



Bincombe Valley Primary School and Community Nursery

Complaints Policy

Safeguarding Statement: The school is committed to safeguarding children and promoting the welfare of children and young people and expects all staff and volunteers to share this commitment.

Equality Statement: We have carefully considered and analysed the impact of this policy on equality and the possible implications for pupils with protected characteristics, as part of our commitment to meet the Public Sector Equality Duty (PSED) requirement to have due regard to the need to eliminate discrimination, advance equality of opportunity and foster good relations.

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1 Aims and application

- 1.1 Bincombe Valley Primary School and Community Nursery aims to build upon collaborations to ensure that the school works in a productive and positive partnership with all parents and carers. In respect of complaints relating to the school, all complainants should use this complaints procedure, and refrain from airing any grievance or concerns on social media sites, as this could be potentially damaging to the school, and our children & young people (CYP).
- 1.2 When responding to complaints, we aim to:
- Be impartial and non-adversarial
 - Facilitate a full and fair investigation by an independent person or panel, where necessary
 - Address all the points at issue and provide an effective and prompt response
 - Respect complainants' desire for confidentiality
 - Treat complainants with respect and courtesy
 - Make sure that any decisions we make are lawful, rational, reasonable, fair and proportionate, in line with the principles of administrative law
 - Keep complainants informed of the progress of the complaints process
 - Consider how the complaint can feed into school improvement evaluation processes
- 1.3 This complaints procedure is not limited to parents or carers of children who are registered at the school. Any person, including members of the public, may make a complaint to an individual school, about any provision of facilities or services that we provide. Part 1 of this policy outlines how parents/carers of registered CYP currently attending Bincombe Valley Primary School and Community Nursery can raise a concern or complaint. Concerns or complaints from other persons will be dealt with in accordance with Part 2 of this policy.
- 1.4 This procedure does not apply to concerns and complaints relating to the matters listed in Appendix 1.
- 1.5 Anonymous concerns or complaints will not normally be investigated under this procedure. The Headteacher or Chair of Governors, if appropriate, will determine whether there are exceptional circumstances to justify conducting an investigation into the issues raised.
- 1.6 All staff will be made aware of this complaints procedure and are expected to review this policy regularly in order that they are familiar with our process of dealing with complaints and can be of assistance when an issue is brought to their attention.
- 1.7 In this procedure:
- 'complaint' means an expression of dissatisfaction however made, about actions taken or a lack of action.
 - 'concern' means an expression of worry or doubt over an issue considered to be important for which reassurances are sought.
 - 'meeting' means an in person or virtual meeting (i.e., telephone or video conference where all parties can participate verbally), virtual meetings will only be held in the event that all parties have access to appropriate equipment to attend and are happy to do so.
 - 'parent' means a parent, carer or anyone with legal responsibility for a child;
 - 'school days' excludes weekends and school holidays and periods of partial or total closure;
- 1.8 The timeframes referred to in this policy are our usual timeframes and the school will seek to adhere to these timeframes where possible.
- 1.9 Reasonable adjustments will be made to this procedure where required to ensure that all complainants can access and complete this complaints procedure. In accordance with equality law, Governing Body 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.

2. Legislation and guidance

- 2.1 This document meets the requirements of section 29 of the [Education Act 2002](#), which states that schools must have and make available a procedure to deal with all complaints relating to their school and to any community facilities or services that the school provides. It is also based on [guidance for schools on complaints procedures](#) from the Department for Education (DfE), including the model procedure, and model procedure for dealing with serial and unreasonable complaints.

