Lambeth

Kingswood

School Complaints Policy & Procedure

April 2025

Lambeth Schools HR

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1.Introduction

- Governing bodies of all maintained schools and nursery schools in England are required, under Section 29(1) of the Education Act 2002, to have procedures in place to deal with complaints relating to the school and to any community facilities or services that the school provides. The law also requires the procedure to be publicised.

- As it is a legal requirement, all maintained schools and academies will already have a complaints procedure, based on, for example, Local Authority (LA) or Diocesan Board models. We have developed this advice in the light of the latest guidance from the Department for Education (March 2019) and it is therefore recommended to all Lambeth governing bodies as a model policy and procedure, for adoption once amended to include the necessary school specific information. It is anticipated that the model policy and procedure will be considered and approved by the governing body, who will then decide whether they wish to adopt the model complaints procedure. The decision on whether or not to adopt this procedure must be recorded by the clerk.

2. The Education Act 2002

Section 29 of the Education Act 2002 requires that:

1. *The governing body of a maintained school (including a maintained nursery school) shall*

   a. *establish procedures for dealing with all complaints relating to the school or to the provision of facilities or services under section 27, other than complaints failing to be dealt with in accordance with any procedures required to be established in relation to the school by virtue of a statutory provision other than this section, and*

   b. *publicise the procedures so established.*

2. *In establishing or publicising procedures under subsection (1), the governing body shall have regard to any guidance given from time to time (in relation to England) by the Secretary of State.*

Section 39 of the Education Act 2002 provides the following:

1. *"maintained school" means a community, foundation or voluntary school, a community or foundation special school or a maintained nursery school;*

2. *"maintained nursery school" means a nursery school which is maintained by a local education authority and is not a special school;*

3.Publicising the Procedure

There is a legal requirement for the Complaints Procedures to be publicised on the school's website. It is up to the governing body to decide how to further fulfil this requirement by including details of the Complaints Procedures for example in:

- the School prospectus;
- the information given to new parents when their child/children join the school;

- the home-school agreement;
- home school bulletins or newsletters;
- documents supplied to community users including course information or letting agreements;
- a specific complaints leaflet which includes a form on which a complaint can be made;
- posters displayed in areas of the school that will be used by the public, such as reception or the main entrance

4. Aim

The school's governors and the Headteacher are committed to providing the best educational experience they can for all pupils attending this school. They recognise the value to all concerned of dealing fairly, speedily and effectively with any complaint against their decisions, actions or omissions, which a pupil or parent or other aggrieved person may have. To this end, they have adopted the underlying principles and procedures set out in this document for dealing with complaints relating to schools and community services as required by section 29(1) (a) of the Education Act 2002. The policy allows for a concern or complaint relating to the school, or the services that it provides to be raised.

5. Scope of this Complaints Procedure

This procedure covers all complaints about any provision of community facilities or services by **Kingswood Primary (the school)** other than complaints that are dealt with under other statutory procedures, including those listed below.

Exceptions	**Who to contact**
• Admissions to schools • Statutory assessments of Special Educational Needs • School re-organisation proposals	Concerns about admissions, statutory assessments of Special Educational Needs, or school re-organisation proposals should be raised with the Local Authority.
• Matters likely to require a Child Protection Investigation	Complaints about child protection matters are handled under our child protection and safeguarding policy and in accordance with relevant statutory guidance. If you have serious concerns, you may wish to contact the local authority designated officer (LADO) who has local responsibility for safeguarding or the Multi-Agency Safeguarding Hub (MASH). Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO) email: LADO@lambeth.gov.uk
• Exclusion of children from school*	Further information about raising concerns about exclusion can be found at: www.gov.uk/school-discipline-exclusions/exclusions. **complaints about the application of the behaviour policy can be made through the school's complaints procedure.*
• Whistleblowing	We have an internal whistleblowing procedure for all our

