



**WHITLEIGH  
PRIMARY AND  
SIR JOHN HUNT  
CSC  
FEDERATION**

Sir John Hunt



# **Compliments, Comments, Concerns and Complaints Policy**

**First Adopted: 16 May 2018**

**Reviewed: 21 May 2024**

**Next Review: May 2027**

## **Guidance notes for parents/carers and the Community**

This leaflet can be provided in alternative formats – please ask the school administrator for details.

### **If you have a compliment, comment, concern or complaint.....**

.....we would like you to let us know. You are requested to raise directly with the school any issues regarding the school or its staff rather than posting any comments or pictures/videos on social media that have implications for the school, its staff or its students. All members of staff are familiar with the procedure and are able to assist you.

**Compliment** – We like to hear when we have done a good job so that we can share what we do well with the staff and children to ensure we continually improve.

**Comment** – We welcome suggestions for improving our work.

**Concern** – A concern is an expression of worry or doubt over an issue considered to be important for which reassurances are sought. Please tell us of any concern you have as soon as possible so that we can try to resolve it.

If you are a parent/carer be assured that no matter what you want to talk to us about, our support for you and your child will not be affected in any way.

Concerns will be dealt with under Stage 1 of the Concerns and Complaints Flowchart.

A complaint that has not been raised as a concern will be dealt with as a concern under Stage 1 of the Concerns and Complaints Flowchart.

**Complaint** – A complaint is a concern which has not been satisfactorily resolved. If you feel we have not dealt satisfactorily with your concern, please tell us as soon as possible that you wish to make a formal complaint, as it is difficult for us to investigate properly an incident or problem that happened some time ago.

Complaints will be dealt with under Stage 2 of the Concerns and Complaints Flowchart.

If at any formal stage of the complaint 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 Headteacher/Principal and/or the individual's line manager. As the complainant you are entitled to be informed that action is being taken, but you are not entitled to participate in the proceedings or receive any detail.

We will not usually investigate complaints about issues and incidents that are more than three months old.

We aim to keep to the timeframes outlined for stages 2 and 3 in the attached flowchart but sometimes more complex complaints take longer to investigate. If this is the case we will keep you informed of progress.

If you seek to remain anonymous it may not be possible to take action. However, if an anonymous complaint is received which may need to be treated as a child protection matter it will be dealt with under the appropriate statutory procedure.

**This policy does not cover the following types of complaints for which there are statutory or formalised procedures in place:**

<b>Procedure dealing with:</b>	<b>Further information available from:</b>
Appeals with respect to admissions	See school's Admissions policy or contact the local authority's School Admissions Team Telephone: 01752 307481
Appeals with respect to exclusion of pupils	See school's Behaviour/Exclusions policy or contact the local authority's Inclusion and Attendance Manager Telephone: 01752 307471
Special Educational Needs Statements/Education Health and Care Plans	Local authority's 0-25 SEND Statutory Assessment Team Telephone: 01752 307409
National Curriculum and Religious Education	Local authority's Education and Learning team Telephone: 01752 307485
Child Protection Issues	Local authority's Advice and Assessment team, Children's Social Care Telephone: 01752 308600
Child Protection Investigations against staff	Local Authority Designated Officer Telephone: 01752 307144
Whistleblowing	The school has an internal whistleblowing procedure for employees and voluntary staff which is available from the school office. Other concerns can be raised direct with Ofsted on 0300 123 3155 or via email at <a href="mailto:whistleblowing@ofsted.gov.uk">whistleblowing@ofsted.gov.uk</a>
Staff grievances and disciplinary procedures	The school has internal grievance and disciplinary procedures for employees which are available from the school office.
Subject Access Requests and Freedom of Information requests	See the school's Freedom of Information and Data Protection policies
Services provided by other external organisations who use the school/academy premises or facilities	External providers should have their own complaints procedures and should be contacted direct.
Services provided by Plymouth City Council	Local authority's Customer Services team Telephone: 01752 668000

### **What to do first if you have any concerns**

Most concerns can be sorted out quickly by speaking or emailing the relevant member of staff (child's class teacher, or another member of staff or a member of the Leadership team). If you are unsure of the relevant member of staff, please contact your child's tutor in the first instance.

All staff will make every effort to respond to your concerns. They will make sure that they understand what you feel went wrong, and they will explain their own actions to you. They will ask what you would like the school to do to put things right. Of course, this does not mean that in every case they will come round to your point of view but it will help both you and the school to understand both sides of the issue. It may also help to prevent a similar problem arising again.

