



## Complaints Policy

Beaumont School [www.beaumontschool.com](http://www.beaumontschool.com)

Tel - 01727 854726

Email – [admin@beaumont.school](mailto:admin@beaumont.school)

### HOW TO COMMENT OR COMPLAIN

#### We care about what you think

Each day this school makes many decisions and tries hard to do the best for all of its students. Your comments - whether positive or negative - are helpful for our future planning.

You may want to talk to us about a particular aspect of this school, though not actually make a complaint - you may just want to get something 'off your chest'.

If you are dissatisfied about the way your child is being treated, or any actions or lack of action by us, please feel free to contact us using the details listed above.

#### Our aims

It is our aim that:

- Your complaint will be dealt with honestly, politely and in confidence.
- Your complaint will be investigated thoroughly and fairly.
- If your complaint is urgent, we will aim to deal with it more quickly.
- We will keep you up to date with progress at each stage.
- You will receive an apology if it is found that a mistake has been made.
- You will be told what (if anything) we are going to do to put things right.
- You will get a full and clear written reply to formal (Stage 2) complaints within **28 school days (5½ weeks)** of the date that the Stage 2 complaint is received by the Chair of Governors, if we are not able to do so within that timescale we will explain why and keep you informed of the timescale.
- Complaints shall be dealt with confidentially, and that confidentiality shall be respected by all parties concerned.

References to 'school days' are references to week days during term time when the students are in attendance for lessons at the school and therefore exclude weekends, holidays and INSET days.

#### Application of this Policy and time limits

The school is governed by the Education (Independent School Standards) (England) Regulations 2014 ("the Regulations"). This Complaints Policy has been formulated to comply with Schedule 1, Part 7 of the Regulations, as well as equality legislation and the rules of natural justice. In the case of any variance between the procedure outlined in this Complaints Policy and the Regulations, the procedure outlined in the Regulations will apply.



Although every effort will be made by the school to comply with the time limits specified under each stage of this policy, it may not always be possible to do so (for example: due to the complexity or number of matters raised, the intervention of a holiday period, or the unavailability of the Complainant, the school or any person complained of for a meeting, if offered, or any Complaints Panel Hearing). In all cases, **where a time limit cannot be complied with, the Complainant will be contacted within the specified time limit, setting out the reasons why the time limit cannot be complied with, and confirming the new time limit which will apply.**

Any person, including members of the general public, may make a complaint about any provision of facilities or services that the school provides.

Save as set out below, this Complaints Policy applies to all concerns and complaints relating to the school. However, **the Second Formal Stage (Stage 2) set out in this policy only applies to concerns and complaints raised by parents of students registered at the school and on the school roll at the time that the complaint is made.**

This Complaints Policy does **not** apply to concerns and complaints involving child protection issues or which are likely to involve a child protection investigation, or relating to admissions, exclusions, whistleblowing and statutory assessments of SEN needs, for which there are separate statutory procedures.

Complaints about the management and performance of staff, staff grievances and disciplinary matters are also not dealt with under this Complaints Policy. These are dealt with by the school under separate staff policies regarding performance management, capability, grievance and discipline, and the detail of such investigations are confidential to individual members of staff.

Any third party providers offering community facilities or services through the school premises, or using school facilities, are encouraged by the school to have their own complaints procedure in place. All persons complaining in relation to those providers should seek to resolve their complaint through those processes in the first instance. If the matter has not been satisfactorily resolved in that way, then the complaint should be made pursuant to this Complaints Policy and full details of the outcome of the complaint to the provider (including any outcome) should be provided as part of that complaint.

Where a complaint is submitted more than six months after the incident or event (or where a complaint relates to a series of incidents or events which occurred more than six months prior to the date of the complaint), the school reserves the right to refuse to investigate the complaint under this Complaints Policy **if it appears reasonable and fair to do so, having regard to the circumstances surrounding the complaint. Any question on this will be resolved by the Chair of Governors (or the Vice-Chair if the complaint is against the Chair).**

The purpose of this Complaints Policy is to ensure that, if an error has been made, or an injustice done, some action can be taken to remedy matters for the injured party. Where parents have removed their child from the school roll, or the child has left the school, it is clearly not possible for things to be put right for that child. However, the Governing Body has a duty of care to the pupils who remain on roll, and therefore the Chair of Governors will investigate the circumstances of the complaint to satisfy him/herself that no one acted inappropriately and that procedures and policies were followed correctly. This investigation will not involve a Stage 2 hearing, but the Chair of



Governors will inform the parents whether the complaint has been upheld or otherwise and of any changes to practice and procedures which have been agreed by the Governing Body as a result.

### **Natural Justice**

Simply put, the rules of natural justice relate to fairness. The school will ensure that all concerns, difficulties or complaints are dealt with in accordance with the following principles:

- All parties will be provided with all information and documentation pertinent to the matters raised;
- All parties will be given the opportunity to prepare and present their case and respond to the other parties involved;
- All persons investigating and making decisions in relation to the matters raised will be impartial and will do so without bias (or apparent bias) to any party involved;
- All decisions will be made on a balanced and considered assessment of the information before the investigator only; and
- All decisions will be based upon logical conclusions based on evidence, and not on mere speculation or suspicion.

### **Anonymous Complaints**

The school will not investigate anonymous complaints under the procedure in this Complaints Policy. Anonymous complaints will be referred to the Headteacher (or the Chair of Governors in the event that the anonymous complaint is about the Headteacher) who will decide what, if any, action should be taken.

### **Records of Complaints and Confidentiality**

The school will keep a written record of all complaints, whether they are resolved at Stage 1 or Stage 2 under this Complaints Policy, and any action taken by the school as a result of those complaints (regardless of whether they are upheld).

For the avoidance of doubt, the school will not maintain a separate written record of every concern or minor issue raised with the school through individual members of staff, Heads of Subject or Heads of Year, the details of which will be placed on the relevant student's file. However, a formal record will be kept of all complaints that reach Stages 1 and 2.

All correspondence, statements and records relating to individual complaints (including the matters discussed at any formal stage of this Complaints Policy) must be kept confidential by everyone involved in a complaint except where access is requested by the Secretary of State, a school inspector, or pursuant to the order of a court or other authority with competent jurisdiction. Failure to comply with this will be taken seriously and may prejudice the outcome of the process and be interpreted by the school and/or any Complaint Panel as a desire to terminate the processes within this Complaints Policy.



## How to make a complaint

### **A. In the first instance – Informal Stage**

If you have a concern about anything we do, or if you wish to make a complaint, you can do this by telephone, in person or in writing (by letter or email). We hope that most complaints can be settled quickly and informally, either by putting matters right or by giving you an explanation. If there is something you are not happy about, or you don't understand why we are doing something in a particular way, please come in and discuss it with an appropriate member of staff, such as the Form Tutor, Head of Year, Head of Department or the Special Educational Needs Co-ordinator (SENCo) if it is about Special Needs.

The school will aim to resolve your concern (if raised informally) within **fifteen school days** of the date it was raised.

We know that it can feel uncomfortable to question or challenge something, but if you don't tell us what is worrying you, we cannot explain why we are doing something or what we are doing or how we are trying to put it right. We should be able to sort out your worries, but sometimes this may not be possible.

### **B. First Formal Stage (Stage 1)**

If you are not satisfied with the informal response to the complaint, then you may submit the complaint **in writing** to the Headteacher. If you have alternative communication preferences due to disability or learning difficulties, the school will allow alternative methods of contact – in which case a complaint may be made in person, by telephone, or in writing. In order to prevent any later challenge or disagreement over what was said, brief notes of meetings and telephone calls will be kept and a copy of any written response added to the relevant student's record. Where there are communication difficulties, the school may, at its discretion, use recording devices to ensure the complainant is able to access and review the discussions at a later point.

This is the first formal stage of the Complaints Policy and involves the Headteacher investigating the complaint (unless the complaint relates to the Headteacher in which case they will not be involved in this stage of the complaint, and it will be handled by the Chair or Vice-Chair of Governors). It is helpful if, at this stage, you set out clearly how you would like to see the issue resolved. A Governor may also become involved at this stage if it is felt by either the school or the governing body that it would be helpful for him/her to seek to assist in resolving matters at this stage.

