

Redbourn Primary School



Complaints Policy and Procedure

Date of Issue: December 2024

Next review date: December 2026

This policy is based on the latest Department of Education Hertfordshire model complaints procedure last updated 15 January 2021.

1. INTRODUCTION

We care about what you think. Each day, the staff at Redbourn Primary School make many decisions and tries hard to do the best for all the children. Feedback - either positive or negative – is helpful for future planning. We know that it can feel uncomfortable to question or challenge something, but if you don't tell us what is worrying you we cannot explain what we are doing or try to put it right.

Following this policy ensures that the School is able to consider and respond to issues in a timely and appropriate manner.

This policy sets out the process through which issues about provisions of the School's facilities or services can be raised. Importantly, some issues are outside the scope of this policy as they fall under separate statutory procedures. These exceptions are set out in Appendix 1. In circumstances where a concern or complaint falls outside the scope of this policy and procedure, the School will confirm the applicable process.

2. THE DIFFERENCE BETWEEN A CONCERN AND A COMPLAINT

This Policy distinguishes between a "complaint" and a "concern" and sets out different procedures through which they must be raised.

A concern may be treated as *'an expression of worry or doubt over an issue considered to be important for which reassurances are sought'*.

A complaint may be generally recognised as *'an expression or statement of dissatisfaction however made, about actions taken or a lack of action'*.

It is in everyone's interest that concerns and complaints are resolved at the earliest possible stage. Many issues can be resolved informally, without the need to use the formal stages of the complaints procedure. For example, you may want to "get something off your chest", there may be something you feel someone in the School should know, or you may not understand why we are doing something in a particular way.

3. DEALING WITH CONCERNS

Redbourn School hopes that concerns can be dealt with promptly without the need for them to reach the stage of a formal complaint. For this reason, our process allows for concerns to be escalated informally to Senior Leadership and the Headteacher and requests that these options are exhausted before a formal complaint is filed.

The starting point should be to raise any concerns with your class teacher. We would prefer that concerns are raised by email to admin@redbournprimary.co.uk or SENCO@redbournprimary.co.uk (if it is about Special Needs provision). However, concerns may also be raised, by letter, in person or by telephone using the following contact details:

Redbourn Primary School,

Long Cutt,

Redbourn,

Herts,

AL3 7EX.

01582 792341

If you feel your concern has not been adequately addressed by your class teacher, then the matter should be escalated to the appropriate Head of Key Stage using the email addresses below, dependent on the age of your child:

Head of Key Stage 1 and Early Years Foundation Stage (for Nursery, Reception, Year 1 and Year 2): KS1@redbournprimary.co.uk

Head of Key Stage 2 (Years 3-6): KS2@redbournprimary.co.uk

Senior Leaders should be able to address your concerns, but sometimes this is not possible in which case you should escalate your concern to the Headteacher.

In each case we aim to make an initial response, if required, within two school days, and may need up to five school days where a more detailed response is necessary or longer in exceptional circumstance or in the case of escalations to the Headteacher.

If you have difficulty discussing a concern with a particular member of staff, we will respect your views. In these cases, the Headteacher, will refer you to another staff member. Similarly, if the member of staff directly involved feels unable to deal with a concern, the Headteacher will refer you to another staff member. The member of staff may be more senior but does not have to be. The ability to consider the concern objectively and impartially is more important.

Concerns (or complaints) should not be made to individual governors. They have no power to act on an individual basis and it may also prevent them from considering complaints at a later stage.

If, despite escalation to the Head of Key Stage and the Headteacher, you feel your concern has still not been adequately addressed, you may decide to raise a formal complaint by following the procedure set out below.

4. HOW TO MAKE A FORMAL COMPLAINT?

Prior to making a formal complaint, we require that the informal concerns process is followed first in order to give the complainant and the School the best opportunity to resolve the issue. If a resolution has not been reached, a formal complaint may be made in accordance with this section.

The complaint process

This process is designed to resolve a concern or complaint relating to the School as quickly as possible. The process is designed to be fair and impartial. We aim to provide an effective response to parents, offer appropriate redress and where possible to learn from the experience, so that our services can be improved.