### **What to do next**

If you are dissatisfied with the response to your concern you can make a formal complaint to the Headteacher/Principal. This can be done by completing the attached complaint form.

The Headteacher/Principal will investigate the complaint and may require interviews for any members of staff or students involved. You will receive a written response to your complaint.

If your complaint is about an action of the Headteacher/Principal or a member of the Board of Governors, then you should refer it to the clerk to the Board of Governors instead of the Headteacher/Principal.

### **If you are still unhappy**

The complaint will normally be resolved by this stage. However, if you are dissatisfied with the response you may wish to contact the clerk to the Board of Governors to ask for your complaint to be referred to the Board of Governors' Complaints Appeal Panel. You can contact the clerk at the school address.

The clerk will arrange a panel meeting at a mutually convenient time. Your complaint will then be heard by a panel of three governors who have no previous knowledge of the issue and so will be able to give it a fresh assessment. You, and the Headteacher/Principal, will be invited to attend and speak to the panel at a meeting. You may take a friend or relative with you if you wish. Please remember that a complaints appeal panel meeting is designed to find a formal resolution and it is therefore not appropriate to bring legal representation with you.

The panel will be as informal as possible and at the start of the meeting the governor chairing the panel will explain what will happen during the meeting. Both you and the school will be given an opportunity to put your case to the panel members. Notes will be taken of the meeting.

The panel can make the following decisions:

- 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
- Recommend changes to the school's systems or procedures to ensure that problems of a similar nature do not recur

Following the meeting the clerk will issue a letter confirming the panel's decision.

### **Further action**

Complaints about school problems are almost always settled within schools but, if you are dissatisfied with the school's internal procedure you can refer your complaint to the

Secretary of State. The School Complaints Unit of the Department for Education considers complaints on behalf of the Secretary of State by looking at whether the school has followed its own procedures but will not normally reinvestigate the substance of the complaint. The School Complaints Unit will not overturn a school's decision about a complaint except in exceptional circumstances where it is clear that the school has acted unlawfully or unreasonably, and they may ask the school to reconsider the complaint.

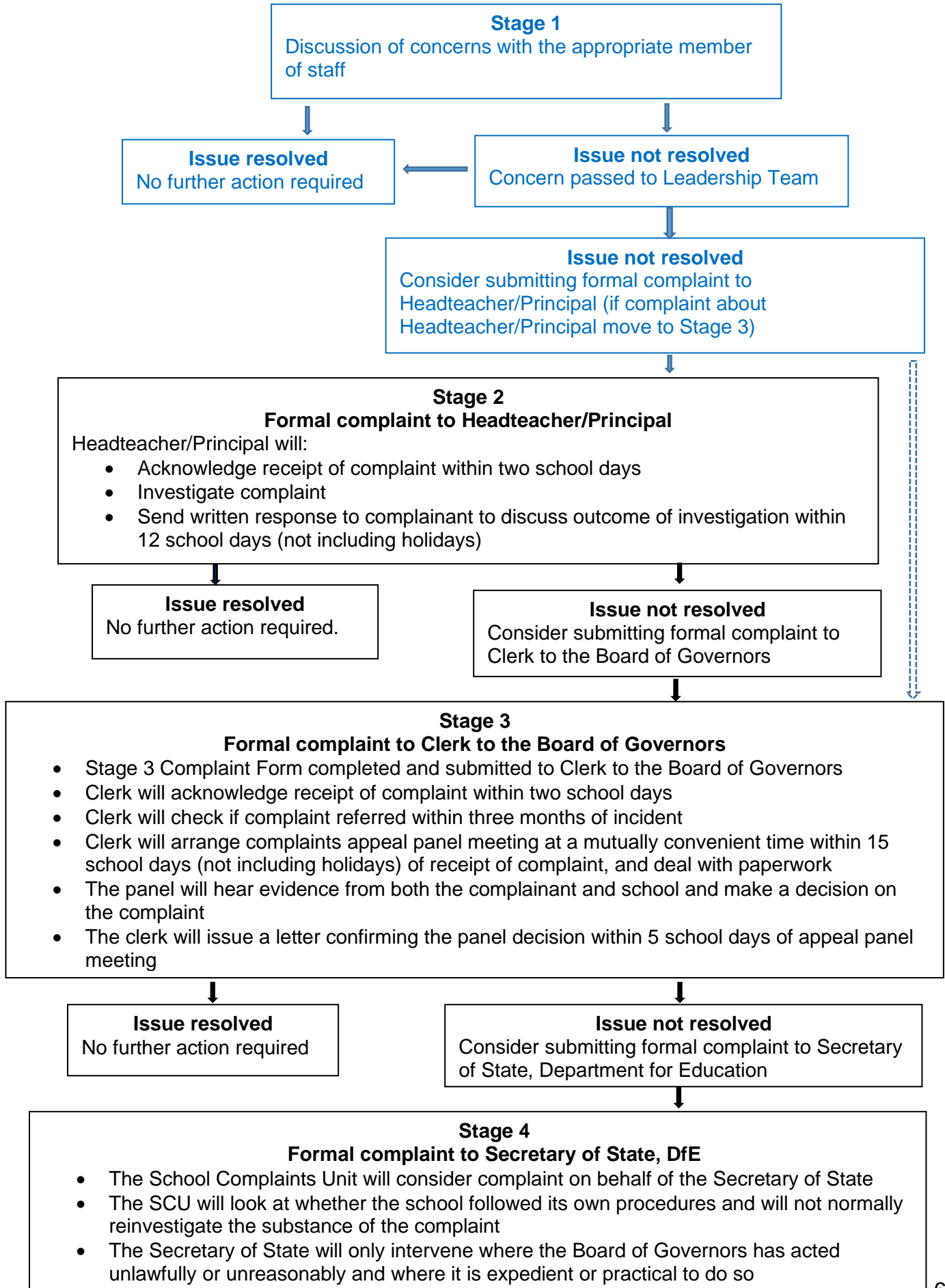
Further information can be obtained from the School Complaints Unit by calling the National Helpline on 0370 000 2288 or going online at [www.education.gov.uk/help/contactus](http://www.education.gov.uk/help/contactus) or by writing to the Department for Education, School Complaints Unit, 2nd Floor, Piccadilly Gate, Store Street, Manchester M1 2WD.

