

Burdett-Coutts

COMPLAINTS POLICY

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We would like to acknowledge the work of other colleagues in the drafting of this policy. We have drawn on a range of sources including policies from other schools, good practice guides, published schemes, LDBS, LA and any statutory guidelines where appropriate.

Introduction

In accordance with Section 29(1) of the Education Act 2002, all maintained schools and maintained nursery schools must have and publish procedures to deal with all complaints relating to their school and to any community facilities or services that the school provides, for which there are no separate (statutory) procedures.

When dealing with parental complaints, the governing body of Burdett-Coutts & Townshend Foundation CE Primary School (hereafter known as Burdett-Coutts school) adheres to guidance from the Department for Education (DfE) advice, 'Best practice guidance for school complaints procedures 2020', the LDBS model Complaints procedure (May 2023) and the LDBS Complaints against governors policy in VA church schools (2023).

Where the complaint relates to Burdett-Coutts school's Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) provision, our procedures will address additional duties under the statutory framework for the EYFS (sections 3.83 to 3.84)

As a Church of England School, Christian values are at the heart of all we do. We value our relationship with parents and all members of the school and local community. If you have a concern we want to know about it so that it can be dealt with immediately. Most issues can be dealt with easily and quickly, but to ensure all concerns are handled effectively, the Governing Body has adopted a complaints policy and procedure.

Aims of the Policy

At Burdett-Coutts school, we encourage our learners to be ambitious for themselves, and for others, by challenging and supporting them in questioning the world and in finding solutions. Our Christian vision is deeply rooted in our theological understanding of St Paul's letter to the Philippians: "*I can do all things through Him who gives me strength*"

Through our exploration and teaching of the Christian values of friendship, compassion and service, we want our learners to flourish in today's world, knowing that they are loved and cherished by God. For it is through Him, that they are given the strength to encounter each day and live life in all its fullness. We aim to give children the confidence to believe that through effort and diligence, they can "do all things" and achieve.

To enable this, we believe that our school should provide a caring, positive, stimulating and safe environment which promotes the welfare, social, physical and moral development of the individual child. Therefore, we aim to work closely with all parents in a partnership which benefits all children and ensures that their school experience is happy and secure.

In line with our school vision and rules, the purpose of this policy is to help reaffirm this partnership and to ensure that it is easy for parents to inform the staff and/or governors of any concerns they may have and that such complaints will be responded to quickly and positively.

Intentions:

This Complaints Procedure is devised with the intention that it will:

- usually be possible to resolve problems by informal means;
- be simple to use and understand;
- treat complaints confidentially;
- allow problems to be handled swiftly;
- inform future practice so that a problem is unlikely to recur;
- ensure that the school's attitude to a pupil will never be affected by a parental complaint;
- discourage anonymous complaints;
- actively encourage strong home-school links;
- ensure that any person complained against has equal rights with the person making the
- complaint;
- reaffirm the partnership between parents, staff and governors as we work together for the
- good of the pupils in the school;
- be regularly reviewed

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 about any 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.

The Difference Between a Concern and a Complaint

A concern can be defined as 'an expression of worry or doubt 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.

How to Raise a Concern or Make a Complaint

A concern or complaint can be made in person, in writing or by telephone. It may also be made by a third party acting on behalf of a complainant, as long as they have appropriate consent to do so. Concerns should be raised with either the class teacher or Head Teacher. If the issue remains unresolved, the next step is to make a formal, written, complaint.

- Complaints against school staff (except the Head Teacher) should be made in the first instance, to the Head Teacher via the school office. Please mark them as Private and Confidential.
- Complaints that involve or are about the Head Teacher should be addressed to 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.

Please do not approach individual governors to raise concerns or complaints. They have no power to act on an individual basis and it may prevent them from considering complaints at a later stage.

For ease of use, a template complaint form is included at the end of this procedure (Annex B). 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. For instance, providing information in alternative formats, assisting complainants in raising a formal complaint or holding meetings in accessible locations.

