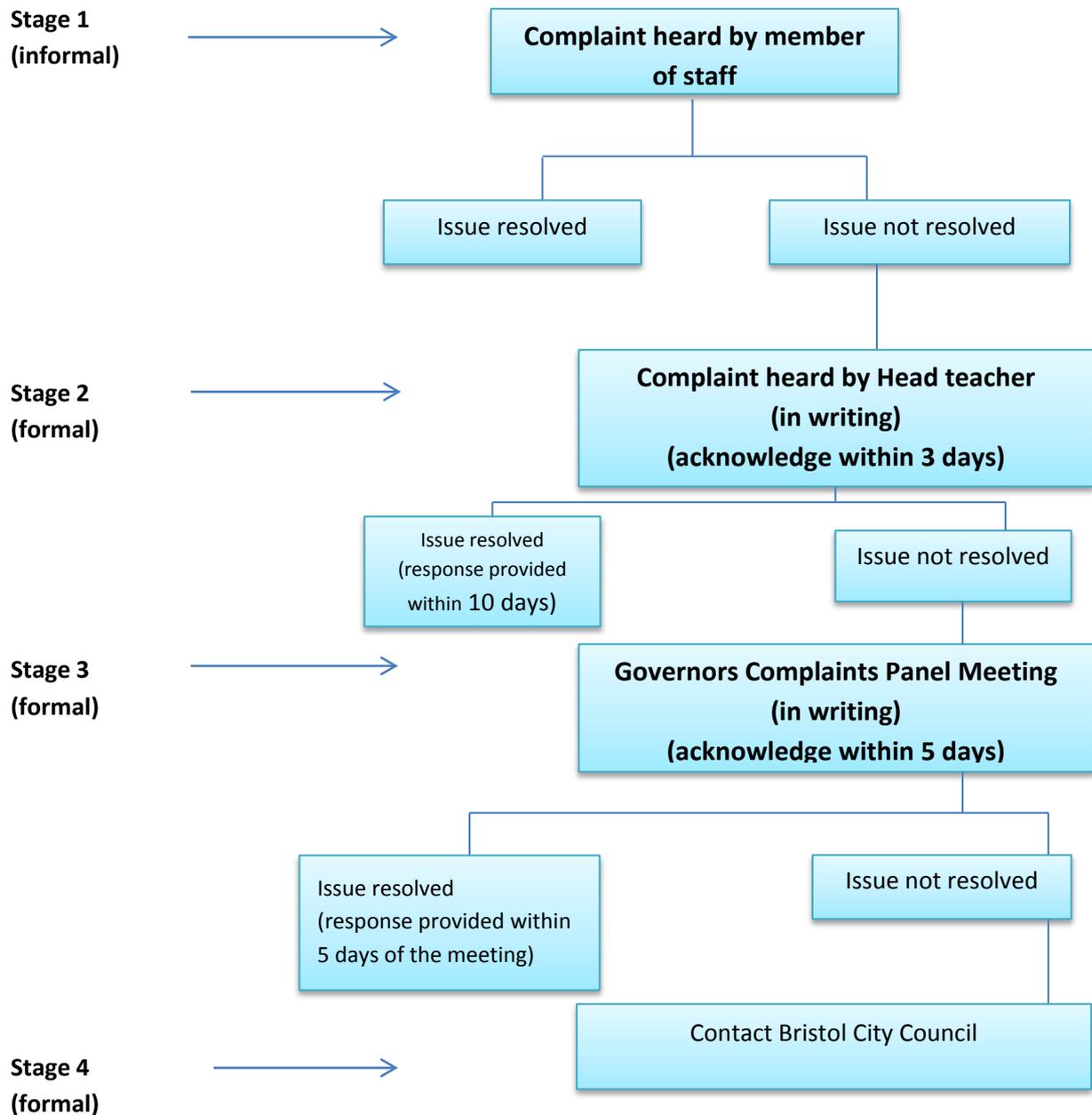




Hartcliffe Nursery School and Children's Centre Complaints Procedure Flowchart

Summary of Dealing with Complaints





Hartcliffe Nursery School and Children's Centre Complaints policy and procedures

It is important that parents/carers and staff respect each other's roles and responsibilities and work in partnership.

