



Uffington
Church of England
Primary School

COMPLAINTS PROCEDURE

The First Step (Stage 1)

As a first step, if you are unhappy with anything about the school, please talk to the teacher most involved.

Usually, teachers are available for a short while at the end of the day, but to make sure that the teacher has time to listen properly to what you have to say, it may be worth telephoning the school to make an appointment.

We would hope that most concerns can be resolved in this way.

The teacher will not only try to address your concern but will report the matter to the Headteacher so that she is aware of your concern and what is being done about it.

The Next Step (Stage 2)

Very occasionally, it may be that the teacher cannot resolve your concern, or you may feel that the situation has not changed. If this is the case, you should raise the issue with the Headteacher.

Please telephone the school to make an appointment.

Invariably, matters can be satisfactorily resolved at this stage.

Taking Matters Further (Stage 3)

We would expect most, if not all, complaints to have been resolved through the stages described so far. However, in exceptional circumstances, this may not be the case and you may wish to pursue the matter further, and more formally.

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At this stage the governing body will take on the management of the complaint. A request to escalate to this stage must be made to the Clerk, via the school office, within ten days of receipt of the Stage 2 response.

The Clerk will record the date the complaint is received and acknowledge receipt of the complaint in writing (either by letter or email) within five school days. Requests received outside of this time frame will only be considered if exceptional circumstances apply.

The procedure is as follows:

- You should set out your concern, in writing, and address it to the Clerk to the Governors, Mrs J Cobb, Uffington Church of England Primary School. If, for some reason, you do not feel that you can do this, please telephone the school office, (01780 756236) and explain that you want to make a complaint, but are unable to set it out in writing. The Clerk will then arrange to produce a typewritten statement of your complaint, at your instruction, for you to sign.
- The Governors will then appoint a committee of three to meet formally to consider your complaint. They may invite you to come along and amplify what has been written down, and they may well invite other people to give their point of view on what you have said.
- If the complainant is invited to attend the meeting, they may bring someone along to provide support. This can be a relative or friend. Generally, we do not encourage either party to bring legal representatives to the committee meeting. However, there may be occasions when legal representation is appropriate.
- The committee will also not review any new complaints at this stage or consider evidence unrelated to the initial complaint to be included. 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 normally permitted unless a complainant's own disability or special needs require it. Prior knowledge and consent of all parties attending must be sought before meetings or conversations take place. 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

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- 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 Uffington Church of England Primary 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 Uffington Church of England Primary School.

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 in the exercise of their duties under education law, they can contact the Department for Education after they have completed Stage 3.

The Department for Education will not normally reinvestigate the substance of complaints or overturn any decisions made by Uffington Church of England Primary School. They will consider whether Uffington Church of England Primary 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.

Should it be considered that these methods are not appropriate, a risk assessment will be conducted before offering a face to face meeting.

Policy reviewed by the Governing Body	June 2023
Next Review	June 2024

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APPENDICES

How to raise a concern or make a complaint

Complainants should follow the procedures outlined in this policy.

Complainants should not approach individual governors to raise concerns or complaints. They have no power to act on an individual basis and it may also prevent them from considering complaints at Stage 2 of the procedure.

Complaints against school staff (except the headteacher) should be made in the first instance, to the headteacher via the school office. Please mark them as Private and Confidential.

Complaints that involve or are about the headteacher 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.

Equality Law

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 headteacher 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 if exceptional circumstances apply.

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.

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Scope of this Complaints Procedure

This procedure covers all complaints about any provision of community facilities or services by Uffington CE Primary School, other than complaints that are dealt with under other statutory procedures, including those listed below.

Exceptions	Who to contact
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Admissions to schools• Statutory assessments of Special Educational Needs• School re-organisation proposals	<p>Concerns about admissions, statutory assessments of Special Educational Needs, or school re-organisation proposals should be raised with Lincolnshire County Council</p> <p>https://www.lincolnshire.gov.uk/local-democracy/your-comments-and-feedback/complaints/</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Matters likely to require a Child Protection Investigation	<p>Complaints about child protection matters are handled under our child protection and safeguarding policy and in accordance with relevant statutory guidance.</p> <p>If you have serious concerns, you may wish to contact the local authority designated officer (LADO) who has local responsibility for safeguarding:</p> <p>Jemma Parkinson 01522 554669 Rachel Powis 01522 554668</p> <p>LSCB_LADO@lincolnshire.gov.uk or complete the online referral form https://lincolnshirecounty-self.achieveservice.com/service/LADO_Referral_Form</p> <p>or Children's Services: 01522 782111 (Office hours) 01522 782333 (Out of hours emergency duty team)</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Exclusion of children from school*	<p>Further information about raising concerns about exclusion can be found at: www.gov.uk/school-discipline-exclusions/exclusions.</p> <p><i>*complaints about the application of the behaviour policy can be made through the school's complaints procedure. <link to school behaviour policy>.</i></p>

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