3 Key principles

- 3.1 We expect all complainants to make reasonable attempts to seek an informal resolution.
- 3.2 To investigate your complaint properly and fairly, we have implemented a staged approach. We anticipate that almost all complaints that arise will be resolved at Stage 1 or Stage 2 as outlined below.
- 3.3 We expect our members of staff to be addressed in a respectful manner and for communication to remain calm at all times. The procedure under Part 3 will only be used on very rare occasions to deal with unreasonably persistent complainants or unreasonable complainant behaviour.
- 3.4 Concerns or complaints should be brought to our attention as soon as possible. Any matter raised more than three months after the incident being complained of (or, where a series of associated incidents have occurred, within three months of the last of these incidents) will not be considered unless the Headteacher (or Chair Governors if the complaint is about the Headteacher) accepts that there are good reasons to explain the delay or the complaint is about a particularly serious matter.
- 3.5 Where a complaint is received outside of term time, we will consider it to have been received on the first school day following the holiday period.
- 3.6 On rare occasions a school may receive complaints from a number of parents relating to the same issue. In order to deal with these complaints efficiently the school will follow the procedure set out in Part 4.
- 3.7 If it becomes necessary to alter the time limits and deadlines set out within this procedure, you will be advised accordingly and given an explanation as to why this has been the case and provided with revised timescales. If other bodies are investigating aspects of the complaint, for example the police, local authority safeguarding teams or tribunals/courts, 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.
- 3.8 Complainants should 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 later stages.
- 3.9 If a complainant commences legal action against Bincombe Valley Primary School and Community Nursery in relation to their complaint, we will consider whether to suspend the complaints procedure until those legal proceedings have concluded.
- 3.10 If a complainant wishes to withdraw their complaint, we will ask them to confirm this in writing.

4 Record keeping and confidentiality

- 4.1 The school will record the progress of all complaints, including information about actions taken at all stages, the stage at which the complaint was resolved, and the final outcome. The records will also include copies of letters and emails, and notes relating to meetings and phone calls.
- 4.2 This material will be treated as confidential and stored securely, and will be viewed only by those involved in investigating the complaint or on the review panel. This is except where the secretary of state (or someone acting on their behalf) or the complainant requests access to records of a complaint through a freedom of information (FOI) request or through a subject access request under the terms of the Data Protection Act, or where the material must be made available during a school inspection.
- 4.3 Records of complaints will be kept securely, and all documentation will be kept for 4 years from the receipt of the complaints form.
- 4.4 The details of the complaint, including the names of individuals involved, will not be shared with the whole governing board in case a review panel needs to be organised at a later point.
- 4.5 Where the governing body is aware of the substance of the complaint before the review panel stage, the school will (where reasonably practicable) arrange for an independent panel to hear the complaint.
- 4.6 Complainants also have the right to request an independent panel if they believe there is likely to be bias in the proceedings. The decision to approve this request is made by the governing body, who will not unreasonably withhold consent.

5 Complaints procedure

Stage 1: Informal concerns

- 5.1 An informal concern can be raised in person or by telephone. They may also be made by a third party acting on behalf of an individual /s, as long as they have appropriate authority to do so. Most enquiries and concerns can be dealt with satisfactorily by the class teacher or other members of staff without the need to resort to the formal procedure. We value informal meetings and discussions and encourage parents to approach staff with any concerns they may have, and aim to resolve all issues with open dialogue and mutual understanding.
- 5.2 It is always helpful if you can fully explain the nature of the concern and identify the outcome you are looking for. Where appropriate, you may be invited to an informal meeting with the member of staff most appropriate for dealing with that concern. The member of staff dealing with the concern will make sure that you are clear on what action (if any) has been agreed. This may be put in writing if appropriate.
- 5.3 It is essential that the school respects the views of an individual /s who indicates that they would have difficulty discussing a concern with a particular member of staff. In this case, the Headteacher will refer the individual /s to another designated member of staff.
- 5.4 Similarly, if the member of staff directly involved feels too compromised to deal with a concern, the Headteacher may consider referring the individual/s to another member of staff. The member of staff may be more senior, but this is not essential.
- 5.5 If the matter is brought to the attention of the Headteacher they may decide to deal with your concerns directly at this stage. If the concerns are about the Headteacher these should be referred directly to the Chair of the Governing Body under Stage 2.

- 5.6 There is no suggested timescale for resolution at this stage given the importance of dialogue through informal discussion, although it would be expected that most issues will be resolved within 10 school days. Where no satisfactory solution has been found, you will be advised that if you wish your concerns to be considered further you should write to the Headteacher under Stage 2 of this procedure within 10 school days.