It is recognised that, throughout the formal stages of this Complaints Policy, it is useful for informal discussions to continue in order that the parties may seek to resolve matters informally without needing to proceed to the next formal stage. Any governor involved in Formal Stage 1 of the Complaints Policy may not be involved in the Complaints Panel at Stage 2.

If your first contact is with an individual Governor, they will advise you to take up your concerns with the appropriate member of staff at the informal stage or, if you have already done that, then **in writing** (or via alternative communications methods, as set out above, if preferred) to the Headteacher as a Stage 1 complaint. It is preferable that Governors are not made aware of a



potential complaint as they may be required to sit on a Complaints Panel in the event of the complaint reaching a formal hearing (Stage 2), and therefore they should remain impartial.

If your complaint is about the Headteacher, you should write directly to the Chair of Governors/communicate with the Chair of Governors. If your complaint is against the Chair of Governors or any individual governor, you should write to/communicate with the Clerk to the Governing Body.

If your child has a Statement of Special Educational Needs (SEN) or an Education, Health and Care Plan (EHCP) you might find it helpful to talk to our Special Educational Needs Co-ordinator (SENCo) or your child's named Special Needs Officer at the Local Authority. The SEND Information Advice and Support Service (SENDIASS – formerly Parent Partnership) may also be able to help you.

A Stage 1 Complaint will be acknowledged by the Headteacher within **five school days** of receipt. The acknowledgement letter will confirm the date that the complaint was received, the action to be taken, and the specified time limit.

The Headteacher will be provided with any records of the informal stage of the complaint and will then proceed to investigate the complaint. This will involve obtaining and considering all documentation held by the school which is relevant to the complaint.

If further information is required from the Complainant, this may be requested from them over the telephone or in writing.

The Headteacher will speak to the persons who were involved in the matters raised by the Complainant. Where the Headteacher considers it necessary and/or appropriate, students may be spoken to with another unconnected member of staff or a parent present.

Where there is an issue about the conduct of a member of staff, that member of staff will be offered the option of having another member of staff present in all discussions. Other members of staff will be spoken to alone. A written record of all conversations will be made, and the student or member of staff spoken to will be asked to read, sign and date the written record to confirm that it is accurate. In the case of students, where appropriate, the accompanying unconnected member of staff or parent may also be asked to sign and date the record of the conversation.

If the Headteacher deems it to be appropriate in relation to the matters raised, the Complainant will be offered a meeting to discuss the issues raised. This may take place (1) at the beginning of the investigation to clarify any matters which are unclear or (2) after the investigation has taken place, with the aim of reaching an amicable resolution.

The Headteacher will write to the Complainant confirming the outcome of the investigation within **twenty school days** from the date that the Stage 1 complaint was first received. The letter will set out the individual matters raised by the Complainant, the findings made by the Headteacher during the course of the investigation, and the conclusion reached.

In appropriate cases, the Headteacher may delegate the complaint to a member of the Senior Leadership Team to deal with in accordance with the procedure outlined above.



If the Complainant is the parent of a child registered at the school, the letter will inform the Complainant that, if they are unsatisfied with the outcome of the Stage 1 investigation, they should write to the Clerk to the Governors within **five school days** of receipt of the letter asking for their complaint and the Stage 1 investigation to be reviewed under Stage 2 of this Complaints Policy.

If the Complainant is not the parent of a child registered at the school, then the completion of Stage 1 of this Complaints Policy is the end of the school's obligation to consider the complaint.

### **C. Second Formal stage (Stage 2) – only for complaints made by parents of a child registered at the school**

If you are a parent of a child registered at the school and you remain dissatisfied following the outcome of Stage 1 of this Policy and wish to take your complaint further, then – within **five school days** of receiving the letter confirming the outcome of Stage 1 – you must write a letter addressed to the Chair of Governors. In the letter you should:

- make it clear why you are complaining about the outcome of Stage 1 of the Complaints Policy; and
- explain clearly what you want to happen as a result of your complaint.