	employees, including temporary staff and contractors. The Secretary of State for Education is the prescribed person for matters relating to education for whistleblowers in education who do not want to raise matters direct with their employer. Referrals can be made at: www.education.gov.uk/contactus. Volunteer staff who have concerns about our school should complain through the school's complaints procedure. You may also be able to complain direct to the LA or the Department for Education (see link above), depending on the substance of your complaint.
• Staff grievances	Complaints from staff will be dealt with under the school's internal grievance procedures.
• Staff conduct	Complaints about staff will be dealt with under the school's internal disciplinary procedures, if appropriate. Complainants will not be informed of any disciplinary action taken against a staff member as a result of a complaint. However, the complainant will be notified that the matter is being addressed.
• Complaints about services provided by other providers who may use school premises or facilities	Providers should have their own complaints procedure to deal with complaints about their service. Please contact them direct.
• National Curriculum - content	Please contact the Department for Education at: www.education.gov.uk/contactus

If other bodies are investigating aspects of the complaint, for example the police, local authority (LA) safeguarding teams or Tribunals, this may impact on our ability to adhere to the timescales within this procedure or result in the procedure being suspended until those public bodies have completed their investigations.

If a complainant commences legal action against the school in relation to their complaint, we will consider whether to suspend the complaints procedure in relation to their complaint until those legal proceedings have concluded.

6. General Principles

- The procedure is designed to ensure that wherever possible, an informal resolution is attempted. All stages of the complaints procedure should be investigatory rather than adversarial

- All complaints will be treated as confidential. Only those individuals concerned with investigating the complaint will have access to the file. No information regarding the investigation will be made available publicly unless required by law.

7. Time scales

- You must raise the complaint within three months of the incident or, where a series of associated incidents have occurred, within three months of the last of these incidents. We will consider complaints made outside of this time frame if exceptional circumstances apply. Any complaint which is raised more than 3 months after the event will not be considered except in exceptional circumstances.

- The responsibility for dealing with complaints lies with the school. The Local Authority / Diocese will redirect any complaints received by them to the school and the complainant informed accordingly.

8. Who can make a complaint?

This complaints procedure is not limited to parents or carers of children that are registered at the school. Any person, including members of the public, may make a complaint to Kingswood Primary School about any provision of facilities or services that we provide. Unless complaints are dealt with under separate statutory procedures (such as appeals relating to exclusions or admissions), we will use this complaints procedure.

9. The difference between a concern and a complaint

- A concern may be defined as 'an expression of worry or doubt over an issue considered to be important for which reassurances are sought'.

- A complaint may be defined as 'an expression of dissatisfaction however made, about actions taken or a lack of action'.

- It is in everyone's interest that concerns and complaints are resolved at the earliest possible stage. Many issues can be resolved informally, without the need to use the formal stages of the complaints procedure. The school takes concerns seriously and will make every effort to resolve the matter as quickly as possible.

- If you have difficulty discussing a concern with a particular member of staff, we will respect your views. In these cases, the headteacher will refer you to another staff member. Similarly, if the member of staff directly involved feels unable to deal with a concern, the headteacher will refer you to another staff member. The member of staff may be more senior but does not have to be. The ability to consider the concern objectively and impartially is more important.

- We understand however, that there are occasions when people would like to raise their concerns formally. In this case, the school will attempt to resolve the issue internally, through the stages outlined within this complaints procedure.

10. Anonymous complaints

We will not normally investigate anonymous complaints, however, the Headteachers or Governors may wish to pursue anonymous complaints although there is no named complainant to respond to. However, if such complaints allege or imply a serious matter that may be to the detriment of the school, then it will be at the Chair of Governor/Headteacher's discretion to consider whether a case needs further investigation or not. Further investigation may be carried out in exceptional circumstances such as child protection issues or bullying allegations, where the school would involve appropriate external agencies.

11. Serial & Unreasonable Complaints

There will be occasions when, on proper investigation a complaint is deemed to be unfounded, malicious or vexatious or when despite all stages of the procedure having been followed the complainant remains dissatisfied and wishes to reopen the same issue. In these circumstances the Chair of the governing body will inform the complainant in writing that the procedure has been exhausted and that the matter is closed. Please also see model policy for managing serial and unreasonable complaints at Appendix 4, page 20 – this policy also includes managing "unreasonable" behaviour.

12. Complaints received outside of term time

We will consider complaints made outside of term time to have been received on the first school day after the holiday period.