Stage 2: Formal written complaints

- 5.7 If your concerns are not resolved under Stage 1, you should put your complaint in writing and send this to the Headteacher or Clerk to the Governing Body.
- 5.8 It is very important that you include a clear statement of the actions that you would like us to take to resolve your complaint. The Complaint Form provided at Annex 2 of this procedure must be completed. 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 all cases your written complaint must include:
- the nature of the complaint explaining the complaint in full;
 - details of how the matter has been dealt with so far;
 - the names of potential witnesses, dates and times of events and copies of all relevant documents; and
 - a clear statement of the actions that you would like us to take to resolve your complaint.
- 5.9 Your complaint will normally be acknowledged in writing by the Headteacher/Clerk to the Governing Body within 5 school days of receipt. The acknowledgement will give a brief explanation of the school's complaints procedure and a target date for providing a response to the complaint.
- This will normally be within 25 school days of receipt (with a maximum extension of 65 school days).
- 5.10 If appropriate, the Headteacher (or someone appointed by them) may invite you to a meeting to clarify your complaint and to explore possible resolutions. If you accept that invitation, you may be accompanied by one other person, such as a friend, relative, advocate or interpreter, to assist you. Where possible, this meeting will take place within 15 school days of receipt of the written complaint.
- 5.11 If necessary, an investigation will be conducted. Witnesses will be interviewed, and statements taken from those involved. If the complaint centres on a child or young person (CYP), the CYP should also be interviewed. CYPs should normally be interviewed with their parent present, but if this would seriously delay the investigation of a serious or urgent complaint or if the CYP has specifically said that s/he would prefer that their parents were not involved, another member of staff with whom the CYP feels comfortable should be present. If the matter includes a complaint relating to a member of staff, the member of staff must have the opportunity to respond to the complaint.
- 5.12 Once the relevant facts have been established as far as possible, the Headteacher will provide a written response to the complaint, including an explanation of the decision and the reasons for it. This will include what action will be taken to resolve the complaint (if any). You will be advised that if you are dissatisfied with the outcome of the complaint, you may request that your complaint be heard by the Complaints panel under Stage 3 of this procedure.
- 5.13 Bincombe Valley Primary School and Community Nursery may engage an independent, external person to carry out the investigation into the Stage 2 complaint or to review the investigation and response at Stage 2. This may be appropriate where the complaint is particularly complex and involves legal issues.

Q. What if the complaint is about the Headteacher?

In these cases, your complaint should be sent to the Clerk to the Governing Body who will arrange for

the Chair of Governors to conduct the Stage 2 procedure.

Q. What if the complaint is about a member of the Governing Body?

Complaints about the Chair of Governors, any individual governor or the whole governing body should be addressed to the Clerk to the Governing Body who will arrange for another Governor to investigate the concerns in accordance with Stage 2.

- 5.14 All complaints should be marked as Private and Confidential.
- 5.15 Please be aware that where your complaint relates to an employee a copy of the complaint may be shared with them in order to investigate the issues raised.

Stage 3: Referral to the complaints panel

- 5.16 If you are dissatisfied with the decision under Stage 2, you may request that a complaints panel be convened to consider your complaint. The complaints panel will not review any new complaints at this stage or consider evidence unrelated to the initial complaint. New complaints must be dealt with from Stage 1 of the procedure.
- 5.17 To request a hearing before the complaints panel, you should write to the Governing Body via the Clerk to the Governors within 10 school days of receiving notice of the outcome of Stage 2. Requests received outside of this time frame will only be considered if exceptional circumstances apply. You should ensure that you provide copies of all relevant documents and state all the grounds for your complaint and the outcome that you are looking for. Your written request will be acknowledged within 5 school days of receipt.
- 5.18 The Clerk to the Governors will arrange for a complaints panel to be convened, made up of at least three members, including:
- members of the Governing Body; and,
 - one person who is independent of the management and running of the school. This could be a Governor or Headteacher from another school.
- 5.19 The Clerk to the Governors shall appoint one of these members to be the Chair of the complaints panel. It is important that the panel is independent and impartial, and that it is seen to be so. In deciding the make-up of the panel, the Clerk to the Governors will need to try and ensure that they are sensitive to the issues of: age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religious beliefs, gender, and sexual orientation.
- 5.20 The panel will focus on the school's actions and investigation at previous stages of the complaint, whether school policy and any relevant legislation and/or statutory guidance has been followed and can make findings and recommendations (where appropriate). The aim of the panel meeting is for the panel to consider the complaint with the aim of resolving the complaint and achieving reconciliation between the school and the complainant. The panel will not consider any new complaints at this stage or consider evidence unrelated to the initial complaint.
- 5.21 Every effort will be made to enable the hearing to take place within 25 school days of the receipt of your request (with a maximum extension to 65 school days). As soon as reasonably practicable and in any event at least 5 school days before the hearing, you will be sent written notification of the date, time and place of the hearing, together with brief details of the panel members who will be present. Fair consideration will be given to any bona fide objection to a particular member of the panel. You will also be informed of the name of the person who will be presenting the case on behalf of the school (referred to in this policy as the 'school representative'). This may be the person who is the subject of the complaint, the person who undertook the investigation at Stage 2 or another person with sufficient knowledge of the matter.

