



The Fountain School

Policy Documentation

Policy: Complaints

Responsibility for Review: Proprietor
Date of Last Review: February 2024

A summary of the stages in this School's Complaints Procedure

The diagram below provides a summary of the procedures detailed in the following pages. Because this is only a summary you are advised to ensure you have read the relevant section of the guidance in detail before starting out on any of the stages. Please remember that it is normal and expected that each stage will be followed in sequence. It is also expected that there will be good reason to move on to the next stage in the procedures.

What you should do	What will happen
Informal: Discuss the problem with the class teacher or Head teacher	The member of staff concerned will help to ensure you have all relevant details

Formal Procedure
If your complaint is about the Head teacher go straight to Stage 2

Stage 1: Write to the Head teacher stating your complaint. Give all relevant details, your name and how you may be contacted.	You should receive an acknowledgement within 7 days and the Head teacher's findings within 15 school days
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If you are not satisfied with the findings of the Head teacher
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Stage 2: Write to the schools Complaints Appeal Panel (CAP) within 10 days stating why you are not satisfied with the Head teacher's finding and that a hearing be conducted.	The Chair of CAP will convene a hearing within 20 school days. You will be given an opportunity to attend the hearing and/or your representative or a friend. You will be provided with a substantive written response within 14 days from the date of a hearing
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How to make a complaint about the school

Things do not always happen as you might expect. You may have a disagreement with the way your child is being educated or supervised whilst at school. This document explains how you can resolve your concerns as quickly and effectively as possible. It can also help you if you want to make a formal complaint about an unresolved issue.

I have a complaint about the school.

Who can complain?

Anyone with parental responsibility for a pupil at a school can complain if they are not satisfied with the service received.

From time-to-time other people may have a complaint about a school. In this case, it is best to contact the head teacher first, as she will almost always be able to deal with the problem. However, everyone is entitled to have his or her complaint heard as detailed below.

I have a complaint, what should I do first?

Before making a complaint, check the details of the cause of your concern with either your child's class teacher or administrator. This can often resolve the problem.

You may wish to take your concern straight to the Head teacher. She may ask if you have talked to the relevant teacher and may want you to arrange a meeting to do that. The main priority is to resolve the matter quickly and calmly. It is likely that a problem will become more difficult to solve as more people become involved. Try to involve just the people who you feel may help to solve the problem.

I still can't resolve my concern. What should I do next?

The issue will now become a formal complaint.

At this level it is important that everyone involved is clear about the procedures and the nature of the complaint, so you should make important points in writing.

There are three possible stages to the formal complaints process, with a view to solving problems at the earliest possible stage.

With the exception of a complaint against a head teacher (when you should start at Stage 2), you should complete the first stage before moving on to second.

The Formal Complaints Procedure of The Fountain

Stage 1

Write to the head teacher saying that you are making a formal complaint. Say what your complaint is, with all relevant details, your name and how you can be contacted. If your complaint is about the head teacher go straight to Stage 2.

The head teacher should acknowledge your letter within 7 school days. She will look into your complaint and decide the best way of solving your problem. Hopefully you will be able to accept the head teacher's guidance.

If this does not resolve your complaint, or if the head teacher has not offered a way forward within 14 school days of your writing to the school, you should go to Stage 2 of this procedure.

Stage 2

If stage 1 of the complaint's procedure did not solve the problem or if the head teacher did not respond, or if your complaint is about the head teacher, you should do the following:

Write to the school's Complaint Appeal Panel (CAP). The Panel is drawn up of the two Trustees and an independent local Imam. You must do this within 10 days of receiving the letter telling you about the result of Stage 1. Your letter must explain why you do not agree with the head teacher's findings and ask that the CAP carries out an enquiry. All the three panel members will not have been involved previously in the complaint.

The Chair of the CAP will arrange for the enquiry to commence no later than 28 days after this request.

During this 28 day period the following should happen:

The School will give you and the panel copies of all papers about the complaint. You can provide extra written material if you wish by sending a copy to the Chair of CAP, c/o the school. All papers for the Chair must be with him at least 7 days before any hearing.

The members of the Panel may question everyone involved until they are satisfied that they have all the information they need. You can take along a relative, friend or a representative if you wish. If you do this, you must explain who the person is to the Chair.

Normally, children cannot attend. If the CAP thinks a child has to be interviewed, they need to get the permission of the parents and must be sensitive to the needs of the child by letting a known and trusted adult go along with the child.

Sometimes the Members of the Panel may realise that they need further information that is not available straight away. They can halt the meeting and meet again at another time. This time must be convenient to you, the Panel and any other people involved. Everybody must try to deal with the complaint as quickly as possible.

The CAP will take one of the following actions:

- 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.

The complainant will be notified of the panel's decision, in writing, within 14 days from the date of the hearing. **The decision of the CAP is final**

Checklist for a Panel Hearing

The panel needs to take the following points into account:

- The hearing is as informal as possible.
- Witnesses are only required to attend for the part of the hearing in which they give their evidence.
- After introductions, the complainant is invited to explain their complaint, and be followed by their witnesses.
- The head teacher may question both the complainant and the witnesses after each has spoken.
- The head teacher is then invited to explain the school's actions and be followed by the school's witnesses.
- The complainant may question both the head teacher and the witnesses after each has spoken.
- The panel may ask questions at any point.
- The complainant is then invited to sum up their complaint.
- The head teacher is then invited to sum up the school's actions and response to the complaint.
- Both parties leave together while the panel decides on the issues.
- The chair explains that both parties will hear from the panel in writing within 14 days.

Findings and Recommendations

The CAP will make available the written findings and or observations to all parties (e.g person who made complaint, teacher, head teacher etc)

General Issues

Record Keeping

The school will keep a confidential record of all complaints recorded together with stage at which it was resolved

Anonymous complaints: Anonymous complaints cannot be dealt with by the formal procedure detailed in this document.

Confidentiality: All complaints are dealt with in confidence, with information only being given to those people who need to know.

Lobbying: No one should lobby or put pressure on a person responsible for investigating a complaint. The investigating officer and/or panel may count this against you.

Withdrawal of Complaints:

You may withdraw your complaint at any time. If possible, you should write to the person who was last dealing with the matter. You will then be sent a written acknowledgment of the withdrawal of the complaints.

Annex A

Example of a Complaint Form

Please complete and return to The Fountain who will acknowledge receipt and explain what action will be taken.

Your name:

Pupil's name:

Your relationship to the pupil:

Address:

Postcode:

Day time telephone number:

Evening telephone number:

Please give details of your complaint.

What action, if any, have you already taken to try and resolve your complaint. (Who did you speak to and what was the response)?

What actions do you feel might resolve the problem at this stage?

Are you attaching any paperwork? If so, please give details.

Signature:

Date:

Official use

Date acknowledgement sent:

By who:

Complaint referred to:

Date: