



**Ysgol Gynradd
Gwaelod y Garth
Primary School**

COMPLAINTS POLICY AND PROCEDURE

Policy Date: October 2026

Responsibilities: Headteacher, Governors, All staff

1. Introduction

Ysgol Gwaelod y Garth is committed to dealing with concerns and complaints effectively, fairly and promptly. We aim to clarify any issues that parents, carers, pupils or community members are not sure about, correct any mistakes that may have occurred, apologise where appropriate, and learn from complaints in order to improve our provision.

We value the positive relationship between home and school and implement an open door policy where possible. We believe that the best way to resolve most concerns is through early and honest communication.

The school promotes a respectful relationship between pupils, parents, staff and governors and expects everyone to engage in a respectful and constructive manner. This complaints procedure complements our commitment and is a way of ensuring that anyone with an interest in the school can express a concern and be confident that it will be fully considered and, if your concerns are well-founded, that the matter will be dealt with appropriately and promptly.

2. Definition of a Complaint

For the purposes of this policy, a complaint is an expression of dissatisfaction with the school, staff member or governing body requesting a response from the school.

3. Principles

All complaints will be dealt with in accordance with the following principles:

- Fairness and impartiality.
- Respect for all individuals involved in the matter.
- Confidentiality where possible.
- Consider the interests and welfare of the pupil.
- Timely response.
- Transparency in the process.
- Learn from complaints to improve practices.
- Appropriate record keeping.

4. Scope of this Policy

This policy applies to general complaints about:

- Education provided by the school.
- Actions or decisions of the school.
- Conduct of staff or governors.

This policy does not apply to:

- A complaint from a member of staff (staff complaints procedure).
- Staff disciplinary issues.
- School admissions.

- Exclusions.
- ALN matters where there is a statutory right of appeal.
- Matters under legal or police investigation.

5. When to use this procedure

When you have any concerns or when you make a complaint, we will usually respond in the way explained below. Sometimes you may have concerns about issues that are not decided by the school, and in such cases we will tell you who you should make a complaint to. At other times, you may have concerns about issues that are dealt with under other procedures, and in such cases, we will explain how your concerns are being dealt with.

If the matter of concern to you or the complaint relates to another body in addition to the school (for example, the local authority), we will work with them to decide how to deal with the issue causing you concern.

6. Have you asked us yet?

If you are coming to us for the first time, you should give us the opportunity to respond. If you are not happy with our response, then you can make your complaint using the procedure we describe below. Most issues of concern can be settled quickly, by speaking to the relevant person at the school, without the need for a formal procedure.

7. What we expect from you

We believe that every complainant has the right to be heard, to be understood and respected. School staff and governors have the same right. We expect all individuals:

- Communicate politely.
- Treat staff and governors with respect.
- Co-operate with the investigative process.
- Do not use offensive language, behaviour or threats.
- Do not publish confidential information about live complaints on social media.

We will not tolerate aggressive or offensive behaviour. We will also not tolerate unreasonable demands or instances where an issue is being pushed in an unreasonable manner, or vexatious complaints.

8. How we will approach the matter of concern to you or your complaint

We will consider all your concerns and complaints in an open and fair way. The school will respect people's rights and feelings at all times and will make every effort to protect confidential information.

Timescales for dealing with your concerns or complaints may need to be extended and we will keep you informed.

We may seek advice from the local authority where appropriate. Some types of concerns or complaints may raise issues that need to be dealt with in another way (other than this complaints policy); in such cases, we will explain why and set out what action we will take.

Anonymous complaints are recorded but it will be a matter for the school to decide at its discretion whether or not to investigate the complaint, depending on the nature of the complaint.

9. Answering the matter of concern to you or your complaint

There are up to three stages, Stages A, B and C. Most complaints can be resolved during Stages A or B. You can bring a relative or someone in your company to support you at any time during the process but you will be expected to speak for yourself, if you do not need special assistance. However, if the complainant is a pupil, we recognise that it is reasonable for the person who becomes their company to speak on their behalf and/or advise them.

As far as possible, the matter of concern to you or your complaint will be dealt with confidentially. However, at times, the person dealing with the matter of concern to you or your complaint may need to consider whether anyone else in the school needs to be informed about the issue or complaint in order to deal with the case appropriately.

If you are a pupil under the age of 16 and wish to express a concern or make a complaint, we will ask for your consent before contacting your parent(s) or carer(s). If you are a pupil under the age of 16 and you are involved in a complaint in any other way, we may ask your parent(s) or carer(s) to be present at any conversation or interview with you.

10. Stage A – Informal Concern

If there's an issue that's causing you concern, you can often resolve it quickly by talking to:

- Class teacher.
- Relevant member of staff.
- The Headteacher if appropriate.

You should express your concern as soon as possible; normally, we would expect you to express your concern within 10 school days of any incident. The more you delay, the more difficult it will be for those dealing with the issue to deal with it effectively.

If you are a pupil, you can express your concerns to your representative on the school council, your class teacher or any other member of staff. This will not stop

you from making a complaint at a later date if you feel that the issue(s) you have raised have not been dealt with appropriately.

Normally, we will try to let you know what we have done or plan to do about the issue causing you concern within 10 school days, but if this is not possible, we will speak to you and agree a revised timetable with you.