13. Resolving complaints

At each stage in the procedure, the school wants to resolve the complaint. If appropriate, we will acknowledge that the complaint is upheld in whole or in part. In addition, we may offer one or more of the following:

- an explanation
- an admission that the situation could have been handled differently or better
- an assurance that we will try to ensure the event complained of will not recur
- an explanation of the steps that have been or will be taken to help ensure that it will not happen again and an indication of the timescales within which any changes will be made
- an undertaking to review school policies in light of the complaint
- an apology.

14. Withdrawal of a Complaint

If a complainant wants to withdraw their complaint, we will ask them to confirm this in writing.

15. Procedure - How to raise a concern or make a complaint (Informal Resolutions)

- A concern or complaint can be made in person, in writing or by telephone (including email). They may also be made by a third party acting on behalf on a complainant, as long as they have appropriate consent to do so.

- Concerns should be raised with either the class teacher or headteacher. If the issue remains unresolved, the next step is to make a formal complaint.

- Complainants should not approach individual governors to raise concerns or complaints. They have no power to act on an individual basis and it may also prevent them from considering complaints at Stage 2 of the procedure.

- Complaints against school staff (except the headteacher) should be made in the first instance, to **the Headteacher** via the school office office@kingswoodprimary.co.uk. Please mark them as Private and Confidential.

- Complaints that involve or are about the headteacher should be addressed to Simon Hooberman (the Chair of Governors), via the school office. Please mark them as Private and Confidential.

- Complaints about the Chair of Governors, any individual governor or the whole governing body should be addressed to the Clerk to the Governing Body* via the school office. Please mark them as Private and Confidential.

- For ease of use, a template complaint form is included at the end of this procedure. If you require help in completing the form, please contact the school office. You can also ask third party organisations like the Citizens Advice to help you.

- In accordance with equality law, we will consider making reasonable adjustments if required, to enable complainants to access and complete this complaints procedure.

***Please see Roles and Responsibilities, page 12, regarding the role of the Clerk**

16. Stage 1 (Formal)

- Formal complaints must be made to the headteacher (unless they are about the headteacher), via the school office. This may be done in person, in writing (preferably on the Complaint Form), or by telephone.

- The headteacher will record the date the complaint is received and will acknowledge receipt of the complaint in writing (either by letter or email) within 5 school days.

- Within this response, the headteacher will seek to clarify the nature of the complaint, ask what remains unresolved and what outcome the complainant would like to see. The headteacher can consider whether a face-to-face meeting is the most appropriate way of doing this.

- Note: The headteacher may delegate the investigation to another member of the school's senior leadership team but not the decision to be taken.

- During the investigation, the headteacher (or investigator) will:

    - if necessary, interview those involved in the matter and/or those complained of, allowing them to be accompanied if they wish
    - keep a written record of any meetings/interviews in relation to their investigation.

- At the conclusion of their investigation, the headteacher will provide a formal written response within 20 school days of the date of receipt of the complaint.

- If the headteacher is unable to meet this deadline, they will provide the complainant with an update and revised response date.

- The response will detail any actions taken to investigate the complaint and provide a full explanation of the decision made and the reason(s) for it. Where appropriate, it will include details of actions the school will take to resolve the complaint.

- The headteacher will advise the complainant of how to escalate their complaint should they remain dissatisfied with the outcome of Stage 1.

- If the complaint is about the headteacher, or a member of the governing body (including the Chair or Vice-Chair), a suitably skilled governor will be appointed to complete all the actions at Stage 1.

- Complaints about the headteacher or member of the governing body must be made to the Clerk, via the school office.

  If the complaint is:

  - jointly about the Chair and Vice Chair; or
  - the entire governing body; or
  - the majority of the governing body

- Stage 1 will be considered by an independent investigator appointed by the governing body. At the conclusion of their investigation, the independent investigator will provide a formal written response.

17. Stage 2 (Final Stage)

- If the complainant is dissatisfied with the outcome at Stage 1 and wishes to take the matter further, they can escalate the complaint to Stage 2 – a meeting with members of the governing body's complaints committee, which will be formed of the first three, impartial, governors available. This is the final stage of the complaints procedure.

- A request to escalate to Stage 2 must be made to the Clerk, via the school office, within **10 school days** of receipt of the Stage 1 response.