Anonymous Complaints

We will not normally investigate anonymous complaints. However, the Head Teacher or Chair of Governors, if appropriate, will determine whether the complaint warrants an investigation.

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 only in exceptional circumstances.

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.

Scope of this Complaints Procedure

Some issues have associated statutory procedures and cannot be dealt with under our Complaints Procedure. These are listed below.

Issue	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 Westminster City Council.
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).
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. Volunteer staff who have concerns about our school should complain through the school's complaints procedure. 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 Department for Education 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 conduct 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 organisations who use school premises or facilities	Providers should have their own complaints procedure. Please contact them directly.
National Curriculum - content	Please contact the Department for Education www.education.gov.uk/contactus

Legal Considerations

If other bodies are investigating aspects of the complaint, for example the police, local authority (LA) safeguarding teams or Tribunals, this may affect 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 Burdett-Coutts school in relation to the complaint, we will consider whether to suspend the complaints procedure in relation to their complaint until those legal proceedings have concluded.

Resolving Complaints

At each stage in the procedure, we will endeavour 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
- access to mediation.

Withdrawal of a Complaint

If you wish to withdraw your complaint, we will ask you to confirm this in writing.

Stages in the Complaints Procedure

Informal

If you have a concern we would like you to tell us about it so that we can talk with you and see how best to resolve the issue. The majority of concerns can be resolved informally by speaking to a member of staff. Whatever your concern, please know that we shall treat it as strictly confidential and that our support and respect for you and your child will not be affected.

Please contact your child's class teacher, or other appropriate member of staff, and arrange a time when you can discuss the issue. It may be possible for you to see the member of staff straight away but normally it is better to make an appointment so that you can sit and talk things through. It may be possible to give a response immediately, but where any investigation or information is required, a response will be given within five school days.

Formal Stage 1

If you have not resolved your issue by informal means, or you wish to refer it directly to a formal process, you should contact the Head Teacher. If your complaint is about the Head Teacher, you should contact the chair of governors c/o the school. It is helpful if you can give a brief outline of your concern on the school's complaints form (Annex B).

The Head Teacher (or person appointed to investigate the complaint) will record the date the complaint is received and will acknowledge receipt of the complaint in writing (either by letter or email) within five school days.

Note: The Head Teacher 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 Head Teacher (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 the investigation, the Head Teacher will provide a formal written response within seven school days of the date of receipt of the complaint. If the Head Teacher is unable to meet this deadline, they will provide the complainant with an update and revised response date. Where appropriate, it will include details of actions we will take to resolve the complaint.

The Head Teacher will advise the complainant of how to escalate their complaint if they are dissatisfied with the outcome of Stage 1.

If the complaint is about the Head Teacher, 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 Head Teacher or member of the governing body must be made, in writing, 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.

Formal Stage 2

If you are dissatisfied with the outcomes at Stage 1, you may ask for your complaint to be considered at Stage 2 by a complaints committee of the governing body by writing to the Clerk to the Governors c/o the school. The committee will be formed of three governors with no prior involvement. They will listen to you, to the Head Teacher and, if appropriate, any others involved and come to a decision. You may bring a friend to the hearing if you wish.

A request to escalate to Stage 2 must be made, in writing, to the Clerk, via the school office, within 7 school days of receipt of the Stage 1 response. Requests received outside this time frame will only be considered in exceptional circumstances.

The Clerk will write to the complainant to inform them of the date of the committee 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 three proposed dates, without good reason, the Clerk 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. 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 Burdett-Coutts 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.

You are entitled to bring someone along to the complaints committee for support. This can be a relative or friend. We do not encourage either party to bring legal representatives to the committee meeting. However, there may be occasions when legal representation is appropriate - for instance, if a school employee is called as a witness, they may be supported by union and/or legal representation.

Representatives from the media are not permitted to attend.