Stages of a Complaint		Purpose
Concern	Informal concern/complaint	The informal concern/complaint will be considered informally. The School will listen to the differing point of view(s), investigate the concerns and respond to the complainant in writing.
Stage 1 Complaint	Formal complaint	The School will seek to clarify the complaint and fully investigate it. They will respond in writing explaining their decision, their reasons for the decision and any recommendations they consider appropriate.
	Formal Mediation	A meeting will be offered between the complainant, Headteacher and Chair of Governors, or nominated Governor, to help mediate a resolution. The Chair of Governors will seek to provide more clarity about the decisions and recommendations made.
Stage 2 Complaint	Formal Complaint Panel Hearing	The panel will review the process and the outcome of the complaint. They will uphold or dismiss the complaint either fully or partially, decide what action should be taken to resolve an upheld complaint and recommend any changes to the systems and procedures in the school. This is the final stage of the school complaints procedure.

To whom should a complaint be addressed?

Complaints against school staff (except the Headteacher) should be made in the first instance, to the Headteacher via email to the school office admin@redbournprimary.co.uk . Please mark them as Private and Confidential.

Complaints that involve or are about the Headteacher should be addressed to the Chair of Governors, via email governors@redbournprimary.co.uk .

Complaints about the Chair of Governors, any individual governor or the whole Governing Board should be addressed to the clerk to the Governing Board via email roderick.woodhouse@clerks.hfleducation.org .

For the reasons set out above in relation to raising concerns, complaints should **not** be raised with individual governors. In the event that a complainant approaches a Governor, they must signpost the complainant back to the most appropriate person set out in this policy.

A template form is included at Appendix 2 which must be used to raise a complaint. If help is required to complete the template, please contact the School Office.

Anonymous complaints

We will not investigate anonymous complaints.

Time scales

Complaints must be raised within three months of the incident or, where a series of associated incidents have occurred, within three months of the last of these incidents. Where applicable, we also require that complaints are made within three months of your child leaving the School. For Year 6 children who transfer to secondary school, this will be three months from the last day of the summer term.

We will only consider complaints made outside of this time frame if exceptional circumstances apply. To enable the School to make this decision, the complainant will be asked to explain their reasons as to why they have taken longer than three months to raise their complaint. If the complainant does not provide any explanation or the School deems that the explanation given is not compelling or exceptional enough to warrant the issue(s) being investigated as a late complaint, the School will confirm this in writing and take no further action.

Complaints received outside of term time

We will consider complaints made outside of term time to have been received on the first school day after the holiday period.

Timings

Whilst this Policy sets out timescales applicable to the complaints procedure, these may be subject to change or delay due to circumstances outside of the School's control. For example:

- delays in the provision of information;
- availability of key personnel required to participate in an investigation;
- if other bodies are investigating aspects of the complaint, for example the police, local authority (LA) safeguarding teams or Tribunals; and
- if the complainant commences legal action against the Redbourn Primary School in relation to their complaint (in which case we will consider whether to suspend the complaints procedure in relation to the complaint pending resolution of the legal proceedings).

Resolving complaints

At each stage in the procedure, the School wants to resolve the complaint. We will acknowledge if the complaint is upheld in whole or in part or dismissed in whole or in part. In addition, we may offer one or more of the following:

- an explanation
- an admission that the situation could have been handled differently or better
- an assurance that we will try to ensure the event complained of will not recur
- an explanation of the steps that have been or will be taken to help ensure that it will not happen again and an indication of the timescales within which any changes will be made
- an undertaking to review school policies in light of the complaint
- an apology.

Withdrawal of a Complaint

If a complainant wants to withdraw their complaint, we will ask them to confirm this in writing.

Confidentiality

Documents and discussions must remain strictly confidential between the complainant and staff involved to allow the complaints policy to be implemented effectively and impartially.

5. HANDLING OF FORMAL COMPLAINTS

STAGE 1

Upon receipt of a formal complaint using the form in Appendix 2, the recipient will record the date the complaint is received and will aim to acknowledge receipt of the complaint in writing (either by letter or email) within 5 school days.

Within this response, the recipient will seek to clarify the nature of the complaint, ask what remains unresolved and what outcome the complainant would like to see. The recipient can consider whether a face to face meeting is the most appropriate way of doing this. If the “Concerns” process set out in Section 3 above has not been followed, the recipient may ask that this is done prior to considering the complaint further.

During the investigation, the Headteacher (or investigator) will:

- if necessary, interview those involved in the matter and/or those complained of, allowing them to be accompanied if they wish; and
- keep a written record of any meetings/interviews in relation to their investigation.

