Respect Reflection Responsibility Resilience

Green Shoots Partnership

Complaints Procedure

Our Vision

Green Shoots Partnership is a nurturing federation with a strong sense of pride and belonging, with the belief that all have the potential to thrive.

Our Purpose

We exist to cultivate a love of learning by broadening horizons and opening minds to new possibilities. Through our Federation Values, we grow confident individuals who aspire to shape the future.

Meadowside Primary School

Great Doddington Primary School

Last Updated: June 2025

At Green Shoots Partnership we take professional responsibility seriously, this applies to:

- reinforcing and promoting a working environment free from discrimination, victimisation, harassment and bullying.
- a clear commitment to treat all information acquired through employment, both formally and informally, in strict confidence.
- to be aware of the school's responsibilities under the Data Protection Act 2018 for the security, accuracy and relevance of personal data held on such systems and ensure that all processes comply with this.

EQUALITY DUTY

At Green Shoots Partnership we want everyone to reach their full potential and to ensure that all members of our community are treated fairly in all situations.

The Equality Act provides us with a framework to support our commitment to valuing diversity, tackling discrimination, promoting equality, and fostering good relationships between people.

Introduction

At Green Shoots Partnership, we are committed to providing the highest quality education and support for every pupil. We recognise that from time to time, concerns or complaints may arise, and we aim to address these fairly, promptly and constructively. This policy outlines a clear and structured process for raising and resolving complaints.

The Governing Body has approved this policy to enable parents/carers of pupils, and members of the wider community, to raise concerns or complaints.

Scope of the Policy

This procedure applies to most general complaints. However, it does not apply to the following matters, which are covered under separate policies or statutory processes:

- Admissions
- Child protection and safeguarding matters
- Exclusions
- Statutory assessments (SEND/EHC plans)
- Staff grievances or disciplinary proceedings
- Internal assessment decisions for external qualifications
- National Curriculum content
- School reorganisation proposals
- Complaints about external providers using school facilities

See Appendix 1 for further detail and signposting.

We may also adapt this process when handling complaints from non-parental stakeholders, where appropriate.

Aims of the Procedure

- To ensure concerns or complaints are addressed using a consistent, fair, and timely approach
- To promote transparency and open communication between home and school
- To provide a process that is accessible and understandable to all stakeholders

All staff are expected to be familiar with this procedure and to support complainants in accessing the correct stage of the process.

Key Definitions

- A concern is an expression of worry or doubt that can often be resolved quickly without formal procedures.
- A complaint is a formal expression of dissatisfaction, which may require further investigation and response.

Resolving complaints at the earliest opportunity and at the lowest level possible is in everyone's best interest.

General Principles

- Complaints must be raised within three months of the event or issue, except in exceptional circumstances.
- Complainants should not approach individual governors. They have no authority to act individually and this may compromise the process.
- Anonymous complaints will not normally be investigated unless exceptional circumstances apply.
- We expect all parties to communicate respectfully and constructively.
- Timescales are provided throughout and refer to school days (excluding weekends and holidays). If they need to be extended, we will inform complainants accordingly.

PART 1: Complaints from Parents/Carers of Registered Pupils

Stage 1 – Informal Resolution

1. Most concerns can be resolved informally, without resorting to formal procedures. We encourage parents to discuss concerns first with:
    - The Class Teacher
    - A member of the Senior Leadership Team (SLT) if necessary
2. Informal concerns may be made in person, by telephone, or in writing.
3. We aim to resolve informal concerns within 15 school days.
4. If unresolved, the complainant should submit a formal complaint under Stage 2 within 15 school days of the final informal response.

Stage 2 – Formal Complaint

1. Complaints should be submitted in writing to the Head of School, via the school office or the Clerk to the Governors if the Complaint is about the Head of School or Executive Head Teacher.
2. The complaint should include:
    - Details of the issue
    - Actions taken to date
    - Desired outcome
    - Any supporting evidence

    A complaint form is available (Appendix 2) and assistance can be provided by the school office or the SENDco.
3. The school will acknowledge receipt within 5 school days.
4. The Head of School may invite the complainant to a meeting within 15 school days to clarify concerns and seek resolution.
5. Following investigation, a written response will be provided, explaining:
    - The school's decision
    - Any actions to be taken
    - Next steps if the complainant is dissatisfied
6. If appropriate, the complaint may be escalated to the Executive Head Teacher or directly to Stage 3 (Complaints Committee), depending on the circumstances.