- The Clerk will record the date the complaint is received and acknowledge receipt of the complaint in writing (either by letter or email) within **5 school days**.

- Requests received outside of this time frame will only be considered if exceptional circumstances apply.

- The Clerk will write to the complainant to inform them of the date of the meeting. They will aim to convene a meeting within **20 school days** of receipt of the Stage 2 request. If this is not possible, the Clerk will provide an anticipated date and keep the complainant informed.

- If the complainant rejects the offer of reasonable proposed dates, without good reason, the named person/role will decide when to hold the meeting. It will then proceed in the complainant's absence on the basis of written submissions from both parties.

- The complaints committee will consist of at least three governors with no prior involvement or knowledge of the complaint or any other potential conflict of interest. Prior to the meeting, they will decide amongst themselves who will act as the Chair of the Complaints Committee. If there are fewer than three governors from the school available, the Clerk will source any additional, independent governors through another local school or through their LA's Governor Services team, in order to make up the committee. Alternatively, an entirely independent committee may be convened to hear the complaint at Stage 2.

  Please note: in order to secure independent governors/s, in the first instance schools should approach other cluster schools, or, if a subscriber to the Lambeth Schools Partnership, another LSP school. If the governing body is unable to convene a panel from its own members for any reason, usually prior knowledge or previous involvement, in law a panel of governors still has to be convened.

- The complainant may bring someone along to provide support at the hearing. This can be a relative or friend. Generally, we do not encourage either party to bring legal representatives to the committee meeting.

- For instance, if a school employee is called as a witness in a complaint meeting, they may wish to be supported by union and/or work colleague.

- Note: Complaints about staff conduct will not be handled under this complaints procedure. Complainants will be advised that any staff conduct complaints will be considered under staff disciplinary procedures, if appropriate, but outcomes will not be shared with the complainant.

- Representatives from the media are not permitted to attend.

- At least **5 school** days before the meeting, the Clerk will:

    - confirm and notify the complainant of the date, time and venue of the meeting, ensuring that, if the complainant is invited, the dates are convenient to all parties and that the venue and proceedings are accessible

    - request copies of any further written material to be submitted to the committee at least **2 school days** before the meeting.

- Any written material will be circulated to all parties at least **2 school days** before the date of the meeting. The committee will not normally accept, as evidence, recordings of conversations that were obtained covertly and without the informed consent of all parties being recorded.

- The committee will also not review any new complaints at this stage or consider evidence unrelated to the initial complaint to be included. New complaints must be dealt with from Stage 1 of the procedure.

- The meeting will be held in private. Electronic recordings of meetings or conversations are not normally permitted unless a complainant's own disability or special needs require it. Prior knowledge and consent of all parties attending must be sought before meetings or conversations take place. Consent will be recorded in any minutes taken.

- The committee will consider the complaint and all the evidence presented. The committee can:

    - uphold the complaint in whole or in part
    - dismiss the complaint in whole or in part.

- If the complaint is upheld in whole or in part, the committee will:

    - decide on the appropriate action to be taken to resolve the complaint
    - where appropriate, recommend changes to the school's systems or procedures to prevent similar issues in the future.

- The Chair of the Committee will provide the complainant and the school with a full explanation of their decision and the reason(s) for it, in writing, within **5 school days**.

- The letter to the complainant will include details of how to contact the Department for Education if they are dissatisfied with the way their complaint has been handled by the school.

- If the complaint is:

- jointly about the Chair and Vice Chair; or
- the entire governing body; or
- the majority of the governing body

Stage 2 will be heard by a committee of independent governors.

- The response will detail any actions taken to investigate the complaint and provide a full explanation of the decision made and the reason(s) for it. Where appropriate, it will include details of actions the school will take to resolve the complaint.
- The response will also advise the complainant of how to escalate their complaint should they remain dissatisfied.

18. Next Steps

- If the complainant believes the school did not handle their complaint in accordance with the published complaints procedure or they acted unlawfully or unreasonably in the exercise of their duties under education law, they can contact the Department for Education after they have completed Stage 2.
- The Department for Education will not normally reinvestigate the substance of complaints or overturn any decisions made by the school. They will consider whether the school has adhered to education legislation and any statutory policies connected with the complaint.