If you have alternative communication preferences due to disability or learning difficulties, the Chair of Governors will allow alternative methods of contact, in which case a complaint may be made in person, by telephone, or in writing. In order to prevent any later challenge or disagreement over what was said, brief notes of meetings and telephone calls will be kept and a copy of any written response added to the record. Where there are communication difficulties, the Chair of Governors may, at their discretion, use recording devices to ensure the Complainant is able to access and review the discussions at a later point.

At the Formal Stage 2, the Chair of Governors will arrange for your complaint to be considered under specific arrangements approved by the Governing Body from time to time. This will involve a Panel of Governors, which will consist of three persons appointed by or on behalf of the Governing Body (the Complaints Panel), who will review the investigation and outcome of the Stage 1 complaint.

None of the three Complaints Panel members will have been involved in the matters which gave rise to the complaint, neither will they have been involved in dealing with the complaint previously nor have any detailed prior knowledge of the complaint. Two of the Complaint Panel members may (but do not have to) be Governors. The third Complaint Panel member will be independent of the management and running of the school (i.e. they will not be a member of staff or a Governor) and will not be linked to the school in another way (for example: as a parent of a student at the school).

All decisions as to the members of a Complaints Panel will be made by the Chair of Governors of the school (or the Vice Chair in the event that the complaint is about the Chair of Governors) and his/her decision on that shall be final.

If the Chair of Governors or another Governor has been involved in discussions to help settle the disagreement at Stage 1, s/he should arrange for another Governor to take charge of this stage



of the Complaints Policy. The Governor in charge of Stage 2 of the complaint may (at their discretion) ask to meet you to discuss your concerns.

Further investigation prior to a Complaints Panel hearing does not have to take place if the Chair of the Complaints Panel is satisfied that all the facts of a complaint have been established at Stage 1 of this Complaints Policy and, therefore, no further clarity is needed.

### **Convening the Complaint Panel Hearing**

The aim of the Governing Body is to deal with Stage 2 complaints within **28 school days (5½ weeks)** of the date that the Stage 2 complaint is received by the Chair of Governors. If this is not possible within that timescale, the Complainant will be contacted to explain why and will be kept informed of the revised timescale

The Clerk to the Governors will liaise with the Complaints Panel, the Complainant, and the school to agree a mutually convenient date for the Complaints Panel Hearing and will confirm the date when it has been fixed. It is important that all parties fully engage in this process in a timely manner as failure to do so may mean that the date could be fixed for the panel hearing on a date that is not convenient to all parties or the timescales within this Complaints Policy may not be met.

### **Documentation**

The Clerk to the Governors will forward a copy of all paperwork relating to the complaint (consisting of (a) the record of the informal stage of this Complaint Policy, (b) the original letter of complaint or Complaint Form, (c) any documentation provided by the Complainant with their complaint, (d) all investigation records under Stage 1 with the letter of outcome and the Complainant's letter requesting a Complaint Panel Hearing and (e) any additional accompanying documents, including relevant material from the student's file) to the Complainant, the school, the three Complaints Panel members and any person complained about.

The Complainant and the school should make sure that the Governors' Complaints Panel is provided with any written information or evidence, which the relevant party intends to use in a formal hearing, by the deadlines that are set, in order to enable the Clerk to the Governors to forward that information to the other parties, the Complaints Panel members, and any person complained about, in good time before the hearing. If those deadlines are not met, then the Complaints Panel may (in its absolute discretion) decide that, in the interests of natural justice, it would not be fair to enable that information or evidence to be used by the relevant party at the formal hearing.

If the Complainant or the school wishes to respond in relation to the account of any witness, they should ask the witness to write down, sign and date their account and forward it to the Clerk to the Governors by the deadline that is set, in order to enable the Clerk to the Governors to forward it to the other parties, the Complaints Panel members and any person complained about, in good time before the hearing. Failure to comply may mean that such statements may not be used or referred to at the hearing.

Any written accounts provided by the Complainant and relating to witnesses under the age of eighteen must be signed and dated by their witness and one of the witness' parents or carers. In



the absence of such a signature, such statements may not be used or referred to at the hearing.