Stage 3 – Complaints Committee Hearing

1. If dissatisfied with the Stage 2 outcome, the complainant must write to the Clerk to Governors within 15 school days.
2. The Clerk will acknowledge the request and convene a Complaints Committee of at least three impartial governors.
3. A hearing will be arranged within 20 school days, with at least 5 school days' notice given.
4. Complainants may be accompanied and must provide supporting documents at least 3 school days before the hearing.
5. The committee may modify procedures as needed for fairness.
    - The committee will issue a written decision within 5 school days, which may:
      Uphold or dismiss the complaint
    - Recommend changes
    - Set out steps for resolution
6. This stage concludes the school's internal complaints procedure.

Referral to the Department for Education

If the complainant believes the school did not follow the proper process or acted unlawfully, they may contact the DfE:

Website: www.education.gov.uk/contactus

Tel: 0370 000 2288

Address: Department for Education, Piccadilly Gate, Store Street, Manchester M1 2WD

Record Keeping and Confidentiality

- A record will be kept of all complaints and their outcomes.
- All records will be kept confidential unless requested by the Secretary of State or legally required.

PART 2: Complaints from Non-Parent Stakeholders

1. Initial concerns should be raised with a relevant staff member or the SLT.
2. If unresolved, a formal written complaint should be submitted to the Head of School.
3. If still unresolved, a request for a review can be submitted to the Clerk, and a Complaints Committee will be convened.
4. The decision of the Committee will conclude the process.

PART 3: Persistent or Unreasonable Complainants

The school may deviate from this procedure in rare cases involving unreasonable behaviour, including:

- Abusive or threatening communication
- Repetitive or vexatious complaints
- Refusal to accept process outcomes
- Excessive demands on staff time

Possible actions may include:

- Restricting contact
- Refusing to consider further complaints
- Proceeding on paper only
- Reporting to authorities (in extreme cases)

PART 4: Complaint Campaigns and Duplicates

For complaints submitted by three or more individuals on the same issue:

- We may respond with a template letter or publish a general response.

Duplicate complaints (e.g., from relatives of the original complainant) will not be re-investigated. We will confirm that the complaint has already been considered and closed.

Appendix 1: Matters Outside the Scope of this Procedure

Excluded Issue	Handled By
Admissions	Admissions Policy and Appeals Process
Child Protection/Safeguarding	Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy; Contact MASH or LADO
Exclusions	DfE Statutory Guidance on Exclusions
Curriculum Content	Contact Department for Education
SEND Assessments	Local Authority
Staff Conduct	Internal Disciplinary Procedures
Staff Grievances	Staff Grievance Procedures
External Providers	Contact Provider Directly

Whistleblowing	Internal Whistleblowing Procedure; Contact DfE for external referrals

Appendix 2

Stage 2 – Formal Complaint Form

Your details

Your name	
Your child's name	
Your relationship to the child	
Your address, including postcode	
Daytime telephone number	
Evening telephone number	
Email address	

