

Leicester City Council

Advice for parents regarding school complaints

Most parents enjoy a good relationship with the Headteacher and staff at their child's school, and schools and teachers work hard to keep parents informed about school policies and their child's work. However, there may be times when this does not work, and parents want to raise matters with the school.

Many issues can be resolved informally, without the need to use the formal stages of the complaints procedure.

Informal Concerns

Concerns should initially be raised informally with your child's class teacher or the staff member delivering the service you have concerns about.

Wherever possible the class teacher/staff member will respond to your concern immediately or, if this is not possible, will investigate your concern and respond promptly.

We understand, however, that there are occasions where you feel the need to raise formal complaints.

Formal Complaints Procedure

Each school is required by the Department for Education to produce and publish a formal complaints policy. Before making a complaint, look on their website or ask the school office for a copy of their policy.

You can submit a formal complaint to the school in person, in writing or by telephone.

The Department for Education recommend that school's complaint policies should consist of the following two stages:

Stage 1 – Headteacher/Principal

Raise your complaint with the Headteacher/Principal, who will investigate and formally respond to you in accordance with the school's published complaint's policy.

However, if the complaint is about the headteacher or a member of the governing body, the school will arrange for a suitably skilled governor to investigate the matter instead.

Stage 2 – Governing Body Complaints Committee

If you remain dissatisfied with the outcome of your Stage 1 complaint, you can choose to take the matter further.

Write to the Clerk to the Governors and ask for a meeting of the Governing Body's complaints committee. You can hand your letter in at the school office or email it to them using the contact details on the school's website.

The clerk will then write to you to confirm the arrangements for a meeting of members of the complaints committee. Where they consider it necessary, they will invite you to attend to provide evidence in person. Alternatively, they may choose to consider your written representations instead.

Once the meeting has been held, the Chair of the committee will write to you with the outcome, including a full explanation of their decision and to confirm how you can escalate your complaint if you remain dissatisfied.

Next Steps – Department for Education

After Stage 2 has been completed, if you believe the school have not handled your complaint in accordance with their published complaints policy, or if they acted unlawfully or unreasonably in the exercise of their duties under education law, you can contact the Department for Education.

Contact the School Complaints Unit on **0370 000 2288** or online at:
www.education.gov.uk/help/contactus

Or you can write to them at:

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

The Department for Education will not normally reinvestigate the substance of complaints or overturn any decisions made by schools. However, they will consider whether the school has adhered to education legislation and any statutory policies connected with the complaint.

Ofsted

OFSTED will consider complaints about a school as a whole but it will not investigate about an individual child. Advice and guidance can be obtained from their helpdesk on 08456 40 40 45.

Complaints Support Service

We know that some parents find making a complaint daunting or difficult. If you need help preparing your complaint, contact the Client Services Team at:

Client Services
Leicester City Council
City Hall
115 Charles Street
Leicester
LE1 1FZ
Telephone : 0116 454 1009 (Option 4)

Please note that the service does not include acting on your behalf or representing you.