Staff at Hartcliffe Nursery School and Children's Centre have the welfare of the children as their main priority. We comply with the statutory requirements of the Early Years Foundation Stage and Ofsted. Should there be any concerns or disagreements regarding the care of a child, it is very important that the parents/carers address the problem as soon as possible.

Complaints will be dealt with using the following procedure – see the attached flow chart, guidance and complaints form.

Review date: March 2016

C:\Users\Ali\Desktop\complaints procedure policy.docx

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Complaints policy and procedures

Stage 1 (Informal)

1.1

Wherever possible parents/carers should raise their initial concern with the member of staff involved in the first instance. Most concerns can be resolved through talking with staff- more information could be provided or clarified at this point. In the case of serious concerns (or where the school deems it more appropriate to do so) it may be necessary to refer to these matters directly to the Head teacher. Where the complaint is specifically about the Head teacher, similarly the parent/carer should discuss this with them. This is the first stage of the complaints procedure.

1.2

The concern should be noted (including the outcome) and copied to the Head teacher (or nominated Deputy Head teacher). Where the subject of the complaint is the Head teacher these records should be copied to the Chair of Governors.

1.3

Where informal attempts by school staff have failed to bring about a satisfactory resolution for the parents/carers, the parents/carers are entitled to make a formal complaint to the Head teacher. Where the complaint directly concerns the Head teacher, the parents/carers can access stage (see2.6) by contacting the Chair of Governors.

Stage 2 (Formal)

2.1

This stage is triggered where a letter of complaint is received by the Head teacher. **This should be acknowledged within 3 school days and the investigation should commence.**

2.2

This is the first stage of the formal complaints process and as a result, all communication between parties needs to be recorded.

2.3

Before proceeding with a formal investigation, the Head teacher may wish to meet with the individual and discuss their concerns and wishes. It may still be appropriate and satisfactory to reach an informal resolution at this point. If not, the Head teacher will decide whether the individual's complaint will be dealt with by this policy or another statutory procedure and advised them on what they will need to do.

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2.4

The investigation should involve the review of any relevant documentation and information. If necessary, witnesses will need to be interviewed and statements taken from those involved.

2.5

The outcome of the investigation should be communicated to parents/carers, either at a meeting (followed up in writing) or as a written response. This response should explain the outcome and should be supported by reasons for reaching this decision and what action, if any, will be taken. (If management action is subsequently required against an employee of the school, the parents/carers will not have access to this information). **This response should be provided within 10 school days of acknowledging the complaint.**

2.6

If the individual is dissatisfied with the response they have been given and would like to take their complaint further, they should be referred to the Centre's complaint procedure and told how to move on to the next stage.

2.7

If the parents/carers written complaint concerns the Head teacher, the Chair of Governors should follow sections 2.1 through to 2.6

Stage 3 (Formal)

3.1

The parent/carer will be required to complete a Complaint Form (Appendix 1) and attach any relevant documentation and information and submit to the Chair of Governors.

3.2

On receipt of a completed Complaint Form, which is only provided to parent/carers that have exhausted stage 1 and 2 (or just stage 2 where a complaint concerns a Head teacher) the Chair of Governors will contact the Clerk and ask him or her to make preparatory arrangement for the Governors' Complaints Panel Meeting.

3.3

The Clerk may be the Clerk to the Governing Body, or another governor in exceptional circumstances acting as Clerk.

3.4

The committee will consist of three governors chosen from the agreed pool of governors (five is suggested), and the committee will appoint its own chair

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3.5

The Chair of Governors or Clerk to the Governors' Complaints Panel should acknowledge receipt of a completed complaints form/letter within 5 school days.