Details of your complaint

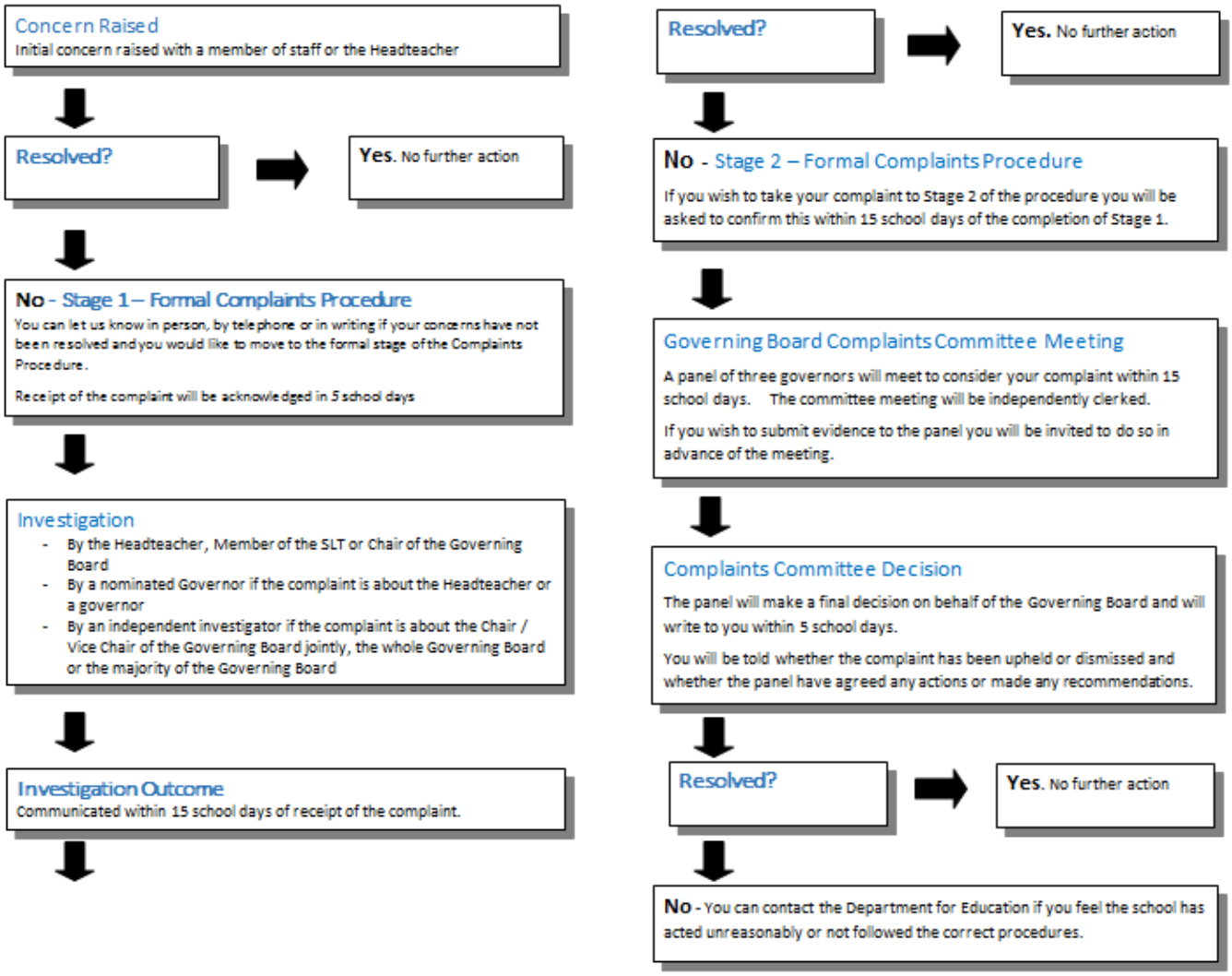
1. Please provide full details of your complaint, including relevant dates and persons concerned where possible in the box below. If you have more than one complaint, please number these. Continue on a separate sheet if necessary.

2. What action, if any, have you already taken to try and resolve your complaint? (Who did you speak to and what was their response?). Continue on a separate sheet if necessary.
3. What would you like as an outcome from your complaint (s)? Continue on a separate sheet if necessary.
4. Are you attaching any paperwork? If so, please provide details.

Signed;	**Date;**

All functions of the complaints procedure must adhere to the requirements of the Data Protection Act 2018 and the Freedom of Information Act 2000. Thank you for completing the form and providing us with details of your complaint. Please complete and return to either the school office in a sealed envelope addressed to the Head of School or Clerk (as appropriate).
Office use Date received;
Date acknowledgement sent;
Responsible office member of staff;
Complaint notification sent to;

Appendix 3


Concern Raised
Initial concern raised with a member of staff or the Headteacher
Resolved?
Yes. No further action
No - Stage 1 – Formal Complaints Procedure
You can let us know in person, by telephone or in writing if your concerns have not been resolved and you would like to move to the formal stage of the Complaints Procedure.
Receipt of the complaint will be acknowledged in 5 school days
Investigation
- By the Headteacher, Member of the SLT or Chair of the Governing Board
- By a nominated Governor if the complaint is about the Headteacher or a governor
- By an independent investigator if the complaint is about the Chair / Vice Chair of the Governing Board jointly, the whole Governing Board or the majority of the Governing Board
Investigation Outcome
Communicated within 15 school days of receipt of the complaint.
Resolved?
Yes. No further action
No - Stage 2 – Formal Complaints Procedure
If you wish to take your complaint to Stage 2 of the procedure you will be asked to confirm this within 15 school days of the completion of Stage 1.
Governing Board Complaints Committee Meeting
A panel of three governors will meet to consider your complaint within 15 school days. The committee meeting will be independently clerked.
If you wish to submit evidence to the panel you will be invited to do so in advance of the meeting.
Complaints Committee Decision
The panel will make a final decision on behalf of the Governing Board and will write to you within 5 school days.
You will be told whether the complaint has been upheld or dismissed and whether the panel have agreed any actions or made any recommendations.
Resolved?
Yes. No further action
No - You can contact the Department for Education if you feel the school has acted unreasonably or not followed the correct procedures.