### **Attendance at the Complaints Panel Hearing and witnesses**

The Chair of the Complaints Panel will play a key part at the Complaints Panel Hearing, ensuring that:

- the remit of the Complaints Panel is explained to the parties and each party has the opportunity to make representations without undue interruption;
- all of the issues raised in the complaint are addressed;
- key findings of fact are made, on the balance of probabilities;
- each party treats the other with respect and courtesy;
- the Complaints Panel is open-minded and acts independently of the school;
- no member of the Complaints Panel has a vested interest in the outcome of the proceedings;
- each side is given the opportunity to state their case;
- all written material is seen by all parties. If any new issue arises during the course of the Complaints Panel Hearing, it would be useful to consider whether to give all parties the opportunity to consider and comment on it;
- the Complaints Panel Hearing is conducted in accordance with the principles set out within this Complaints Policy, including its appendix; and
- only the Complaints Panel members may ask questions directly of the Complainant, the school or any witness attending the hearing.

If any of the above are not adhered to by any person attending the Complaints Panel Hearing, then the Chair of the Complaints Panel may at their absolute discretion ask that person to leave the hearing (which will continue in their absence) or may adjourn the hearing and re-convene the hearing at a later date. If such action is necessary, that will delay the resolution of the complaint beyond the timescales set out in this Complaints Policy.

The Complainant and the school may bring one friend, representative or interpreter to any hearing or other meeting if they wish. For the avoidance of doubt, the friend, representative or interpreter will be present for translation or moral support only and will not play any part in the proceedings, unless invited to do so by the Chair of the Complaints Panel, entirely at his or her discretion and for good reason.

The Complaints Panel Hearing is **not** a legal hearing or tribunal and it is not appropriate for either the Complainant or the school to be legally represented.

The Chair of the Panel may invite any person who may help establish the facts of the complaint to attend the hearing. The Chair should tell all attendees to the hearing who this person is, before the hearing. The Chair of the Complaints Panel will decide, at his or her absolute discretion, which witnesses will be permitted or asked to attend the Complaints Panel Hearing and give a verbal statement (rather than relying on a written statement or record of a meeting which has been signed by the witness).

Witnesses under the age of eighteen will only be allowed to attend the Complaints Panel Hearing at the discretion of the Chair of the Complaints Panel and then only if they are accompanied by one of their parents or carers.



Witnesses will only be required to attend for the part of the hearing in which they give their evidence.

If any member of staff is required by the Complaints Panel to attend a hearing, they will have the opportunity to be accompanied or represented as they wish. A member of staff named in a complaint may also choose to attend a hearing even if not required to do so by the Complaints Panel. They may be represented. If this happens, the Complaints Panel will inform the Complainant in advance. For the avoidance of doubt, the friend or representative will be present for moral support only and will not play any part in the proceedings, unless invited to do so by the Chair of the Complaints Panel, entirely at his or her discretion and for good reason.

The Complaints Panel Hearing will be minuted by the Clerk to the Complaints Panel, who will usually be the Clerk to the Governors.

### **The Complaints Panel's Decision**

The Complaints Panel will convene in private (with the Clerk to the Complaints Panel), either immediately after the Complaints Panel Hearing or on a subsequent date, and will consider all of the documentation and everything that they have heard at the Complaints Panel Hearing and make:

- **Findings of Fact**

The Complaints Panel will decide which facts are established to be true, on a balance of probabilities (i.e. more likely than not). If a fact is not deemed relevant, the Complaints Panel will not consider it any further.

- **Recommendations**

The Complaints Panel will consider the facts which they have established and will make recommendations based upon them. These recommendations may be aimed at achieving reconciliation between the parties (for example, a written apology), improving procedures, or preventing a recurrence of similar circumstances in the future.

When the Panel has heard and decided the complaint, the Chair of the Panel or Clerk to the Governors will write to the Complainant, the school and any person complained about, to confirm the findings and recommendations within **five school days** of the Complaints Panel Hearing.