The complainant can refer their complaint to the Department for Education online at: www.education.gov.uk/contactus, by telephone on: 0370 000 2288 or by writing to:

Department for Education
Piccadilly Gate
Store Street
Manchester
M1 2WD.

Appendix 1: Roles and Responsibilities

Complainant

The complainant will receive a more effective response to the complaint if they:

- explain the complaint in full as early as possible
- co-operate with the school in seeking a solution to the complaint
- respond promptly to requests for information or meetings or in agreeing the details of the complaint
- ask for assistance as needed
- treat all those involved in the complaint with respect
- refrain from publicising the details of their complaint on social media and respect confidentiality.

Investigator

Please note: if an investigator is appointed, that person should be suitably experienced for the task. It could be, for example, a chair of governors from another school, a HR professional or other LA officer.

The investigator's role is to establish the facts relevant to the complaint by:

- providing a comprehensive, open, transparent and fair consideration of the complaint through:
    - sensitive and thorough interviewing of the complainant to establish what has happened and who has been involved
    - interviewing staff and children/young people and other people relevant to the complaint
    - consideration of records and other relevant information
    - analysing information
    - liaising with the complainant and the complaints co-ordinator as appropriate to clarify what the complainant feels would put things right.

The investigator should:

- conduct interviews with an open mind and be prepared to persist in the questioning
- keep notes of interviews or arrange for an independent note taker to record minutes of the meeting
- ensure that any papers produced during the investigation are kept securely pending any appeal
- be mindful of the timescales to respond
- prepare comprehensive documentation/report for the headteacher or complaints committee that sets out the facts, identifies solutions and recommends courses of action to resolve problems.

The headteacher or complaints committee will then determine whether to uphold or dismiss the

complaint and communicate that decision to the complainant, providing the appropriate escalation details.

Complaints Co-ordinator (this could be the headteacher / designated complaints governor or other staff member providing administrative support)

The complaints co-ordinator should:

- ensure that the complainant is fully updated at each stage of the procedure
- liaise with staff members, headteacher, Chair of Governors, Clerk and LAs (if appropriate) to ensure the smooth running of the complaints procedure
- be aware of issues regarding:
    - sharing third party information
    - additional support. This may be needed by complainants when making a complaint including interpretation support or where the complainant is a child or young person
    - keep records.

Clerk to the Governing Body

Please note: although DfE guidance refers to it as the role of the Clerk, where an external Clerk is employed it may be advisable to ensure that school staff/the Complaints Coordinator takes responsibility for bullet points 2 and 3 below.

The Clerk is the contact point for the complainant and the committee and should:

- ensure that all people involved in the complaint procedure are aware of their legal rights and duties, including any under legislation relating to school complaints, education law, the Equality Act 2010, the Freedom of Information Act 2000, the Data Protection Act (DPA) 2018 and the General Data Protection Regulations (GDPR)
- set the date, time and venue of the meeting, ensuring that the dates are convenient to all parties (if they are invited to attend) and that the venue and proceedings are accessible
- collate any written material relevant to the complaint (for example; stage 1 paperwork, school and complainant submissions) and send it to the parties in advance of the meeting within an agreed timescale
- record the proceedings
- circulate the minutes of the meeting
- notify all parties of the committee's decision.

Committee Chair

The committee's chair, who is nominated in advance of the complaint meeting, should ensure that:

- both parties are asked (via the Clerk) to provide any additional information relating to the complaint by a specified date in advance of the meeting
- the meeting is conducted in an informal manner, is not adversarial, and that, if all parties are invited to attend, everyone is treated with respect and courtesy

- complainants who may not be used to speaking at such a meeting are put at ease. This is particularly important if the complainant is a child/young person
- the remit of the committee is explained to the complainant
- written material is seen by everyone in attendance, provided it does not breach confidentiality or any individual's rights to privacy under the DPA 2018 or GDPR.