At the conclusion of their investigation, the Headteacher will provide a formal written response. We aim to provide a response within 15 school days of the date of receipt of the complaint in the form set out in Appendix 2. However, this period may be extended, for example if additional time is needed to clarify the nature of the complaint or due to the availability of those involved to attend interviews.

The response will detail any actions taken to investigate the complaint and provide a full explanation of the decision made and the reason(s) for it. Where appropriate, it will include details of actions the School will take to resolve the complaint.

The Headteacher will advise the complainant of how to escalate their complaint should they remain dissatisfied with the outcome of Stage 1.

If the complaint is about the Headteacher, or a member of the Governing Board (including the Chair or Vice-Chair), a suitably skilled Governor will be appointed to complete all the actions at Stage 1.

If the complaint is:

- jointly about the Chair and Vice Chair; or
- the entire Governing Board; or
- the majority of the Governing Board.

Stage 1 will be considered by an independent investigator appointed by the Governing Board, for example a co-opted Governor from another school. At the conclusion of their investigation, the independent investigator will provide a formal written response.

STAGE 1 MEDIATION

If the complainant is dissatisfied with the response they receive a mediation meeting will be offered between the complainant, Headteacher and Chair of Governors, or nominated Governor, to help share understanding and mediate a resolution. The Chair of Governors will seek to provide more clarity about the decisions and recommendations made.

STAGE 2

If the complainant is dissatisfied with the outcome at Stage 1 mediation and wishes to take the matter further, they can escalate the complaint to Stage 2 – a meeting with a complaints committee of the Governing Board, which will be formed of the first three, impartial, Governors available. This is the final stage of the complaints procedure.

A request to escalate to Stage 2 must be made using the form in Appendix 2 (note a resubmission of the form required to initiate Stage 1 of a complaint is not sufficient). The new form should be addressed to the Chair of Governors and submitted via the School Office or emailed to governors@redbournprimary.co.uk, within 28 days of receipt of the Stage 1 response. The Governing Board will consider exceptional circumstances when deciding whether to accept an escalation after this time frame. After 28 days the complaint will be

considered closed. Complaints made after the 28-day period will be considered as a new complaint.

The Chair of Governors will record the date the complaint is received and acknowledge receipt of the complaint in writing (either by letter or email) within 10 school days.

The Chair of Governors will write to the complainant to inform them of the date of the meeting. They will aim to convene a meeting within 28 school days of receipt of the Stage 2 request. If this is not possible, the Clerk will provide an anticipated date and keep the complainant informed.

If the complainant rejects the offer of three proposed dates, without good reason, the Clerk will decide when to hold the meeting. It will then proceed in the complainant's absence on the basis of written submissions from both parties.

The complaints committee will consist of at least three Governors with no prior involvement or knowledge of the complaint. Prior to the meeting, they will decide amongst themselves who will act as the Chair of the Complaints Committee. If there are fewer than three governors from the School available, the Clerk will source any additional, independent governors through another local school or through the Hertfordshire Governor Services team, in order to make up the committee. Alternatively, an entirely independent committee may be convened to hear the complaint at Stage 2.

The committee will decide whether to deal with the complaint by inviting parties to a meeting or through written representations, but in making their decision they will be sensitive to the complainant's needs.

If the complainant is invited to attend the meeting, they may bring someone along to provide support. This can be a relative or friend. Generally, we do not encourage either party to bring legal representatives to the committee meeting. However, there may be occasions when legal representation is appropriate.

For instance, if a School employee is called as a witness in a complaint meeting, they may wish to be supported by union and/or legal representation.

Note: Complaints about staff conduct will not be handled under this complaints procedure. Complainants will be advised that any staff conduct complaints will be considered under staff disciplinary procedures, if appropriate, but outcomes will not be shared with them.

Representatives from the media are not permitted to attend.

At least 10 school days before the meeting, the Clerk will:

- confirm and notify the complainant of the date, time and venue of the meeting, ensuring that, if the complainant is invited, the dates are convenient to all parties and that the venue and proceedings are accessible.
- request copies of any further written material to be submitted to the committee at least 5 school days before the meeting.

Any written material will be circulated to all parties at least 3 school days before the date of the meeting. The committee will not accept, as evidence, recordings of conversations that were obtained covertly and without the informed consent of all parties being recorded.

The committee will also not review any new complaints at this stage or consider evidence unrelated to the initial complaint to be included. New complaints must be dealt with from the informal concerns process of the procedure.