3.6

This letter will inform the parent/carer that their complaint will be heard by a Complaints Panel within 15 school days. In exceptional circumstances the parent/carer should be notified where this timed period will need to be extended and the reasons for this.

3.7

The Clerk will convene a meeting of the Complaints Panel, confirm membership of the Panel, and arrange a time and date for the meeting. All relevant documentation from the Head teacher and the parent/carer will be distributed to all parties, including the committee members in advance of the meeting.

Roles and Responsibilities

The Governing Body

- to adopt formally a school complaints policy;
- to nominate a pool of governors (5 minimum) from which a Complaints Panel (of 3) can be constituted;
- to monitor and review the effectiveness of the complaints procedure;
- to set a timetable for monitoring and reviewing arrangements;
- to make future recommendations on policy as a result of complaint;
- to ensure that these recommendations have been carried out.

The Chair of Governors

- to receive formal complaints from parents/carers requesting consideration of their complaint by Governors' Complaint Panel;
- to inform the Clerk of the panel to begin making arrangements for the meeting;
- to following Stage 2 (section 2.1-2.6) where the written complaint concerns the Head teacher.

The Governors' Complaints Panel

Role of the Clerk:

Panel meetings must be clerked. The Clerk is the contact point for the parent/carer and their role is specifically to advise Panel members of process issues only and will be expected to:-

- confirm 3 Governors' as Panel Members;
- set the date, time and venue of the meeting, ensuring that the dates are convenient to all parties (school and parent/carer) and that the venue and proceedings are accessible;

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- collate any written material and send it to all parties present (including the Panel) in advance of the meeting;
- record the proceedings;
- advise Panel members of due process only;
- notify all parties of the Panel's decision

Role of the Chair of the Panel

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

- parents/carers with English as an additional language or who are hearing impaired have access to an interpreter;
- the remit of the Panel is explained to the parties and each party has the opportunity of putting their case without undue interruption;
- the issues are addressed;
- key finds of fact are made;
- parents/carers and others who may not be used to speaking as such a meeting are put at ease;
- the meeting is conducted in an informal manner with each party treating the other with respect and courtesy;
- the Panel is open minded and acting independently;
- no member of the Panel has a vested interest in the outcomes of the proceedings or any involvement in an earlier stage of the procedure;
- each side is given the opportunity to state their case and ask questions;
- written material is seen by all parties. If a new issue arises it would be useful to give all parties the opportunity to consider and comment on it.

Notification of the Panel' Decision

The Chair of the Panel needs to ensure that the parent/carer is notified of the Panel's decision in writing **within 5 school days** of the meeting. The response will include any action (if any) that needs to be taken and where appropriate, suggest changes to, or review, the school's systems or procedures to ensure that similar problems do not happen again.

If the parent/carer is dissatisfied with the response they have been given and would like to take their complaint further, they should be referred to the school's complaints procedure and told how to move on to the next stage.

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Stage 4 (Formal)

4.1

Parents/carers are entitled to complain to Bristol City Council if they believe that their complaint was not handled fairly and in accordance with the school's complaints procedures. This involvement of the Local Authority will only commence once the parent/carer has exhausted all of the school-based stages (up to, and including, a Governors' Complaints Panel, Stage3 of the Complaints Procedures)

Complaints should be submitted in writing to:-

Complaints Team
Room G27, City Hall
Freepost BS 4341, PO Box 595
Bristol
BS99 2BR

Other useful contacts:

Ofsted
5th, 6th and 7th Floors
Piccadilly Gate
Store Street
Manchester
M1 2WD

Department for Education
Piccadilly Gate
Store Street
Manchester
M1 2WD



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Date of complaint:
Name:
Address:
Contact number:
Please explain your complaint:
What outcome do you want?
Signature: Date:

Please complete and send to Hartcliffe Nursery School and Children's Centre, Hareclive Road,
Hartcliffe, Bristol BS13 OJW

Email: hartcliffe.early.years@bristolg.gov.uk Telephone number: 01179038633