

# Complaints Policy



Berriew CP School

Written September 2025

## Context

At **Berriew C.P. School**, we are committed to addressing complaints fairly, promptly, and respectfully. A complaint is any expression of dissatisfaction relating to the school that requires a response. We encourage parents, pupils, staff, and the wider community to raise concerns with confidence that they will be heard, investigated, and, where appropriate, resolved. Complaints should first be raised informally with the **relevant staff member** or **Headteacher**. If the issue cannot be resolved, a formal written complaint can be submitted the **Headteacher** and will be investigated thoroughly, with outcomes communicated clearly. Lessons learned from complaints will be used to improve school practice, while confidentiality, fairness, and respect will be maintained throughout the process in line with **Powys County Council guidance**.

## When to use this procedure

When you have a concern or wish to make a complaint, this policy explains how the school will respond. If the matter relates to something outside the school's responsibility, we will advise you who to contact. If your concern is covered by a different procedure (for example, safeguarding, staff conduct, or admissions), we will explain how it will be dealt with and guide you to the correct process. In cases where the complaint involves the school and another organisation (such as Powys County Council), we will work together to agree how best to handle the concern.

## Have You Asked Us Yet?

If this is the first time you are raising a concern, we ask that you give the school the opportunity to respond. Many issues can be resolved quickly by speaking directly to the relevant member of staff or the Headteacher, without needing to follow the formal complaints procedure. If, after this, you are still not satisfied with the outcome, you may submit a formal complaint using the procedure outlined in this policy.

## What We Expect from You

We believe that everyone making a complaint has the right to be heard, understood, and treated with respect. Equally, our staff and governors have the same right. We expect all complainants to act **politely and courteously**. Aggressive, abusive, or threatening behaviour, as well as unreasonable demands, persistent or vexatious complaints, will **not** be tolerated.

## Our Approach to Answering Your Concern or Complaint

We will consider all concerns and complaints in an **open, fair, and respectful** way, ensuring that the rights and feelings of everyone involved are protected and confidential information is handled appropriately. Timescales for responding may be extended after discussion with you if necessary. Where appropriate, we may seek advice from **Powys County Council** or the **diocesan authority**. Some complaints may need to be dealt with through a different procedure, and in such cases, we will explain why and outline the steps to be taken. Records relating to complaints will be kept by the governing body for **seven years**, after which they will be reviewed to determine whether retention is required. Anonymous complaints will be recorded but investigated at the school's discretion, depending on their nature. Complaints that appear to have been made solely to cause harm or offence will still be documented, and records will note any actions taken or reasons for deciding that no action is necessary.

### Answering Your Concern or Complaint

At Berriew C.P. School, complaints are usually dealt with in **three stages: A, B, and C**, with most issues resolved at Stages A or B. You may bring a relative or companion for support, though you are expected to speak for yourself, except where a pupil's companion may speak on their behalf. Complaints will be handled **confidentially wherever possible**, but relevant staff may need to be informed to address the issue appropriately. If you are a pupil under 16, we will usually ask your permission before involving your parent(s) or carer(s).

**Stage A** encourages raising concerns quickly and informally with the class teacher, Headteacher, or school council representative, ideally within **10 school days** of an incident, with a response expected within 10 school days.

**Stage B** involves submitting a written complaint to the Headteacher if the matter is not resolved informally, with a meeting arranged and the outcome communicated in writing within 10 school days of investigation. Complaints about the Headteacher should be submitted in writing to the Chair of Governors.

**Stage C** is the rare escalation to the governing body's complaints committee if the complaint remains unresolved; the complainant may submit reasons in writing or verbally, with a meeting arranged, evidence shared confidentially, and a decision communicated in writing within 10 school days of the meeting. Records of all complaints, meetings, and outcomes are kept for a **minimum of seven years**, and the governing body's complaints committee serves as the **final arbiter**.