Any written material will be circulated to all parties at least 7 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 or consider evidence unrelated to the initial complaint. 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 permitted unless a complainant's own disability or special needs require it. In this case the school will make appropriate arrangements and prior knowledge and consent of all parties must be sought. 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 Burdett-Coutts 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 Burdett-Coutts school.

If the complaint is about:

- the Chair and Vice Chair jointly 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 Burdett-Coutts school will take to resolve the complaint. The response will also advise the complainant of how to escalate their complaint should they remain dissatisfied.

Social Media

In order for complaints to be resolved as quickly and fairly as possible, Burdett-Coutts school requests the complainants not discuss complaints publically via social media such as Facebook and Twitter. Complaints will be dealt with confidentially for those involved, and we expect complainants to observe confidentiality also.

Staff Conduct Complaints

If it is determined that staff disciplinary or capability proceedings are necessary in order to resolve the issue, the details of this action will remain confidential to the Head Teacher and/or the individual's line manager. The complainant is entitled to be informed that action is being taken and the eventual outcome of any such action, but they are not entitled to participate in the proceedings or receive any detail about them.

Complaints About Fulfilment of Early Years Requirements

We will investigate all written complaints relating to our school's fulfilment of the Early Years Foundation Stage requirements (EYFS) and notify the complainant of the outcome within 28 days of receiving the complaint. The school will keep a record of the complaint and make this available to Ofsted on request.

Parents and carers can notify Ofsted if they believe that our school is not meeting the Early Years Foundation Stage requirements, by:

- Calling 0300 123 4666
- Emailing enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk
- Using the online contact form available at https://www.gov.uk/government/organisations/ofsted#org-contacts

We will notify parents and carers if we become aware that our school is to be inspected by Ofsted. We will also supply a copy of the inspection report to parents and carers of children attending the setting on a regular basis.

Serial and Unreasonable Complaints

We hope that our procedures will enable complaints and concerns to be resolved amicably. Very occasionally schools experience unreasonable and unacceptable behaviour in relation to complaints or repetition of issues after the complaints procedure has run its course, we have adopted the DfE model policy for these circumstances, which is attached to this procedure (Annex C).

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, 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 Burdett-Coutts school. They will consider whether Burdett-Coutts 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

Annex B: Complaint Form

Burdett-Coutts & Townshend Foundation CE Primary School Complaint Form	
Name	Name of pupil: Relationship to pupil:
Address:	
Email:	
Mobile:	Landline:
What is your concern and how has it affected you?	
Are you attaching any paperwork? If so, please list below:	
Have you discussed this matter with a member of staff before filling in this form? If so, who did you speak to and what was their response?	
What actions do you feel might resolve the problem at this stage?	
Signature:	Date:
Official use only: Date acknowledgement sent: Complaint referred to:……..	By whom: On ……..

Annex C: Serial & Unreasonable Complaints

Burdett-Coutts & Townshend Foundation CE Primary School (hereafter known as Burdett-Coutts school) 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.

Burdett-Coutts school 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 Burdett-Coutts school 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 and carried out in accordance with the Department for Education - Best practice guidance for Schools Complaints Procedures, as updated in January 2021

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 Burdett-Coutts school.

Annex D: Procedural Advice - Conducting Interviews with Complainants

1. In conducting interviews with complainants, headteachers (or chairs of governors, if relevant) should:
    a. have regard to confidentiality at all times. The need to treat conversations and correspondence as confidential is of paramount importance; from the outset all parties to a complaint should be made aware of the need for confidentiality.
    b. listen attentively and sympathetically to complainants, allowing them to explain their concern/s in their own way. After they have finished, it may be necessary to try to clarify the issue(s) by asking questions and summarising what has been said. It is helpful to ascertain the complainant's desired outcome and possibilities (if any) for redress. Headteachers may wish to ensure that the meeting is minuted by a third party, so that there is a clear record of the meeting.