The meeting will be held in private. Electronic recordings of meetings or conversations are not permitted unless a complainant's own disability or special needs require it. Prior knowledge and consent of all parties attending must be sought before meetings or conversations take place. Consent will be recorded in any minutes taken.

The committee will consider the complaint and all the evidence presented. The committee can:

- uphold the complaint in whole or in part.
- dismiss the complaint in whole or in part.

If the complaint is upheld in whole or in part, the committee will:

- decide on the appropriate action to be taken to resolve the complaint.
- where appropriate, recommend changes to the School's systems or procedures to prevent similar issues in the future.

The Chair of the Committee will aim to provide the complainant and the School with a full explanation of their decision and the reason(s) for it, in writing, within 20 school days.

The letter to the complainant will include details of how to contact the Department for Education if they are dissatisfied with the way their complaint has been handled by the School.

If the complaint is:

- jointly about the Chair and Vice Chair or
- the entire Governing Board or
- the majority of the Governing Board

Stage 2 will be heard by a committee of independent Governors.

The response will detail any actions taken to investigate the complaint and provide a full explanation of the decision made and the reason(s) for it. Where appropriate, it will include details of actions the School will take to resolve the complaint.

The response will also advise the complainant of how to escalate their complaint should they remain dissatisfied.

6. FURTHER RECOURSE

The process for submitting and responding to complaints are summarised in Appendix 3.

Complaints relating to Special Educational Needs provision

Complaints about the way the School has been delivering the provision set out in Section F of your child's Education, Health and Care Plan (EHCP), may be escalated to the Local Authority that maintains your child's EHCP.

If the EHCP is maintained by Hertfordshire County Council, escalation can be made to the following address:

Customer Service Team – Complaints

Postal Point: CHO118

Resources Department

County Hall

Hertford

SG13 8DF

Once in receipt of your complaint, the Complaints Manager for Children's Services will ensure that the Local Authority completes a Section F Provision Checklist. This process entails a Provision Checklist being drawn up directly from Section F of the EHCP. A Senior SEND Officer will then visit the school in order to work through the checklist point by point and complete it. The Senior SEND Officer will seek the comments of the Headteacher, Senior Leadership Team, SENCo and Governors as appropriate, as well as any other information or advice that they deem necessary.

Once the Provision Checklist has been completed, the Local Authority will notify the complainant of the outcome in writing, enclosing a copy of the checklist. A copy of the outcome letter and checklist will also be sent to the School for its information and record keeping. This process will take up to 25 working days (of the Local Authority) to conclude.

Complainants who remain dissatisfied following further investigation of their Special Educational Needs provision complaint by the Local Authority may complain to the Secretary of State who may decide to conduct an additional investigation. The contact details for the Secretary of State are set out below.

Complaints of any other nature

If the complainant believes that the School did not handle their complaint in accordance with this complaints policy or that it acted unlawfully or unreasonably in exercising its duties under education law, they can approach the Department for Education (DFE) after they have exhausted the School's complaints process at Stage 2.

The DFE will not normally re-investigate the substance of a complaint or overturn any decisions made by the School. They will consider whether the School has adhered to education legislation and any statutory policies relevant to the complaint. The DFE will not substitute its decision for that of the Stage 2 complaints committee simply because the complainant disagrees with it.

The complainant can refer their complaint to the Department for Education online at www.education.gov.uk/contactus, by telephone on 0370 000 2288 or by writing to:

Department for Education, Piccadilly Gate, Store Street, Manchester M1 2WD

7. PERSISTENT, UNREASONABLE, AND VEXATIOUS BEHAVIOUR AND COMPLAINTS

Redbourn Primary School is committed to dealing with all complaints fairly and impartially and in accordance with this complaints policy and procedure.

The School will not normally limit the contact that complainants have with us. However, Redbourn Primary School does not expect our staff or Governors to tolerate unreasonable behaviour and we will take action to protect staff from such behaviour, including any that the School deems to be abusive, offensive or threatening.