These findings will be reported to the Governing Body at a Full Governing Body Meeting together with any recommendations. The Governing Body must accept the findings of the Complaints Panel, but can then choose to accept, reject or reject in part the recommendations at its discretion. The Chair of Governors will subsequently write to the Complainant, the school and any person complained about confirming the outcome of the complaint and any agreed actions to be taken.

The correspondence setting out the findings and recommendations will be available for inspection on the school premises by the proprietor and the Headteacher of the school.



## Vexatious or Repeated Complaints

There may be occasions when a Complainant fails to engage with the process set out in this Complaints Policy or, despite a complaint being considered under all stages in this Complaints Policy, the Complainant persists in making the same complaint to the school. There may also be occasions when a Complainant raises unreasonable persistent or repeated complaints or raises complaints about matters which do not affect them or about a matter which is clearly so trivial or historical that it would be a waste of the school's resources to deal with it under the formal stages of the Complaints Policy.

A vexatious complaint is likely to involve some or all of the following attributes:

- the complaint arises from a historical and/or irreversible decision or incident;
- contact with the school is frequent, lengthy, complicated and stressful for staff;
- the Complainant behaves in an aggressive manner to staff or a Complaints Panel when he/she presents his/her complaint or is verbally abusive or threatening;
- the Complainant changes some or all aspects of the complaint part way through the complaint process;
- the Complainant makes and breaks contact with the school or a Complaints Panel on an ongoing basis; or
- the Complainant persistently approaches the school (or the Local Authority, the EFA/DfE, or other Government agencies) through different routes about the same issue, in the hope of getting different responses.

In any and all of these cases, the school reserves the right to regard the complaint as vexatious and to refuse to investigate it under the procedure set out in this Complaints Policy, if it appears reasonable and fair to do so, having regard to all of the circumstances relating to the complaint.

Where the school decides (at either the informal stage or Stage 1 of the procedure within this Policy) that a complaint is vexatious and/or repeated and will not be investigated, the school will write to the Complainant within **five school days** of the complaint being raised to notify them of the decision.

If the Complainant is unhappy with the decision not to investigate a vexatious and/or repeated complaint, they may write to the Chair of Governors to ask for the decision to be reviewed. The Chair of Governors will be provided with all documentation relating to the current complaint and any previous complaints which were relevant to the decision, together with the letter from the school to the Complainant, and will review the decision not to investigate the complaint. The Chair of Governors will not investigate the complaint itself during this review.

The Chair of Governors will write to the Complainant with the outcome of the review within **ten school days** of the date that the letter from the Complainant seeking the review was received. If the Chair of Governors quashes the decision not to investigate the concern or complaint, it will be referred to the school to be dealt with under the procedure in this Complaints Policy in the usual way.

If the Chair of Governors upholds the decision not to investigate the concern or complaint, the Complainant may refer the concern or complaint to the Education and Skills Funding Agency (**ESFA**) using the procedure set out towards the end of this Complaints Policy.



The Chair of Governors can delegate the responsibility for the review to the Vice-Chair of Governors.

If a Complainant fails to engage fully with the process set out in this Complaints Policy and in a timely and effective manner, at any point during the complaint process, the Headteacher or the Chair of the Complaints Panel may cease to deal with the complaint under this Complaints Policy and must notify the Complainant of the position as soon as possible and refer the Complaint to the Chair of Governors as a vexatious complaint.

The Chair of Governors will be provided with all documentation relating to the complaint process and the conduct of the Complainant relevant to the decision, and will review the decision to terminate the complaints process. The Chair of Governors will not investigate the complaint itself during this review.

The Chair of Governors will write to the Complainant with the outcome of the review within **ten school days** of the date that the matter was referred to the Chair of Governors.

If the Chair of Governors quashes the decision to terminate the complaints process, the complaint will continue to be dealt with under the procedure in this Complaints Policy.

If the Chair of Governors upholds the decision to terminate the complaints process the Complainant may refer the concern or complaint to the Education and Skills Funding Agency (**ESFA**) using the procedure set out towards the end of this Complaints Policy.

The Chair of Governors can delegate the responsibility for the review to the Vice-Chair of Governors.

### **Further recourse**

Most complaints are resolved by following the process within this Complaints Policy.