### **Unacceptable behaviour**

As a school, we are committed to dealing with all complaints fairly and impartially, providing a high quality service to those who make them. We will not normally limit the contact complainants have with the school. However, there are a small number of people who hinder our work with serial or persistent complaints, for example where the school is contacted repeatedly by an individual making the same points, or who asks us to reconsider our position. We consider this unacceptable behaviour and will inform the individual and ask them to change it. If the unacceptable behaviour continues, we will take action to restrict their contact with our school staff. In all cases where we decide someone's behaviour is unacceptable, we will write to tell them why, what action we are taking and how long it will last. We will also tell them how they can challenge the decision if they disagree with it. New complaints from people whose behaviour has been unacceptable in the past will be looked at without bias.

We also do not expect our staff to tolerate behaviour that is unacceptable, for example, abusive, offensive or threatening and we will take action to protect our staff from such behaviour, including reporting the matter to the police or taking legal action. In such cases, we may not give prior warning of that action. Alternatively we may temporarily or permanently bar such an individual from the school premises. We will write to tell them why they are being barred from the school site, how they can maintain contact with the school/, and how long it will last. Anyone wishing to complain about being barred can do so by letter or email to the Headteacher/Principal or Chair of Governors. However, complaints about barring cannot be escalated to the Secretary of State or the Education Funding Agency.

## CONCERNS AND COMPLAINTS FLOWCHART





**What do you feel would be a satisfactory and reasonable outcome to this complaint?**

**If you have attached any relevant documents to this form please list them below:**

**Your signature:**

**Date:**

**OFFICIAL USE**

**Date acknowledgement sent:**

**By who:**

**Complaint referred to:**

**Date:**





--

**What do you feel would be a satisfactory and reasonable outcome to this complaint?**

--

**If you have attached any relevant documents to this form please list them below:**

--

**Your signature:**

--

**Date:**

--

**OFFICIAL USE**

**Date acknowledgement sent:**

--

**By who:**

--

**Complaint referred to:**

--

**Date:**

--

I can confirm that the governors of Whitleigh Primary and Sir John Hunt CSC Federation have adopted this policy as their own.

<b>Chair of Governors</b> Sign..... Print..... Date .....
--

<b>Headteacher</b> Sign..... Print..... Date .....
---

<b>Principal</b> Sign..... Print..... Date .....
---

**WCPS is a rights respecting school. As a result all policies in the school adhere to the 54 articles of the rights of a child.**