

# Twyford St Mary's C of E Primary School

## Concerns and Complaints Policy



This policy applies to all Staff, Governors, Parents and members of the public

### **Aims:**

- To resolve concerns through informal discussions at the earliest stage
- To focus on resolution and improvement rather than blame
- To ensure that any concerns and complaints are dealt with in a timely, consistent and confidential manner

At Twyford St Mary's we understand that sometimes things can go wrong and parents, carers and members of the public may need to make a complaint or raise concerns that they have with the school. This policy tells you what to do if this need arises.

### **Informal Stage**

Most issues can be quickly and informally resolved by discussion with the appropriate staff member.

Normally class teachers are the most appropriate people to speak to in the first instance, they work most closely with the children and are best placed to tackle day-to-day issues, they will always be happy to arrange a mutually convenient time to meet up. You can make an appointment directly or via the school office. If you would prefer to speak to the Headteacher, the school office will also be able to arrange this at the earliest convenient opportunity.

Whilst the School Governors are happy to help advise you on the School's Concerns or Complaints Policy, their best advice at the informal stage will always be to talk to the appropriate staff member or the Headteacher first because they are responsible for the operational running of the school. If the matter later becomes a formal complaint heard by Governors, any Governor you've already spoken to would be excluded from that process, as they could then not be regarded as impartial.

### **Formal Stage**

In the unusual event that you are unable to resolve an issue informally, you will need to move on to the Formal Stage of the Complaints and Concerns Policy as outlined below:

#### **Stage 1**

- Please write (via email or letter) to the Headteacher explaining the issue.
- You will receive written acknowledgement of your complaint by return within a maximum three working days.
- The Headteacher will meet with you as soon as reasonably possible to discuss the problem and to seek a mutually acceptable resolution.
- This process will take no more than ten days, usually less.

## **Stage 2**

If the issue is still not resolved to your satisfaction at Stage 1:

- Please write to the Chair of Governors via the school office
- The Chair of Governors will acknowledge your letter within three school days and provide a full response within 15 school days.
- The chair of governors may invite you to attend a meeting to discuss your complaint and possible solutions, or to explain what has happened or will happen as a result of your complaint.
- The chair of governors will explain that the governing body has a strategic role, and is responsible for the school's strategic framework and the headteacher is responsible for the internal organisation, management and control of the school and for advising on and implementing the governors' policies. The headteacher is solely responsible for making day to day decisions.
- This stage offers an opportunity for achieving conciliation between all parties and discussions between the chair of governors and the headteacher will be key to resolving the complaint and agreeing a way forward.
- The chair of governors will decide what powers are available to governors in respect of the particular complaint.
- For matters that are the headteacher's responsibility, the chair of governors is empowered only to look at whether the headteacher's decision or action was reasonable in the light of the information available at the time.
- The chair of governors will keep a record of all interactions with you and any decisions made in reference to your complaint. If the chair of governors has decided not to take any further action, they will explain what they have decided and how they reached the decision. You will also be advised of your right to take the matter further if you are not satisfied with the chair of governor's response.

## **Stage 3**

If after all the steps in Stage 2 have been exhausted the issue is still not resolved to your satisfaction you may write to the clerk to the Governing Body at the school address asking for a Complaints Panel to be set up.

The Complaints Panel is made up of three members of the School's Governing Body. Sometimes Governors may need to be brought in from other schools' governing bodies to ensure impartiality. TSM has in place an arrangement with Compton All Saints CofE School to draw on their governing body in such a case.

The Complaints Panel will meet at a time convenient to everyone involved. You, the Headteacher and any member of staff the complaint is about will be invited to the meeting. Any person invited can bring a friend or supporter if they wish.

The Complaints Committee will consider any written material, and also give everyone involved an opportunity to state their case and to question others present. The committee will ensure that everyone is treated fairly. The Clerk to governors will minute the meeting and everyone present will be given a copy of the minutes.

The Panel will give its decision, in writing, within five working days after the meeting, along with the reasons for their decision.