- 5.22 If, despite best efforts, it is not possible to find a mutually convenient date and time for a hearing within a reasonable timeframe, the Clerk to the Governors may determine that the hearing proceeds on the basis of written submissions from both parties.
- 5.23 You have the right to be accompanied to the hearing by a friend, relative, advocate or interpreter. You should notify the Clerk to the Governors in advance if you intend to bring anyone to the hearing. Please note that we do not encourage either party to bring legal representatives to the panel meeting. Representatives from the media are not permitted to attend.
- 5.24 A copy of the complaint and any other documents provided by you in support of your complaint, or by the school representative in defence of the complaint, will be provided to the complaints panel as soon as practicable upon receipt. Copies of these documents shall also be provided to you and the school representative (as applicable) at least five school days before the hearing.
- 5.25 The complaints panel reserves the right not to consider any documentation presented by either party less than three school days prior to the hearing. The complaints panel is under no obligation to hear oral evidence from witnesses but may do so and/or may take written statements into account. The panel will not normally accept recordings of conversations that were obtained covertly and without the informed consent of all parties being recorded.
- 5.26 The hearing will be conducted to ensure that each party has the opportunity to address the complaints panel. The procedure to be followed during the hearing will be explained to the parties by letter in advance of the hearing. The Clerk to the Governors will ensure that sufficient notes are taken to record an accurate reflection of the points considered and any decisions taken, or actions agreed. Electronic recordings of the hearing will not normally be permitted and, in any event, would require the consent of all those present.
- 5.27 Unless otherwise stated, the procedure for the Stage 3 hearing is as follows:
- the complainant and school representative will enter the hearing together;
 - the Chair of the panel will introduce the panel members and outline the process;
 - the complainant will explain the complaint;
 - the school representative and panel members will question the parent;
 - the school representative will explain the school's actions;
 - the complainant and the panel members will question the school representative;
 - the complainant will sum up their complaint;
 - the school representative will sum up the school's actions;
 - the Chair of the panel will explain that both parties will hear from the panel within 10 school days;
 - both parties will leave together while the panel decides;
 - the Clerk to the Governors will stay to assist the panel with its decision making.
- 5.28 The Clerk to the Governors and or complaints panel reserves the right to modify the above procedure at their sole discretion, for example requiring the complainant and the school representative to present their complaint/actions separately to the Complaints panel in the absence of the other party.
- 5.29 A panel hearing may be adjourned if the panel require further evidence or in exceptional circumstances e.g. if clarification sought by the panel is essential to the proceedings. The adjourned date must be as soon as possible.
- 5.30 After the hearing, the complaints panel will consider their decision and inform the complainant and, where relevant, the person complained about of their decision in writing within 10 school days. The letter will set out the decision of the panel together with the reasons underpinning that decision. The panel can (by a majority if necessary):
- dismiss the complaint in whole or in part;
 - uphold the complaint in whole or in part;

- decide on the appropriate action to be taken to resolve the complaint;
- make findings and recommend changes to the school systems or procedures to ensure that problems of a similar nature do not happen again.

Stage 4: Referral of complaint to the DfE

- 5.31 If the complainant is unsatisfied with the outcome of the school's complaints procedure, they can refer their complaint to the DfE.
- 5.32 The DfE will not re-investigate the matter of the complaint. It will look at whether the school's complaints policy and any other relevant statutory policies that the school holds were adhered to. The DfE also looks at whether the school's statutory policies adhere to education legislation.
- 5.33 The DfE will intervene where a school has:
- Failed to act in line with its duties under education law.
 - Acted (or is proposing to act) unreasonably when exercising its functions.
- 5.34. If the complaints procedure is found to not meet regulations, the school will be asked to correct its procedure accordingly.