2. At the end of the interview decide if it is possible to:
    a. make an immediate response to the concern/s; or
    b. delay a response. It is often necessary to say to complainants that their concerns will be carefully considered and when all the facts and circumstances have been ascertained, they will receive a response normally within five school days.

3. Avoid passing judgement or coming to conclusions before having spoken to any third parties and having considered all the aspects of the complaint.

4. If the complaint is against a third party, ensure that they have an opportunity to explain the situation as they see it, but not usually in the presence of the complainant unless this is deemed desirable by all concerned.

5. Examine the general context and constraints of the situation and consider if there are any precedents.

6. When all the facts and circumstances relating to the matter have been ascertained make careful notes summarising your investigation. You should then decide how to respond to the complainant.

7. The complainant should be clearly informed of the school's response to the complaint/s and of the next stage in the procedure, should s/he wish to proceed further.

Annex E: Outline of the Procedure for a Complaints Panel Hearing

The Panel may:

a. dismiss the complaint in whole or in part;
b. uphold the complaint in whole or in part;
c. decide on the appropriate action to be taken to resolve the complaint;
d. recommend changes to the school's systems or procedures to ensure that problems of a similar nature do not recur.

The Panel members should be aware of the following:

- the school's complaints procedure;
- the appeal hearing is independent and impartial and must be seen to be so;
- no governor may sit on the panel if they have had a prior involvement in the complaint, or the circumstances surrounding it;
- panel members should be drawn from a cross-section of the governing body;
- the hearing is held in private;
- the aim of the hearing is to resolve the complaint and achieve conciliation between the
- school and the complainant;
- it may not be possible to resolve matters to the complainant's satisfaction, it may only be possible to establish facts and satisfy the complaint that the matter has been taken seriously;
- some parents may feel nervous: the panel chair will make efforts to ensure proceedings are as informal as possible.

The chair of the panel:

- welcomes those present and introduces each person by name;
- stresses that the meeting is strictly confidential to those present;
- checks that mobile phones and other devices are switched off.
- outlines the procedure to be followed;
- asks all attending the Panel, including witnesses, to remain available for approximately 30 minutes after they withdraw, in case the Panel needs to clarify a point;
- ensures that key findings of fact are made and the issues addressed;
- ensures that each party is able to state their case and ask questions without undue
- interruption;
- ensures that all written material is seen by all parties;
- conducts the hearing in an informal manner and ensures each party treats the other with respect and courtesy.

Order of hearing:

- The complainant is invited to present their case and explain their desired outcome and any possibilities of redress.
- The headteacher may question both the complainant and any witnesses.
- The headteacher is invited to explain the school's actions.
- The complainant may question the headteacher and any witnesses.
- Both parties are invited to sum up.

After the complainant and Headteacher have withdrawn, the Panel decides on its recommendations, including any redress. The decision and recommendations of the Complaints Panel are sent within two school days to all parties. The Panel's decision is final.

Sometimes the Panel will need to respond to unexpected events eg

- a complainant may not arrive for the meeting. The Panel will need to consider any reason given or any request for a postponement and decide whether to proceed in their absence or to reconvene the meeting.
- A party may wish to introduce new written evidence not previously distributed. This should be given to the clerk and the chair will need to consider whether to allow time for all sides to consider the new information or to disallow it. New complaints or allegations will not be considered.

Annex F: Model Letters

Letter 1: Acknowledgement Letter

Dear

Thank you for your letter/telephone call/our meeting* of DATE. The School's policy is to deal with parental concerns as quickly as possible. I will investigate the matters you raise and contact you again by (DATE) to let you know the outcome.

Thank you for bringing this matter to my attention.

