usually, the authorities will agree on arrangements with the governing body to conduct an independent investigation to the complaint.
- v. **The head:** The matter causing concern or complaint will be referred to the chair of governors and he/she will conduct the investigation or, if possible, will delegate the matter to another governor. Step B and the consecutive steps of the complaints procedure will be used.

In every case, the school and the governing body will ensure that the complaints are treated in an open and fair way, without prejudice.

We will take your concerns and complaints seriously and, if we have made any mistakes, we will try to learn from them.

If you need help to voice your concerns, we will try to assist you. If you are a young person and if you need additional support, the Welsh Government has established MEIC, a national support line that offers 6 to children and young people. Advice and support are also available from the Children's Commissioner for Wales.

The governing body has consulted with staff and pupils on this policy, and will consult further if any changes are made in the future.



## Appendix A: Exemplary complaints form

Usually, the individual who had the problem should complete this form. If you make a complaint on behalf of someone else, you should also complete Section B. Please note, before we go on to deal with the complaint that we need to satisfy ourselves that you have the authority to act on behalf of the individual in question. If you are a pupil, the school will help you complete this form, the school will explain it to you and give you a copy once it has been completed.

### A. Your details

<b>Surname</b>	
<b>First name(s)</b>	
<b>Title: Mr/Mrs/Ms/other</b>	
<b>Address and post code</b>	
<b>Daytime phone number</b>	
<b>Mobile phone number</b>	
<b>Email address</b>	

What is the best way for us to contact you?

### B. If you are making a complaint on behalf of anyone else, note his/her details

<b>His/her name in full</b>	
<b>Address and post code</b>	
<b>What is your relation to him/her?</b>	
<b>Why are you making this complaint on his/her behalf?</b>	

### C. Regarding your complaint (you can continue your answers on separate pages if needed)

C.1 The name of the school you're complaining about.

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C.2 In your opinion, what did they do wrong or what they didn't do.

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C.3 Describe the effect this has had on you.

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C.4 When did you become aware of the problem for the first time?

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C.5 If there are more than three months since you became aware of the problem for the first time, state the reason why you haven't complained before now.

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C.6 In your opinion, what should be done to solve the situation?

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C.7 Have you already notified a member of staff about your complaint? If you have, give brief details regarding how and when you did that.

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**Complainant's signature:** ..... **Date:** .....

**Signature if you are making a complaint on behalf of someone else**

**Signature:** ..... **Date:** .....

This form and any other documents to support your complaint should be sent to:  
The deputy head, Ysgol Gyfun Gymraeg Bro Myrddin, Croesyceiliog, Carmarthen, SA32 8DN.