

Londonderry Primary School

Educating, Encouraging, Caring



Shaping the future with
learning, kindness and care.

Complaints Policy

Approved by Board of Governors: November 2025

To be reviewed: November 2028

COMPLAINTS PROCEDURE

Adapted from EA Model School Complaints Procedure

Londonderry Primary School prides itself on fostering a positive and respectful environment for staff, pupils and parents/carers. As a community-focused school, we believe in mutual respect and effective communication to achieve shared goals for pupils' education. We hope that any issues that may arise can be addressed by talking to the relevant staff who will be happy to help. We welcome open communication and regular engagement between the school and parents/carers. We view this as vital to nurturing a positive relationship within the whole school community.

You can speak to staff by telephone or arranging a meeting through the school office. We believe that if issues are dealt with at an early stage, they are more likely to be resolved.

The Board of Governors and Principal of Londonderry Primary School are committed to resolving concerns or complaints promptly, fairly, and with mutual respect.

This policy outlines how parents and carers can raise concerns or complaints, how the school will respond, and the next steps available if a complainant remains dissatisfied.

Introduction

This policy applies to complaints about the actions, decisions, or omissions of the school or staff in connection with a pupil's education or welfare.

It does not cover matters that have separate statutory processes, such as admissions, exclusions, SEN, School Development Proposals, staff grievances, or safeguarding concerns.

The school will not deal with anonymous complaints with the exception for a referral of child protection concerns.

- ✓ We acknowledge that anyone who wants to raise a concern or complaint, about any aspect of our service has the right to do so.
- ✓ We will deal with concerns and complaints according to these procedures.
- ✓ We will provide parents with a copy of these procedures.
- ✓ Concerns and complaints will be dealt with as promptly, impartially and thoroughly as possible.
- ✓ Those bringing concerns or complaints to our attention will be treated courteously and fairly.
- ✓ It is expected that those bringing concerns or complaints to our attention will treat teachers and other staff in the same way.
- ✓ The concern on everyone's part should be to deal with issues raised in a calm and reasonable manner.
- ✓ We believe that the vast majority of concerns and complaints can be dealt with and resolved informally in a spirit of mutual trust and partnership.

Aims

Our Complaints Procedure aims to:

- ✓ Encourage resolution of all concerns by **informal** means whenever possible.
- ✓ Encourage resolution of all concerns as quickly as possible.
- ✓ Provide timely responses to concerns and complaints.
- ✓ Keep you informed of progress.
- ✓ Ensure a full and fair investigation of your complaint where appropriate.
- ✓ Have due regard for the rights and responsibilities of all parties involved.
- ✓ Respect confidentiality.
- ✓ Fully address complaints and provide the effective response.
- ✓ Take appropriate action to rectify the issue and prevent it happening again where appropriate.
- ✓ Be responsive in learning from outcomes which will inform and improve practice within the school.

A copy of this Procedure is available from the school's website or available from school on request.

Procedure

Informal Resolution

Most concerns can be resolved quickly and informally by speaking directly with the member of staff concerned such as the class teacher or Key stage leader.

- 1) Contact the class teacher through the school office
- 2) Contact the Key stage leader
- 3) Contact the Vice Principal
- 4) Contact the Principal: *If the issue cannot be resolved informally, a formal written complaint should be submitted to the Principal.*

Key Stage Leaders

Foundation Stage (P1& P2) Mrs L Hutton

Key Stage 1 (P3&P4) Mr G Adams

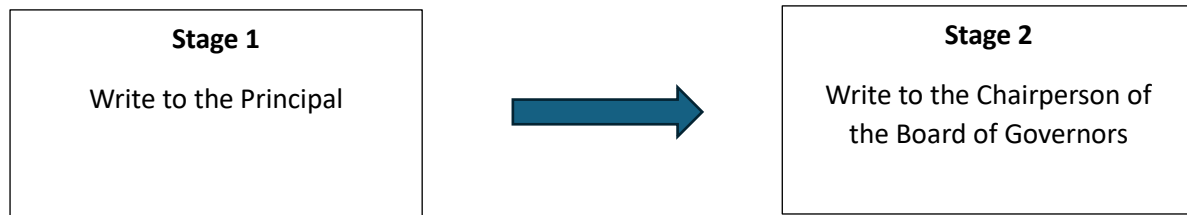
Key Stage 2 (P5-P7) Mrs C Lowry and Mr M Robinson

Acting Vice Principal Mr G Adams

Principal Mrs L Weir

Chairperson of the Board of Governors: Dr J Lemon

Complaints Procedure: At A Glance



Time Limit

To enable complaints to be resolved please contact the school as soon as possible. Unless there are exceptional circumstances, complaints will normally only be considered within 6 months of the date of the incidents about which you are complaining.