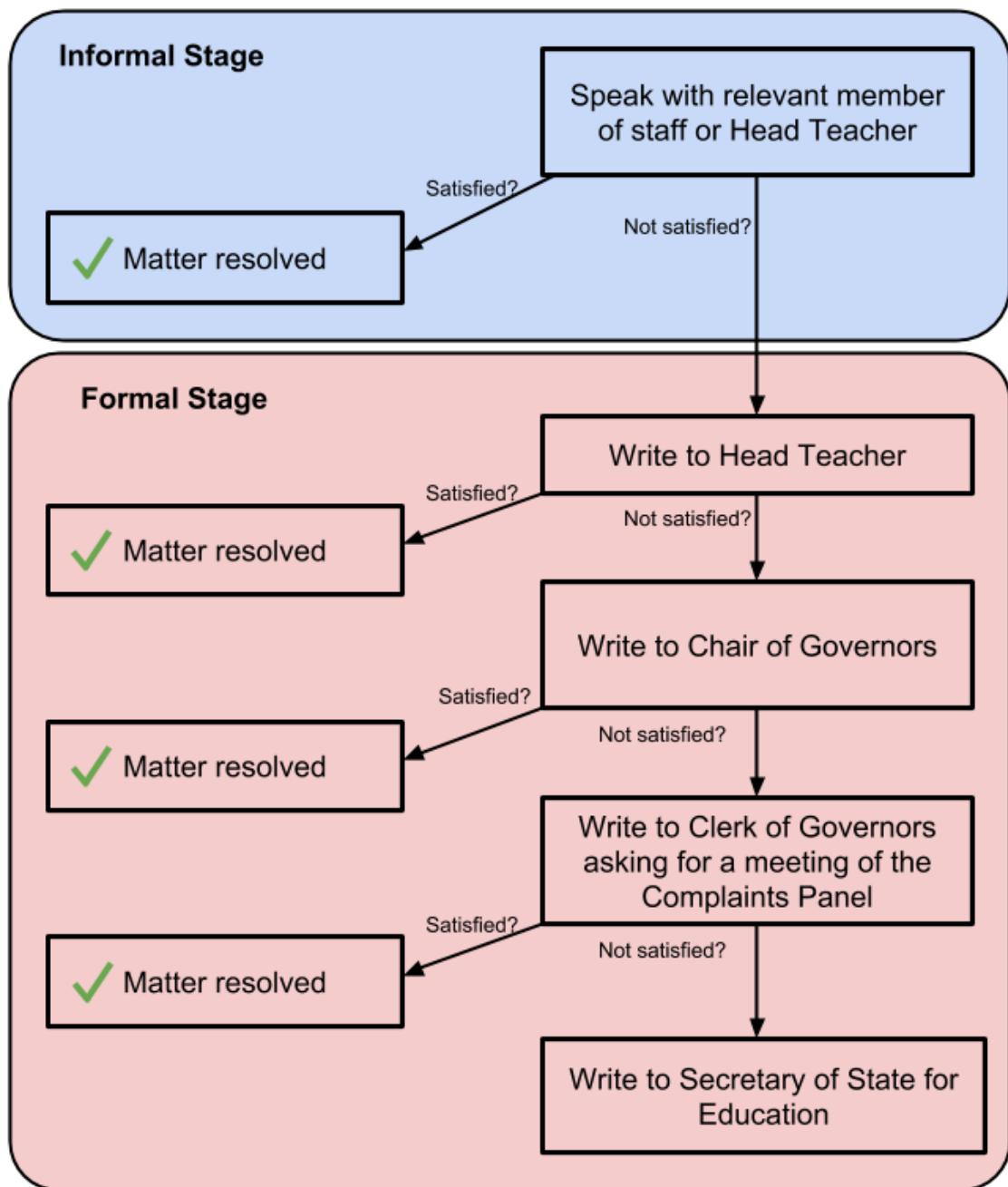
#### **Stage 4**

If you are not satisfied with the Complaints Panel decision you can write to the Secretary of State for Education at the following address: School Complaints Unit, Department for Education, 2nd Floor, Piccadilly Gate, Store Street, Manchester, M1 2WD

#### **Monitoring of the Policy**

All complaints and the action taken will be documented in a central log and a summary included in the Headteacher's termly report to the governors, with advice on any implications for policies. The Complaints log will be reviewed annually by the Governors.

# Concerns and Complaints Flow Chart



Approved by Governing Body – Summer 2025

Date of next review – Summer 2027

Sample of a complaint form

<b>Your name:</b>
<b>Pupil's name:</b>
<b>Your relationship to the pupil:</b>
<b>Address:</b>
<b>Postcode:</b>
<b>Day time telephone number:</b>
<b>Evening telephone number:</b>
<b>Please give details of your complaint.</b>
<b>What actions do you feel might resolve the problem at this stage?</b>
<b>Signature:</b>
<b>Date:</b>
<b>Official use</b>
<b>Date acknowledgement sent:</b>
<b>By who:</b>
<b>Complaint referred to:</b>

**Date:**