Once a complaint has been through all the stages of this Complaints Policy, if the Complainant believes that this Complaints Policy does not comply with the Regulations, or that the school has not followed the procedure in this Complaints Policy, the Complainant can refer the complaint to the Education and Skills Funding Agency (**ESFA**) for consideration.

The Complainant can find further information about referring a complaint to the ESFA by pasting this link into an Internet browser:

<http://www.education.gov.uk/schools/leadership/schoolperformance/b00212240/making-complaint-school/complaints-free-schools-academies>

The Complainant should be aware that the ESFA will not usually investigate the substance of a complaint itself, or interfere with the findings of the Complaints Panel, unless the decision made was manifestly unreasonable.

In the case of complaints about **Special Educational Needs provision**, you may complain further to the Local Authority. This should be done by writing to the Children's Services Complaints Manager.



It should be noted however that if you wish to pursue this route, you must do so within **20 working days (4 weeks)** of receiving the written outcome of the hearing of your complaint. After **20 working days (4 weeks)**, neither the school nor the Local Authority is under any obligation to investigate or progress your complaint any further.

*This policy has undergone an equality impact assessment in accordance with the school's Public Sector Equality Duty under the Equality Act 2010.*

### Useful contacts

#### **Advisory Centre for Education**

Education Advice & Training

72 Durnsford Road

London

N11 2EJ

Web: [www.ace-ed.org.uk](http://www.ace-ed.org.uk)

Phone: **0300 0115 142**

#### **POhWER - Professional Advocacy Service**

Hertlands House

Primett Road

Stevenage

SG1 3EE

Web: [www.pohwer.net](http://www.pohwer.net)

Phone: **0300 456 2370**

#### **Children's Legal Centre**

Riverside Office Centre

Century House North

North Station Road

Colchester

Essex

CO1 1RE

Web: [www.childrenslegalcentre.com](http://www.childrenslegalcentre.com)

Phone: **0345 345 4345**

#### **National Youth Advocacy Service**

(NYAS)

Egerton House

Tower Road

Birkenhead

Wirral

CH41 1FN

Web: [www.nyas.net](http://www.nyas.net)

Phone: **0345 345 4345**

**SENDIASS** (Special Educational Needs & Disability Information Advice Support Service – formerly Parent Partnership)

Registry Office Block

CHR102

County Hall

Hertford

SG13 8DF

Web: [www.hertsdirect.org/parentpartnership](http://www.hertsdirect.org/parentpartnership)

Email: [parent.partnership@hertfordshire.gov.uk](mailto:parent.partnership@hertfordshire.gov.uk)

Phone: **01992 555847**

#### **Family Lives**

**(Formerly Parentline Plus)**

15-17 The Broadway

Hatfield

Hertfordshire

AL9 5HZ

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

Phone: **0808 800 2222**



### APPENDIX

#### Hearing Stage 2 formal complaints

#### Format of Hearing

Stage A	Introduction of everyone present and clarification of the conduct of the hearing. Panel Chair checks that everyone has a copy of this Format of Hearing on the table.
Stage B	Parents present complaint, highlighting points made in their written complaint and other documentation. Witnesses are called as and when required (as determined by the Panel). Panel questions Parents to clarify the points they make.
Stage C	Headteacher presents the facts as s/he perceives them, highlighting points made in the written response and other documentation. Witnesses are called as and when required (as determined by the Panel).  Panel questions Headteacher to clarify the points s/he has made.
Stage D	Parents summarise their case, highlighting evidence, including anything that has emerged in the questioning.
Stage E	Headteacher summarises the case for the school, highlighting evidence.  This should include the School's response and actions in relation to the complaint before the hearing and anything that has emerged in the questioning.
Close	Panel Chair thanks Parents and Headteacher for attending and gives an indication of when they can expect to hear the outcome.  Parents and Headteacher leave the room at the same time. Panel considers all evidence, documents and the content of the hearing.  a; all the evidence and comes to its conclusion.

The Panel will take the following points into account:

- The hearing should be as informal as possible.
- Witnesses should only attend for the part of the hearing in which they give their evidence.
- Only members of the Panel may ask questions – which may be at any point during the hearing.