Yours sincerely

Headteacher

* delete as appropriate

Letter 2: Notification Of Decision Regarding Parental Complaint

Confidential

Dear

Further to your letter of (DATE) and our subsequent meeting, I have given careful consideration to your concerns and considered all the available relevant evidence. We agreed at our meeting that your concerns related to the following: ….. (Outline the complaint)

Following my investigation I have concluded that ……

Include as appropriate:

There is insufficient evidence to reach a conclusion and I cannot therefore uphold your complaint. If you are able to provide additional evidence, I will reconsider this decision.

Or

Your complaint is not substantiated by the evidence in that……. (include reasons for this conclusion).

Or

Your complaint was substantiated in part/full ….. (include reasons for this conclusion). The School will review its practices/procedures in relation to …… with the intention of avoiding any recurrence. Parents will be informed in due course of the policy changes.

Or

In order to fully address the matters investigated, the school has initiated appropriate internal procedures. Due to the nature of these procedures, their outcome must remain strictly confidential. I am confident however that the circumstance which gave rise to your complaint should not recur.

I hope that you now feel that your concerns have been addressed by the school and that we can work together in the future to ensure that no other issues reach this level of concern. However, if you feel dissatisfied with this response you may proceed to the next stage of the complaints procedure (outline the process for this). If you wish to pursue this option please write to……. by …. (DATE).

Yours sincerely

Headteacher (or Chair of Governing Body, if complaint is against the headteacher)

Letter 3: Notification Of Formal Hearing Of The Complaints Panel

Confidential

Dear

Thank you for your letter of (DATE) indicating your wish to make a formal complaint to the Governors' Complaints Panel. I have been instructed to convene a meeting of the Panel in order to hear your complaint. The Panel will consist of three governors who have had no prior involvement in the complaint.

I write to invite you to a meeting of the Complaints Panel which will be held at ….. (time) on ….. (date) at ….. (location). You are welcome to be accompanied by a friend and/or, if necessary, an interpreter.

I would be grateful if you could confirm whether you intend to come to the meeting and, if you bring a friend, and/or if you intend to invite any witnesses, please let me know their names. Please also let me know if we should be aware of any issues regarding access for the disabled.

I enclose copies of the paperwork relating to your complaint. If there is any additional written information in support of your complaint, please send this to me by …… (DATE) so that I may circulate this to the Panel and the headteacher.

Please note that the Panel will be discussing the issues raised in the attached papers and any further information you submit by the deadline. It will not be possible for you to raise any new issues at the meeting.

I enclose an explanatory sheet summarising the procedure at the meeting. The Panel will consider carefully both your views and those of the school and will make every effort to find a mutually acceptable solution to the situation which has led to your complaint.

Yours sincerely

Clerk to the Governors

Letter 4 Outcome Of Hearing Of The Complaints Panel

Confidential

Dear

Thank you for meeting with me and my fellow governors on the Complaints Panel on (DATE) to discuss your complaint. I am grateful to you for the time and effort you put into presenting your complaint.

I am writing to let you know (or confirm, if the outcome is announced at the end of hearing) the outcome of our consideration of your complaint.

Include here a brief summary of the nature of the complaint and the conclusions reached by the Panel, including particulars of any evidence that was pertinent to reaching a conclusion. It is important that due weight is given to both the complainant's evidence and that of the school.

Outcomes will vary, see letter two for possible options. Also include any actions that the school intends to take as a result of the complaint, including any changes or reviews of school procedures.

I and my fellow Panel members hope that you will feel your complaint has been fairly heard and that all the issues you raised have been investigated appropriately. The Governors Panel is the last stage in the School's complaints procedure and the Governors consider that this matter is now closed. (*The wording of this final paragraph will largely depend on the outcome and the wording may need to change appropriately*).

If you are dissatisfied with the way your complaint has dealt with you may contact the School Complaints Unit at the Department for Education (www.education.gov.uk/contactus, or by telephone 0370 000 2288, or by writing to DFE, School Complaints Unit, Piccadilly Gate, Store St, Manchester, M1 2WD.

Yours sincerely

Chair of Complaints Panel

Cc Headteacher
Chair of Governors