For more information or to refer a complaint, see the following webpage:

www.gov.uk/complain-about-school

6 Roles and Responsibilities

6.1 The role of the Clerk to the Governors

The Clerk to the Governors is the contact point for the complainant and the complaints panel, and should:

- ensure that the complainant is fully updated at each stage of the procedure;
- liaise with staff members, Headteacher and Chair of Governors to ensure the smooth running of the complaints procedure;
- be mindful of the timescales to respond to complaints;
- 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);
- ensure that the panel has access to legal advice, where appropriate;
- 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;
- minute the meeting;
- notify all parties of the panel's decision;
- assist the school in issuing a summary letter to the complainant.

6.2 The role of the Headteacher (or Chair of Governors if the complaint is about the Headteacher)

- to ensure that the complainant is fully updated at each stage of the procedure;
- to ensure that the correct procedure has been followed;
- to ensure that an investigation is carried out, and a report compiled;
- to meet the complainant, if appropriate;
- if the complaint is being referred to Stage Three, notify the Clerk to the Governors to arrange the complaints panel.

6.3 The role of the Chair of the complaints panel

The Chair of the panel has a key role, ensuring that:

- 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;
- the remit of the panel is explained to the complainant;
- the 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);
- key findings of fact are made, and that any issues not previously mentioned in writing should not be raised at the meeting and, if they are mentioned at the meeting, these should not be noted or considered by the panel;
- 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 panel is open-minded, acts independently and no panel member has an external interest in the outcome or any involvement in an earlier stage of the procedure;
- the meeting is minuted.

7 Concerns or complaints from other persons

7.1 Part 1 of this complaints policy applies only to complaints made by parents or carers of current registered CYP of Bincombe Valley Primary School and Community Nursery. However, we wish to work closely with other members of the local community and will deal with their concerns and complaints as follows:

- **Stage 1** - a concern regarding a school or its operations may be made to any member of staff. That member of staff will attempt to resolve the matter immediately or may, if appropriate, refer the matter to their line manager or member of the senior leadership team (SLT) who is best placed to deal with the concern. It is expected that most concerns will be responded to orally or in writing within 10 school days. If a longer period is required, you will be kept informed of the progress of the investigation.
- **Stage 2** - where a concern is not resolved at stage 1, or you wish your concerns to be dealt with immediately as a formal complaint, you should put your complaint in writing using the complaints form in appendix 2 and send this to the Headteacher to investigate. The Headteacher may delegate the task of investigation and/or responding to the complaint to a member of the Senior Leadership Team or may escalate the complaint straight to stage 3. A formal response to the complaint will usually be provided within 25 school days of receipt of the letter of complaint although if a longer period is required to respond, you will be kept updated.
- **Stage 3** - if you are not satisfied with the response at stage 2, you may request a review by writing to the Clerk to the Governors. You should write to the Clerk within 10 school days of receipt of the letter at stage 2. Requests received outside of this time frame will only be considered if **exceptional** circumstances apply. The Clerk will arrange for a Governor to consider the complaint alone or may convene a complaints panel on the same terms as set out in Part 1 of this complaints policy. The decision at this stage will usually be sent to you within 25 school days of receipt of the request for a review. The decision at stage 3 exhausts the school's complaints procedure.

8 Unreasonably persistent complainants and unreasonable complainant behaviour

8.1 There are rare circumstances where we will deviate from the Complaints Procedure set out

in Parts 1 and 2. These include, but are not necessarily limited to:

- where the complainant's behaviour or language towards staff or members of the governing body is abusive, offensive, discriminatory or threatening;
- where the complaint's behaviour is hindering our consideration of complaints and/or the proper running of the school because of the frequency or nature of the complainant's contact, 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
 - seeks an unrealistic outcome, such as the inappropriate dismissal of staff
 - 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
 - knowingly provides falsified information
 - publishes unacceptable information on social media or other public forums
- where the complainant's complaint is unreasonably persistent, clearly frivolous, vexatious and/or has patently insufficient grounds. The Office of the Independent Adjudicator defines the characteristics of a 'frivolous' or 'vexatious' complaint as:
 - complaints which are obsessive, persistent, harassing, prolific, repetitious
 - insistence upon pursuing unmeritorious complaints and/or unrealistic outcomes beyond all reason
 - insistence upon pursuing meritorious complaints in an unreasonable manner
 - complaints which are designed to cause disruption or annoyance
 - demands for redress that lack any serious purpose or value
- where the complainant's complaint is the same, similar to or based on the same facts of a complaint which has already been considered in full.