Prior to the initiation of Stage 1 of the Formal Complaints Procedure, the Principal will collate and review all relevant documentation and evidence provided by the parent(s), class teacher, Key Stage Leader, and Vice Principal. This process is undertaken to ensure that all informal stages have been fully pursued and appropriately concluded. It is a requirement that the complainant engages with school staff to seek resolution through the informal process before any formal stage is commenced.

Stage One

When making a formal complaint, contact the school Principal who will arrange for the complaint to be investigated. *If the complaint is about the Principal, proceed to Stage Two.* The school requires complaints to be made in writing, where this may present difficulties, please contact the school which will make reasonable arrangements to support you with this process.

Please provide all relevant details and as much information as possible including:

- ✓ Name and contact details.
- ✓ What the complaint is about.
- ✓ What has already been done to try to resolve it.
- ✓ What you would like the school to do to resolve the complaint.

The complaint will normally be acknowledged within 5 school working days and a response normally made within 20 school working days of receipt of the complaint. This response will be issued in writing by the Principal and will indicate with reasons whether the complaint has been upheld, partially upheld or not upheld.

These timeframes may need to be reviewed if complaints are ongoing during school holiday periods.

If you remain unhappy with the outcome at Stage 1, the complaint may be progressed to Stage 2 which is overseen by the Board of Governors.

Stage Two

If the complaint is unresolved after Stage One, write to the Chairperson of the Board of Governors (*care of the school and marked 'private and confidential'*). Where this may present difficulties, please contact the school which will make reasonable arrangements to support the complainant with this process. The Chairperson will convene a committee to review the complaint. Please provide as much detail as possible as indicated above.

The complaint will normally be acknowledged within 5 school working days and a final response normally made within 20 school working days from date of receipt of the complaint. The response will be issued in writing by the Chairperson of the committee.

These timeframes may need to be reviewed if complaints are ongoing during school holiday periods.

Northern Ireland Public Services Ombudsman (NIPSO)

If following Stage Two you remain dissatisfied with the outcome of your complaint, you can refer the matter to the Office of the Northern Ireland Public Services Ombudsman (NIPSO).

The Ombudsman provides a free, independent and impartial service for handling complaints about schools in Northern Ireland. You have the right to complain to the Ombudsman if you feel that you have been treated unfairly or have received a poor service from a school and your complaint has not been resolved to your satisfaction.

A complaint should normally be referred to NIPSO within six months of the final response from the School. The school must advise in its concluding letter that the complaint may be referred to the NIPSO if you remain dissatisfied.

Contact details for NIPSO:

Northern Ireland Public Services Ombudsman

Office of the Northern Ireland Public Services Ombudsman
Progressive House
33 Wellington Place Belfast
BT1 6HN

Freepost: FREEPOST NIPSO
Telephone: 02890 233821
Freephone: 0800 34 34 24
Email: nipso@nipso.org.uk
Website: www.nipso.org.uk

What to Expect Under This Procedure

Your rights as a person making a complaint

In dealing with complaints we will ensure:

- ✓ Fair treatment.
- ✓ Courtesy.
- ✓ A timely response.
- ✓ Accurate advice.
- ✓ Respect for privacy.
- ✓ Clear reasons for decisions.

Your responsibilities as a person making a complaint

When making a complaint it is important that you:

- ✓ Raise issues in a timely manner.
- ✓ Treat our staff with respect and courtesy.
- ✓ Provide accurate and concise information in relation to the issues raised.
- ✓ Use these procedures fully and engage with them at the appropriate levels

Rights of parties involved during the investigation

Where a meeting is arranged parties may be accompanied but not represented by another person.

Complainant

May be accompanied but not represented by another person during the process e.g. spouse, friend, family member or interpreter, provided this person is not offering legal representation or acting in an official capacity.

Staff Member

May be accompanied or represented by another person during the process e.g. union representative, colleague

Pupils

A parent / carer or other nominated adult should accompany pupils.

Record Keeping

The school will maintain records of all correspondence, conversations, investigations, and outcomes concerning your complaint. If the complainant does not respond within a reasonable time to the outcome of an investigation into your complaint, we will assume that you are satisfied and do not require us to take further action.

Records will be used to monitor patterns and identify improvements anonymously to the Board of Governors.

Monitoring and Review

The Board of Governors will review this policy every three years or sooner if required by changes in legislation or guidance.

Lessons learned from complaints will be used to improve policies and practice.