Redbourn Primary School defines unreasonable behaviour as that which affects the smooth and efficient running of the School on a daily basis, or that which hinders the School's consideration of complaints because of the frequency or nature of the complainant's contact with the School, such as, if the complainant:

- Refuses to articulate their complaint or specify the grounds of a complaint or the outcomes sought by raising the complaint, despite offers of assistance.
- Refuses to co-operate with the complaints process at any stage.
- Refuses to accept that certain issues are not within the scope of the complaints process.
- Insists on the complaint being dealt with in ways which are incompatible with the complaints process or with good practice, or only in a way that suits themselves.
- Introduces trivial or irrelevant information that they expect to be taken into account and commented upon.
- Raises detailed but unimportant questions and insists they are answered fully, often immediately and to their own timescales.
- Makes unfounded complaints about staff who are trying to deal with the issues, and seeks to have them replaced.
- Seeks to change the basis of some or all of the complaint as the complaints process proceeds.
- Repeatedly makes the same complaint(s) (despite previous investigations or responses concluding that the complaint is unfounded or has been fully addressed).
- Refuses to accept the outcome of the complaints process despite the fact that the process has been exhausted and correctly implemented, including signposting the complainant to the Department for Education (DFE).

- Seeks an unrealistic outcome.
- Makes excessive demands on School time by way of frequent, lengthy, complicated and stressful contact(s) with staff regarding the complaint, in person, in writing, by email and by telephone whilst the complaint is being dealt with.
- Uses threats to intimidate.
- Uses abusive, offensive or discriminatory language or violence.
- Makes and breaks contact with the School on an ongoing basis with varying time delays in between.
- Knowingly provides false information.
- Persistently approaches various individuals at the School, as well as the Local Authority, Ofsted and the Department for Education, etc, through different routes about the same issue(s) in the hope of eliciting different responses.
- Publishes what the School deems to be inappropriate or unacceptable information on social media or other platforms.

Complainants should try to limit their communication with the School where it relates to their complaint, whilst the complaint is being progressed. It is unhelpful if repeated correspondence is sent (either by letter, phone, email or text), as it could delay the outcome(s) being reached.

Wherever possible, the Headteacher or Chair of Governors will discuss any concerns with the Complainant/Parent/Carer about their behaviour informally, before deciding to invoke this policy and procedure for managing persistent and vexatious behaviour and complaints.

If any unreasonable behaviour continues after the Headteacher or Chair of Governors has spoken informally with the Complainant/Parent/Carer, the Headteacher will write to them. The Headteacher will confirm that the school deems their behaviour to be persistent and/or vexatious and will ask them to stop behaving in this way.

Wherever Complainants/Parents/Carers continue to contact Redbourn Primary School excessively, causing a significant level of disruption, the School will consider whether to impose some or all of the following communication restrictions and confirm this in writing accordingly:

- Requesting that contact only takes place in a particular form (e.g. letters only).
- Requiring contact to take place with a designated member of Staff (e.g. the Headteacher).
- Restricting telephone calls to specified days and times.
- Asking the complainant to enter into an agreement about their future contact with the School.
- Informing the complainant that if they do not follow this advice (as stated above), any further communication/correspondence that does not present significant new matters or new information will only be kept on file and will not be acknowledged or responded to.
- If the complainant tries to re-open an issue that has already been considered through the complaints process, the Chair of Governors will inform them in writing that the

process has been exhausted, that the matter is now closed, and that the school will not enter into any further correspondence about it.

The decision of the Headteacher or Chair of Governors to invoke this policy and procedure (and any communication restrictions imposed as a result) is final and cannot be challenged or overturned through the School's complaints process. This is because the decision will be reviewed by the Headteacher or Chair of Governors after six months. If the Complainant/Parent/Carer's behaviour has remained the same or worsened, the Headteacher or Chair of Governors reserves the right to extend the communication restrictions for a further six months each time they review the situation. If the Complainant/Parent/Carer's behaviour has improved to a level that the School deems acceptable, then communication restrictions will be lifted on the proviso that should matters regress, the School reserves the right to reinstate the communication restrictions that previously applied.

In response to any serious incident of aggression or violence, Redbourn Primary School will immediately inform the police and communicate our actions in writing. This may include barring the individual(s) from the School premises. Should the School deem this necessary, it will ensure that it adheres to the guidance issued by the Department for Education (DFE) entitled Controlling access to School premises.

The school also reserves the right to use and adapt this policy and procedure whenever it deems it appropriate to manage unreasonable or persistent contact not directly associated with, or resulting from, formal complaints.

