

## **Ysgol y Llan, Whitford Complaints Policy (Parents)**

In Ysgol y Llan, we recognise that parents/guardians have a crucial role to play in supporting their children succeed at school. A good partnership between the home and school ensures that children are happy at school. Visits by parents/guardians to school, reports, newsletters and open evenings further strengthen this partnership.

There may be occasions when problems occur and in most cases these are usually sorted out quickly at the informal stage. However, if you have a concern about a school, you may wish to complain formally. We aim to make our complaints procedure easy to follow.

### **Definition of a Complaint**

A complaint is an expression of dissatisfaction about the standard of service, action or lack of action. A formal complaint must be submitted in writing to the appropriate person.

### **Stage 1 (Informal Stage)**

You should contact the school first and discuss your concerns with a member of staff. This could be your child's class teacher, form tutor, head of year or deputy headteacher. Most problems can be dealt with successfully and promptly at this stage.

### **Stage 2**

**2a) To pursue a complaint at this stage, you should make arrangements to meet the headteacher.** If the headteacher is unable to deal with the complaint straight away, he/she should be able to tell you what action will be taken. The headteacher should also tell you when and how he/she will report back to you.

#### **2b) Formal Stage**

If you have complained formally in writing to the headteacher, the school will let you know that it has received your complaint within **5 school days**. You will be given the results of the headteacher's investigation in writing normally within **15 school days**. However, where appropriate, the LA will investigate a complaint on behalf of the school and report to the Chair of Governors.

**2c) If your complaint is about the headteacher, you can complain directly to the Chair of Governors. (See Stage 3).**

### Stage 3

If you are still unhappy with the situation, the next step is to write to the Chair of Governors. You should make it clear why you are complaining and what you want to happen as a result of your complaint.

The Chair of Governors will let you know that he or she has received your complaint normally within **5 school days** and will then investigate it.

You will be told about the outcome of the Chair of Governors' investigation in writing normally within **20 school days**.

If you are still not satisfied after receiving the chair of Governor's report, you can ask to have your complaint referred to a Complaints Committee of the Governing Body at Stage 4.

### Stage 4

You can write to the Clerk of the Governors' at the school. You should say exactly why you are unhappy with the Chair of Governors' findings and ask that a Complaints Committee be set up to investigate the complaint.

The Complaint Committee will meet between **12 and 20 school days** after the clerk to the Governors receives your letter. You will be told in advance about the process and what will happen at the meeting of the committee. You can attend and bring a relative or friend to support you if you want to.

You will be told in writing about the committee's findings normally within **5 school days** from the date of the meeting.

### Stage 5

You may believe that your complaint was not handled fairly according to the school's own complaints procedure. In this case, you can ask the Local Authority (LA) to investigate by writing to the LA's complaint officer at County Hall, Mold.

You should explain your complaint and say why you think the school did not follow its complaint procedure properly. Wherever possible you should give evidence for why you think this.

The department's complaints officer will let you know that he has received your letter normally within **10 working days**. The complaints officer will look at your evidence and then decide if he/she should investigate. He/she cannot do anything until the school itself has finished considering your complaint.

The complaint officer will investigate whether there was a defect in the school's procedure in dealing with your complaint. The complaint officer will not investigate your original complaint all over again. The LA cannot make the school come to a different judgement on your case if the governing body has considered your complaint in a reasonable way.

The complaint officer will tell you the outcome of his/her investigation in writing normally within 15 school days of receiving your complaint. If he/she concludes that the school did not follow its procedures properly, the matter will be referred back to the chair of the governing body. The governing body should then re-investigate the complaint.

#### **Stage 6**

If you believe that the LA has acted unreasonably you may appeal to the:

Minister for Education and Lifelong Learning  
National Assembly for Wales  
Cardiff Bay  
Cardiff  
CF99 1NA

The Minister for Education could step in if a governing body or a LA had not carried out its legal duty or has acted unreasonably. The Minister for Education would not do anything until the school and the LA had finished looking into the complaint.

If you feel that there has been a fault in the way your complaint has been dealt with, you can take this to the Local Government Ombudsman:

The Local Government Ombudsman  
Derwen House  
Court Road  
Bridgend  
CFG31 1BN

The Ombudsman will only investigate where there has been a fault in the way the process was handled by the school or LA. He/She can investigate complaints about how something has been done. This could be giving the wrong information, not dealing with letters or taking too long to do something. He/She cannot question what has been done just because someone does not agree with the result. The Ombudsman cannot investigate how schools and colleges are run. The Ombudsman could not do anything until the school and the LA have finished looking into your complaint.

This policy is statutory and is therefore revised and amended if necessary by the Governing Body of the school at the first meeting of the autumn term every year.