



## **Complaints about schools**

It is the responsibility of individual schools to respond to complaints about the school and anyone who contacts the local authority regarding a school complaint, will be provided with information on the procedure and encouraged to contact the school directly. Each individual school will have a Complaint Policy - a copy of this can be requested from the school.

Schools take their responsibility for children seriously. They value the support and partnership of parents and carers. They try very hard to get things right. However, despite everyone's best efforts, situations may arise which require further attention.

**Stage One:** Many concerns can be resolved quickly with goodwill, often by making early contact with the class teacher or Head of Year. If this is not possible, or the teacher is unable to resolve the concern, the parent, carer or pupil should contact the Head Teacher or Deputy Head Teacher.

The person who receives the complaint should attempt to work with the family to resolve the complaint informally. This may involve:

- Mediation and conciliation;
- Explaining policies or decisions;
- Helping the pupil to express their views to another person;
- Review of educational provision;
- Review of support services.

Most complaints will be dealt with in this way.

**Stage Two:** If the pupil, parent or carer is not satisfied with the outcome of the informal investigation, they may wish to make a formal complaint. This should be done in writing to the Head Teacher and in line with the process set out in the individual schools Complaints Policy.

If the complaint is about the Head Teacher, or if the problem is not resolved, the matter should be referred to the Chair of Governors of the school.

The school and its governors have a duty in law to act properly and investigate complaints impartially. Once investigations are complete the person making the complaint should receive a written response from the school.

**Stage Three:** Pupils, parents and carers who are not satisfied with the outcome of the investigation and wish to pursue a complaint regarding a school issue can refer the complaint to a review committee of Governors, known as the Complaints Panel. This can be done in writing to the Chair of the Governing Body. The aim of the panel is to establish any areas of agreement and identify actions that can be taken to resolve the complaint.

### **Stage Four:**

- Academy - If dissatisfied with the response from an Academy, the matter should be referred to the Education Funding Agency (EFA). If after following this step the complaint remains unresolved, the complaint may be referred to the Secretary of State for Education.
- Schools - If all other attempts to resolve the complaint have been unsuccessful, the pupil, parent or carer may refer their complaint to the Local Government Ombudsman or Secretary of State for Education.

## Complaints Flowchart Process