APPENDICES

Appendix 1 – Complaints not Covered by the Complaints Policy

Exceptions	Who to contact
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Admissions to schools Statutory assessments of Special Educational Needs School re-organisation proposals 	<p>Concerns about admissions, statutory assessments of Special Educational Needs, or school re-organisation proposals should be raised with Hertfordshire County Council.</p> <p>Complaints about the school carrying out a statutory duty, e.g. making a Child Protection referral: the school's complaints process cannot be invoked to stop it from doing something it has a duty to do.</p> <p>Complaints regarding internal management decisions, e.g. class and teacher allocations and school session time changes.</p> <p>Complaints about pupil behaviour outside of school hours, e.g. weekends and holiday periods: such issues are not the School's responsibility.</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Matters likely to require a Child Protection investigation 	<p>Complaints about child protection matters are handled under our child protection and safeguarding policy and in accordance with relevant statutory guidance.</p> <p>If you have serious concerns, you may wish to contact the local authority designated officer (LADO) who has local responsibility for safeguarding or the Multi-Agency Safeguarding Hub (MASH). Lado.Referral@hertfordshire.gov.uk</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Exclusion of children from school* 	<p>Further information about raising concerns about exclusion can be found at: www.gov.uk/school-discipline-exclusions/exclusions.</p> <p><i>*complaints about the application of the behaviour policy can be made through the school's complaints procedure</i> https://www.redbournprimary.co.uk/behaviour/.</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Whistleblowing 	<p>We have an internal whistleblowing procedure for all our employees, including temporary staff and contractors.</p> <p>The Secretary of State for Education is the prescribed person for matters relating to education for whistleblowers in education who do not want to raise matters direct with their employer. Referrals can be made at: www.education.gov.uk/contactus.</p> <p>Volunteers who have concerns about the School should complain through the School's complaints procedure. You may also be able to complain direct to the LA or the Department for Education (see link above), depending on the substance of your complaint.</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Staff grievances 	<p>Complaints from staff will be dealt with under the school's internal grievance procedures.</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Staff conduct 	<p>Complaints about staff will be dealt with under the School's internal disciplinary procedures, if appropriate.</p> <p>Complainants will not be informed of any disciplinary action taken</p>

	against a staff member as a result of a complaint. However, the complainant will be notified that the matter is being addressed.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Governor conduct 	A member of staff complaining about an action or a decision of the School's Full Governing Board: the Governing Board will have already given the matter full consideration.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Complaints about services provided by other providers who may use school premises or facilities 	Providers should have their own complaints procedure to deal with complaints about service. Please contact them direct.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> National Curriculum - content 	Please contact the Department for Education at: www.education.gov.uk/contactus
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> If other bodies are looking into aspects of a complaint, for example the Police, the Local Authority (LA) Safeguarding Teams or a Tribunal, this may impact on the School's ability to adhere to the timescales set out within this policy and procedure or may result in the process being suspended until the other relevant Board has concluded its enquiries. 	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> If a complainant commences legal action against Redbourn Primary School in relation to their complaint, we will consider whether to suspend the complaints process until the legal proceedings have concluded. The School will only consider investigating the complaint after the conclusion of legal proceedings if those proceedings did not address the issues at the heart of the complaint. 	

Appendix 2 - Formal Complaint Form

Please return/email this form to the appropriate person according to the policy (see page 4).



Your name:	
Pupil's name and class (if relevant):	
Your relationship to the pupil (if relevant):	
Address:	
Email address:	
Contact number:	
Have you raised this issue with the Class Teacher (If appropriate)? If so, when did you do this?	
Please give details of your complaint, including whether you have spoken to anybody at the school or on the Governing Board about it:	
What actions do you feel might resolve the problem at this stage?	

<p>Have you raised this issue with the Head of Key Stage 1 or 2 (If appropriate)? If so, when did you do this?</p>	
<p>Have you raised this Formal Complaint with the Headteacher (Formal Stage 1)?</p> <p>If so, when did you receive the Headteacher's written response?</p>	<p><i>Please complete for Formal Stage 2 complaints only.</i></p>
<p><i>Please complete for Formal Stage 2 complaints only.</i></p> <p>What actions do you feel might resolve the problem at this stage?</p>	
<p>Are you attaching any paperwork? If so, please give details</p>	
<p>Signature:</p>	
<p>Date:</p>	

Appendix 3 – Who should concerns and complaints be addressed to?

Concerns about any aspect of the provision of the School's facilities or services should in the first instance be discussed with the class teacher. It is normally appropriate to communicate directly with the member of staff concerned.

Where a concern has not been resolved with the class teacher or there is a generic complaint about the School, this should be raised with the Head of Key Stage. If it remains unresolved with the Head of Key Stage it should be raised with the Headteacher.