  If a new issue arises it would be useful to give everyone the opportunity to consider and comment upon it; this may require a short adjournment of the meeting
- both the complainant and the school are given the opportunity to make their case and seek clarity, either through written submissions ahead of the meeting or verbally in the meeting itself
- the issues are addressed
- key findings of fact are made
- the committee is open-minded and acts independently
- no member of the committee has an external interest in the outcome of the proceedings or any involvement in an earlier stage of the procedure
- the meeting is minuted
- they liaise with the Clerk (and complaints co-ordinator, if the school has one).

Committee Member

Committee members should be aware that:

- the meeting must be independent and impartial, and should be seen to be so

  No governor may sit on the committee if they have had a prior involvement in the complaint or in the circumstances surrounding it.
- the aim of the meeting should be to resolve the complaint and achieve reconciliation between the school and the complainant

  We recognise that the complainant might not be satisfied with the outcome if the meeting does not find in their favour. It may only be possible to establish the facts and make recommendations.
- many complainants will feel nervous and inhibited in a formal setting

  Parents/carers often feel emotional when discussing an issue that affects their child.
- extra care needs to be taken when the complainant is a child/young person and present during all or part of the meeting
- Careful consideration of the atmosphere and proceedings should ensure that the child/young person does not feel intimidated.
- The committee should respect the views of the child/young person and give them equal consideration to those of adults.
- If the child/young person is the complainant, the committee should ask in advance if any support is needed to help them present their complaint. Where the child/young person's parent is the complainant, the committee should give the parent the opportunity to say which parts of the meeting, if any, the child/young person needs to attend.

- However, the parent should be advised that agreement might not always be possible if the parent wishes the child/young person to attend a part of the meeting that the committee considers is not in the child/young person's best interests.
    - the welfare of the child/young person is paramount.

Recording complaint progress

You should:

- record the progress of the complaint and the final outcome
- determine who is responsible for these records and make sure the data is kept secure

As schools are data controllers in their own right, governing bodies must decide for themselves how long they keep records, unless statutory regulations apply. For example, copies of attendance registers must be retained for 3 years.

Under the General Data Protection Regulations (EU) 2016/679 (GDPR), data must not be kept longer than is necessary.

You should consider that complainants may have a right to copies of these records under the Freedom of Information Act 2000, the Data Protection Act 2018 and GDPR.

Refer to our Data protection: toolkit for schools or the Information Commissioner's Guide to GDPR for more information.

Appendix 2: Procedure for hearing the complaint

Governors Complaints Committee (GCC)

Introduction

The aim of the meeting is to resolve the complaint and achieve reconciliation between the school and the parent.

The Chair of the GCC will ensure that the meeting is properly minuted.

Although the meeting will follow the structured order below, given potential sensitivities and anxieties, the Chair will endeavour to ensure that the proceedings are as informal as possible and that all parties are put at their ease.

The introduction of new information or witnesses, previously not notified to all parties, would be reason to adjourn the meeting so that everyone has time to consider and respond to the new information.

Order of Meeting

1. The Chair welcomes the parent and his/her companion and introduces everyone present.
2. The Chair explains the purpose of the meeting, the procedure, and that all written evidence has been made available to all parties.
3. The parent/companion explains the complaint, calling in witnesses if appropriate and what outcome they are seeking
4. The GCC and Headteacher may question the complainant and witnesses.
5. The Headteacher/Chair of Governors are then invited to present a response to the complaint, including action taken to address the complaint at stage 1 of the procedure and calling witnesses, if appropriate.
6. The GCC and parent may question the Headteacher/Chair of Governors.
7. The GCC may ask questions at any point.
8. The parent summarises their case, highlighting evidence, including anything that has emerged in the questioning.

9. The Headteacher summarises the school's position, highlighting evidence, including anything that has emerged in the questioning.

N.B. No new points to be added at stages 8 or 9.