We will keep you updated on progress being made. We will also keep a record of the matter of concern to you so that that record can be referred to in the future.

Normally, the school will attempt to respond and resolve the issue within **10 school days**. Most concerns will be resolved informally.

11. Stage B - Formal Complaint

In most cases, we would expect the matter of concern for you to be resolved informally. If you feel that the initial issue that caused you concern has not been dealt with appropriately, you should submit your complaint in writing to the Headteacher. We would expect you to aim to do this within five school days of the date on which you receive a response to the issue that has caused your concern, as it is in everyone's interest that a complaint is resolved as soon as possible. We can help you put your complaint on paper if necessary.

If you are involved in a complaint in any way, we will explain what will happen and the type of support available to you.

We will:

- acknowledge the complaint within 5 working days
- offer a meeting if necessary
- investigate the matter
- provide a written response

Usually, a full response will be provided within **10 working days**.

If the investigation cannot be completed within this time, the complainant will be informed of the revised timetable.

12. Complaints about the Headteacher

Complaints about the Headteacher should be submitted in writing to the **Chair of the Governing Body** and sent to the school address, asking him/her to investigate your complaint.

The Chair will conduct a Phase B investigation or delegate the investigation to an appropriate governor.

13. Stage C - Review by the Governing Body's Complaints Committee

However, if you still feel that your complaint has not been dealt with fairly, you should write, via the school's address, to the Chair of Governors outlining your reasons for asking the governing body's complaints committee to consider your complaint. You do not have to write down all the details of your complaint again. Normally, we would expect you to do this within five school days of the date you receive the school's response.

We will let you know how we will deal with the complaint and send you a letter to confirm this. The letter will tell you by when the complaints committee should receive all the documents for consideration. The letter will also record what we have agreed with you about where and when the meeting will take place and what will happen.

It may be necessary to change the timetable to ensure that everyone can attend the meeting, to gather information or to get advice. In such a case, the person dealing with the complaint will agree a new date for the meeting with you. Normally, in order to deal with the complaint as quickly as possible, the complaints committee will not reschedule the meeting more than once. If you request a rescheduling of the meeting more than once, the committee may consider that it would be reasonable to make a decision on the complaint in your absence to avoid unnecessary delay.

Then:

- A committee of governors not involved in the case will be appointed.
- The complaints committee will usually hold a meeting with you within 15 school days of receiving your letter
- Everyone involved in the complaint sees the documentation before the meeting, and we will ensure that people's rights in terms of information privacy are protected.

We aim to write to you within 10 school days of the meeting to explain the outcome of the governing body's complaints committee considerations.

The final decision on complaints will be made by the governing body's complaints committee.

14. Special Circumstances

When a complaint is made about any of the following people or groups/bodies, the complaints procedure will be used in a different way.

Governor or group of governors:

- The matter causing concern or complaint will be referred to the Chair of Governors who will conduct the investigation. Alternatively, the Chair may delegate the matter to another governor who will conduct the investigation. Stage B and subsequent steps of the complaint procedure will be used.

Chair of Governors or Headteacher and Chair of Governors:

- The Vice Chair of governors will be notified and will investigate the complaint or delegate it to another governor. Phase B and subsequent steps of the complaint procedure will be used.

Chair of governors and vice-chair of governors:

- The complaint will be referred to the clerk of the governing body who will notify the chairman of the complaints committee. Stage C of the complaints procedure will be used.

The whole governing body:

- The complaint will be addressed to the clerk of the governing body who will inform the Headteacher, the chair of governors and the local authority.
- As a rule, the authorities will agree arrangements with the governing body to conduct an independent investigation into the complaint.

The Headteacher:

- The matter causing concern or complaint will be referred to the chair of governors who will conduct the investigation or possibly delegate the matter to another governor. Stage B and the subsequent steps of the complaints procedure will be used.

15. Unreasonable or Vexatious Complaints

The school is committed to listening to all reasonable complaints.

However, the school may take action if an individual:

- Makes repetitive complaints that have already been fully investigated
- Uses offensive or threatening language
- Harasses staff members or governors
- Makes unreasonable demands on school time
- Uses social media to harass or interfere with a complaint process

The school can:

- Limit means of communication
- Specify a single point of contact
- Insist that communication be in writing
- Take further action in accordance with legal advice or local authority advice

16. Monitoring and Review

The Headteacher will:

- Keep a record of complaints.
- Monitors outcomes and emerging themes.

The Governing Body will:

- Accept general information about complaints.

- Review this policy regularly.
- Ensure that lessons are learned where appropriate.

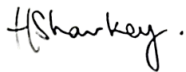
17. Our commitment to you

In all cases, the school and governing body will ensure that complaints are dealt with in an open and fair way, without prejudice.

We will take your concerns and complaints seriously and, if we have made any mistakes, we will try to learn from them.

If you need help voicing your concerns, we will try to help you. If you are a young person and need extra support, the Welsh Government has set up MEIC, a national helpline offering advocacy and advice services to children and young people. Advice and support is also available from the Children's Commissioner for Wales.

Cymerawyd y Polisi / Policy Approved by:



Helen Sharkey
Pennaeth / Head Teacher
Dyddiad / Date: 21.10.26



Dona Lewis
Cadeirydd y Llywodraethwyr / Chair of Governors
Dyddiad / Date: 21.10.26