Many concerns can be resolved by simple clarification or the provision of information and it is anticipated that most complaints will be resolved at this informal stage. If the parent is not satisfied with the response, the next step is to make a formal complaint.

This process is summarised as follows:

Stage 1

Who is the Complaint about	Who should the complaint be addressed to at stage 1?	Who will deal with the stage 1 complaint investigation?
Complaints against school staff	Headteacher via the school office admin@redbournprimary.co.uk . Please mark as Private and Confidential.	The investigator may be the Headteacher or a senior member of staff.
Complaints that involve or are about the Headteacher	Chair of Governors by email to governors@redbournprimary.co.uk . Please mark as Private and Confidential.	A suitably skilled and impartial Governor.
Complaints about any individual Governor	Clerk to the Governing Board by email to roderick.woodhouse@clerks.hfleducation.org .	A suitably skilled and impartial Governor.
Complaints about the Chair of Governors or the Governing Board		Independent investigator appointed by the Governing Board.

If a complaint is escalated to Stage 2

Who is the Complaint about	Who should the complaint be addressed to at stage 2?	Who will deal with the stage 2 complaint investigation?
Complaints against school staff	governors@redbournprimary.co.uk	Complaints committee of at least three Governors who were not directly involved in the matters in the complaint
Complaints that involve or are about the Headteacher	governors@redbournprimary.co.uk	Complaints committee of at least three Governors who were not directly involved in the matters in the complaint
Complaints about any individual Governor	roderick.woodhouse@clerks.hfleducation.org	Complaints committee of at least three Governors who were not directly involved in the matters in the complaint
Complaints about the Chair of Governors or the Governing Board	roderick.woodhouse@clerks.hfleducation.org	Complaints committee of at least three independent Governors.

* If there are insufficient impartial Governors to comprise a committee, the Governing Board may appoint additional, independent governors through another local school or through the Hertfordshire Governor Services team, in order to make up the committee.