1. The Chair of the Committee checks that all parties feel that they have had a fair hearing and reminds everyone of the confidentiality of the case.
2. Either party may request an adjournment of the hearing at any stage and this may be allowed on the grounds that further enquiries are necessary, but it should also be borne in mind that a speedy resolution of the complaint is usually desirable and advantageous.
3. The Chair of the Committee thanks both parties for attending and gives an indication of when they can expect to hear the outcome. All parties then leave the room together.
4. The GCC considers the complaint and reaches a unanimous or majority decision. The GCC also decides what action (if any) to take to resolve the complaint and, if appropriate, recommends changes to ensure similar complaints are not made in future.
5. When a decision has been made, the Chair informs both parties in writing of the outcome of the complaint. This will usually be within 5 school days, unless there are exceptional circumstances which prevent this, in which case the Complainant will be notified of this and the reason for the delay.
6. The Panel's decision is to be regarded as final and the Complainant will be advised of any further recourse available should he or she be dissatisfied with the outcome, such as to the Secretary of State, or the Education and Skills Funding Agency (in the case of Academies).

Appendix 3: Complaint Form

Please complete and return to the headteacher via office@kingswoodprimary.co.uk who will acknowledge receipt and explain what action will be taken.

Your name:
Pupil's name (if relevant):
Your relationship to the pupil (if relevant):
Address: **Postcode:** **Day time telephone number:** **Evening telephone number:**
Please give details of your complaint, including whether you have spoken to anybody at the school about it.

Have you tried to resolve the complaint informally? Yes☐ No☐

If yes, please provide a brief summary of the outcome and why you feel that your complaint has not been resolved satisfactorily.

If no, please provide a brief summary why you have not tried to resolve the complaint informally.

Resolution:
What actions do you feel might resolve the problem at this stage?

Are you attaching any paperwork? If so, please give details.

Signature: **Date:**
Official use
Date acknowledgement sent:
By who: **Assigned to:**
Complaint referred to:
Date:

Appendix 4: Model policy for managing serial and unreasonable complaints

Note:

This policy can also be adapted to manage unreasonable or persistent contact not directly associated with, or resulting from, formal complaints.

Kingswood is committed to dealing with all complaints fairly and impartially, and to providing a high-quality service to those who complain. We will not normally limit the contact complainants have with our school. However, we do not expect our staff to tolerate unacceptable behaviour and will take action to protect staff from that behaviour, including that which is abusive, offensive or threatening.

Kingswood defines unreasonable behaviour as that which hinders our consideration of complaints because of the frequency or nature of the complainant's contact with the school, such as, if the complainant:

- refuses to articulate their complaint or specify the grounds of a complaint or the outcomes sought by raising the complaint, despite offers of assistance
- refuses to co-operate with the complaints investigation process
- refuses to accept that certain issues are not within the scope of the complaints procedure
- insists on the complaint being dealt with in ways which are incompatible with the complaints procedure or with good practice
- introduces trivial or irrelevant information which they expect to be taken into account and commented on
- raises large numbers of detailed but unimportant questions, and insists they are fully answered, often immediately and to their own timescales
- makes unjustified complaints about staff who are trying to deal with the issues, and seeks to have them replaced
- changes the basis of the complaint as the investigation proceeds
- repeatedly makes the same complaint (despite previous investigations or responses concluding that the complaint is groundless or has been addressed)
- refuses to accept the findings of the investigation into that complaint where the school's complaint procedure has been fully and properly implemented and completed including referral to the Department for Education
- seeks an unrealistic outcome
- makes excessive demands on school time by frequent, lengthy and complicated contact with staff regarding the complaint in person, in writing, by email and by telephone while the complaint is being dealt with
- uses threats to intimidate

- uses abusive, offensive or discriminatory language or violence
- knowingly provides falsified information
- publishes unacceptable information on social media or other public forums.

Complainants should try to limit their communication with the school that relates to their complaint, while the complaint is being progressed. It is not helpful if repeated correspondence is sent (either by letter, phone, email or text), as it could delay the outcome being reached.

Whenever possible, the headteacher or Chair of Governors will discuss any concerns with the complainant informally before applying an '*unreasonable'* marking.

If the behaviour continues, the headteacher will write to the complainant explaining that their behaviour is unreasonable and ask them to change it. For complainants who excessively contact Kingswood causing a significant level of disruption, we may specify methods of communication and limit the number of contacts in a communication plan. This will be reviewed after six months.

In response to any serious incident of aggression or violence, we will immediately inform the police and communicate our actions in writing. This may include barring an individual from Kingswood Primary School.

Adopted by the Governing Body of Kingswood Primary School on date 01.04.25.