In these circumstances, we may:

- inform the complainant that their behaviour is unacceptable or unreasonably persistent and ask them to change it;
- restrict the complainant's access to the school e.g. requesting contact in a particular form (for example, letters only), requiring contact to take place with a named person only, restricting telephone calls to specified days and times or banning the complainant from the school's premises. Any such arrangements will be reviewed after six months;
- conduct the complaints panel on the papers only i.e. not hold a hearing;
- refuse to consider the complaint and, where Part 1 of this procedure applies, refer the complainant directly to Stage 4.

- 8.2 In all cases we will write to tell the complainant why we believe his or her behaviour is unacceptable or unreasonably persistent, what action we are taking and the duration of that action.
- 8.3 We may take the decision not to respond to any further correspondence where:
- we have taken every reasonable step to address the complainant's concerns;
 - the complainant has been given a clear statement of our position and their options; and
 - the complainant contacts us repeatedly, making substantially the same points each time.
- 8.4 The case for ceasing further correspondence is stronger where:
- letters, emails, or telephone calls are often or always abusive or aggressive or make insulting personal comments about or threats towards staff;
 - we have reason to believe the complainant is contacting us with the intention of causing disruption or inconvenience.
- 8.5 Where the behaviour is so extreme that it threatens the immediate safety and welfare of staff or members of the governing body, we will consider other options, for example reporting the matter to the police or taking legal action. In such cases, we may not give the complainant prior warning of that action.

9 Complaint campaigns

- 9.1. For the purposes of this policy, a complaint campaign is defined as a complaint from three or more separate individuals (whether or not connected with a school) which are all based on the same subject.
- 9.2. Depending on the subject in question, we may deviate from the procedure set out in this policy and instead:
- send a template response to all complainants and/or;
 - publish a single response on the school's website (as applicable).

10 Learning lessons and monitoring arrangements

- 10.1. The governing body will review any underlying issues raised by complaints with the Headteacher and /or senior leadership team, where appropriate, and respecting confidentiality, to determine whether there are any improvements that the school can make to its procedures or practice to help prevent similar events in the future.
- 10.2. The governing will monitor the effectiveness of the complaints procedure in making sure that complaints are handled properly. The governing body will track the number and nature of complaints and review any underlying issues.
- 10.3. The complaints records are logged and managed by the School Business Manager.

11 Appendix 1 - Matters excluded from scope of this policy

Excluded Matters	Signposting
Admissions	The process for challenging admissions decisions is set out in our admissions policy in accordance with relevant statutory guidance.
Child protection matters	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).
Exclusions	The process for challenging exclusions decisions is set out in the DfE's statutory guidance and information can be found at https://www.gov.uk/school-discipline-exclusions/exclusions
National Curriculum content	Please contact the Department for Education at www.education.gov.uk/contactus
School re-organisation proposals	Where concerns are not adequately addressed by the school or Dorset Council, complaints can be raised direct with the Department for Education.
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 service. Please contact them direct.
Staff grievances	Complaints from staff will be dealt with under the school's internal grievance procedures.
Staff conduct	Certain complaints about staff may need to 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.
Statutory assessments of Special Educational Needs (SEN)	Concerns about statutory assessments of special educational needs should be raised directly with Dorset Council.
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 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 should complain through the school's complaints procedure. You may also be able to complain direct to the Department for Education (see link above), depending on the substance of the complaint

12 Appendix 2 - Complaints Form

Your name:
Children or Young Person's (CYP) name:
Your relationship to CYP:
Your address and postcode:
Your daytime telephone number:
Your evening telephone number:
Your email address:
Your complaint is: (if you have more than one complaint, please number these)
What action have you already taken to try and resolve your complaint(s) in accordance with Stage 1 of this procedure? (Who did you speak to and what was the response?)
What would you like as an outcome from your complaint(s)?

Are you attaching any paperwork? If so, give details here:

Your signature..... Date

All functions of the complaints procedure must adhere to the requirements of the Data Protection Act and the Freedom of Information Act.

Please complete and return to the School office in a sealed envelope addressed to the Headteacher, Clerk to the Governing Body or Chair of the Governing Body (as appropriate).

Office use

Date received

Date acknowledgement sent

Responsible member of staff

Action taken

13 Appendix 3 - Summary of Complaints Procedure for Parents & Carers (Part 1)