Appendix 4 - Roles and Responsibilities

Complainant	<p>The complainant should:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Explain their complaint in full as swiftly as possible.• Co-operate fully with the School to try and resolve the complaint.• Respond promptly to requests for information or meetings.• Agree the details of their complaint and their desired outcomes in a timely way if clarification is requested.• Ask for assistance if or when needed.• Treat everybody involved in their complaint and the complaints process with dignity and respect.• Refrain from publicising the details of their complaint on social media and respect confidentiality.• Refrain from making allegations and threats. <p>If the complainant fails or refuses to follow the above, the School may have to suspend its consideration of their complaint, either temporarily or permanently, depending on the nature of the complainant's behaviour and how this affects the School's handling of the complaint. In such circumstances, the School also reserves the right to invoke its Policy and Procedure for Managing Persistent and Vexatious Behaviour and Complaints (contained in section 5).</p>
<p>Investigator (if one is required or appointed)</p> <p>This could be the Headteacher or another member of the School's Senior Leadership Team.</p>	<p>The Investigator's role is to establish the facts relevant to the complaint by: Providing a comprehensive, open, transparent and fair consideration of the complaint through:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Sensitive and thorough interviewing of the complainant to establish what has happened and who has been involved.• Interviewing any staff, children, young people or any other people relevant to the complaint.• Consideration of records and other relevant information.• Analysing information.• Referring to any relevant School policies and procedures that apply.• Liaising with the complainant and the Complaints Co-ordinator as appropriate to try and identify how the complaint may best be resolved.• The Investigator should:<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Conduct interviews with an open mind and be prepared to persist in their questioning if they deem this necessary.• Keep notes of interviews or arrange for an independent note taker to document the meeting.• Ensure that any papers produced during the investigation are kept securely pending further consideration of the complaint.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Be mindful of the timescales to respond. <p>If the Investigator is somebody other than the Headteacher, then they should prepare a comprehensive report for the Headteacher or the Stage 2 Complaints Panel that sets out the facts, tries to identify solutions and makes recommendations to try and resolve the issues.</p> <p>The Headteacher or Stage 2 Complaints Panel will then determine whether to uphold or reject the complaint in full or in part and communicate their finding(s) to the complainant, providing the appropriate escalation details.</p>
<p>Complaints Co-ordinator</p> <p>This could be the Headteacher, a Designated Complaints Governor or a member of School staff providing administrative support.</p>	<p>The Complaints Co-ordinator should:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensure that the complainant is updated at each stage of the School's complaints process. • Liaise with staff members, the Headteacher, the Chair of Governors, the Clerk and any another relevant sources of information or support, to ensure a smooth and effective complaints process. • Remain mindful of issues regarding: • Sharing third party information. • Additional support. This may be needed, for example, by complainants when making a complaint, including an Interpreter or where the complainant is a child or young person. • Keep accurate records and store them securely.
<p>Clerk to the Governing Board</p> <p>The Clerk is the point of contact for the complainant, the respondent on behalf of the School and the Stage 2 Complaints Panel.</p>	<p>They should:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensure that everybody involved in the complaints process is aware of their legal rights and responsibilities, including any under legislation relating to School complaints, education law, the Equality Act 2010, the Freedom of Information Act 2000, the Data Protection Act (DPA) 2018 and the General Data Protection Regulations (GDPR). • Set the date, time and venue of the meeting, ensuring that the dates are convenient to all parties if they are invited to attend (unless three proposed dates have been declined without good reason in which case the Clerk or the Chair of Governors will decide when the Hearing will be). They should also ensure that the venue and proceedings are accessible for all attendees. • Collate any written material relevant to the complaint (for example; the Stage 1 paperwork, the respondent on behalf of the School's submission, the complainant's submission and signed, dated witness statements) and send it to all parties in advance of the meeting within an agreed timescale (including the Panel). • Take detailed notes of the Stage 2 Complaints Panel Hearing. • Provide a copy of their detailed notes to either or both parties if requested to do so.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Notify both parties of the Panel's findings.
<p>Chair of the Stage 2 Complaints Panel</p> <p>The Chair of the Stage 2 Complaints Panel will be appointed in advance of the Hearing</p>	<p>Should ensure that:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Both parties are asked (via the Clerk) to provide any additional information relating to the complaint by a specified date in advance of the Hearing. • The Hearing is conducted fairly and impartially, is not adversarial, and that, if all parties are invited to attend, everyone is treated with respect and courtesy. • Complainants who may not be used to attending such Hearings are put at ease insofar as possible. This is particularly important if the complainant is a child or young person. • The remit of the Complaints Panel is explained to both parties. • Written material is seen by everyone in attendance, provided it does not breach confidentiality or any individual's rights to privacy under the DPA 2018 or GDPR. • If a new issue arises, it would be useful to give everyone the opportunity to consider it and comment upon it. This will require an adjournment of the hearing as new issues must be passed back for consideration at Stage 1 first. • Both the complainant and the respondent on behalf of the School are given the opportunity to put forward their case and seek clarity, either through written submissions ahead of the Hearing or verbally in the Hearing itself. • No cross questioning is permitted. All questioning is conducted by the Panel. • The issues are addressed. • Key findings of fact are made. • The Panel is open-minded and acts independently. • No member of the Panel has an external interest in the outcome of the proceedings or has had any involvement at an earlier stage of the complaints process. • The Clerk takes detailed notes of the Hearing. • They liaise with the Clerk whenever the need arises (and the Complaints Co-ordinator, if the School has one).
<p>Stage 2 Complaints Panel Member</p>	<p>Stage 2 Complaints Panel Members should remain mindful that:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Hearing must be independent and impartial and should be seen to be so. • No Governor may sit on the Panel if they have had prior involvement in the complaint or in the circumstances surrounding it. • The aim of the Hearing should be to try and resolve the complaint and achieve reconciliation between the School and the complainant wherever possible. • The complainant may not be satisfied with the outcome if the Panel does not find in their favour. It may only be possible to establish the facts and make recommendations.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Many complainants will feel nervous in a formal setting such as this. • Parents and carers often feel emotional when discussing issues that affect their children. • Extra care needs to be taken if the complainant is a child or young person and they are present during all or part of the Hearing. • Careful consideration of the atmosphere and proceedings should be given to ensure that a child or young person does not feel intimidated. • The Panel should respect the views of a child or young person and give them equal consideration to those of adults. • If a child or young person is the complainant, the Panel should ask them in advance if any support is needed to help them present their complaint. • Where a child or young person's parent or carer is the complainant, the Panel should give them the opportunity to say which parts of the meeting, if any, the child or young person would like to be present for. • The complainant should be advised that it may not be agreed for a child or young person to attend a Hearing if the Panel considers that it is not in the child or young person's best interests. • The welfare and best interests of the child or young person should remain at the forefront at all times.
--	--