## Special Circumstances

Certain complaints involve governors or the Headteacher and are handled slightly differently to ensure impartiality:

- **A governor or group of governors:** Referred to the Chair of Governors, who may delegate the investigation; Stage B onwards applies.
- **The Chair of Governors or the Headteacher and Chair together:** Referred to the Vice Chair, who may investigate or delegate; Stage B onwards applies.
- **Both the Chair and Vice Chair of Governors:** Referred to the Clerk to the Governing Body, who will involve the Chair of the Complaints Committee; Stage C applies.
- **The whole governing body:** Referred to the Clerk, who informs the Headteacher, Chair, local authority, and where relevant the diocesan authority; independent investigation arrangements are agreed.
- **The Headteacher:** Referred to the Chair of Governors, who may investigate or delegate; Stage B onwards applies.

In all cases, complaints will be handled **fairly, openly, and without bias**.

## Our commitment to you

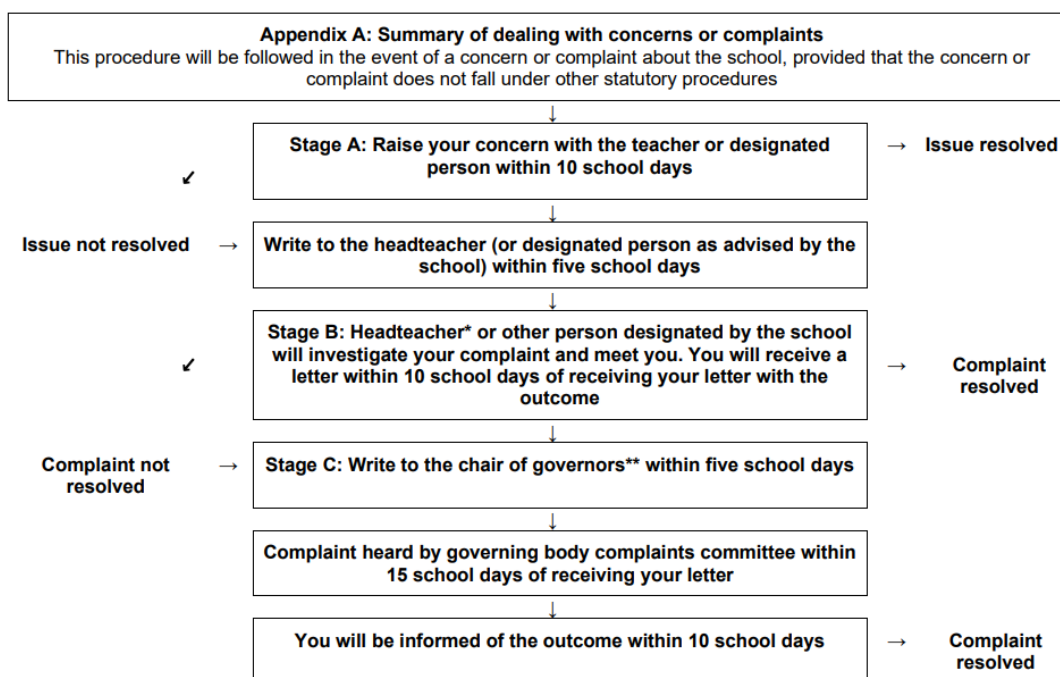
- We take all complaints seriously and learn from any mistakes.
- Support is provided if you need help raising a concern.
- For young people needing additional assistance, advice and advocacy are available via:  
**MEIC** – freephone 0808 802 3456, text 84001, 24 hours a day.  
**Children’s Commissioner for Wales** – freephone 0808 801 1000 (Mon–Fri, 9 a.m.–5 p.m.), text 80 800 (start message with COM), or email [advice@childcomwales.org.uk](mailto:advice@childcomwales.org.uk).
- The governing body has consulted with staff and pupils on this policy and will continue to do so for any amendments.

Adopted by: Berriew C.P. School

Date: 24/10/25

Next Review: 24/10/27

## Appendix A: Summary of dealing with concerns or complaints



\* If the complaint is about the headteacher you should write to the chair of governors.

\*\* If the complaint is about the chair of governors you should write to the vice chair.

All timescales shown are targets and are flexible; however, it is in everyone's best interest to resolve a complaint as soon as possible.

The school will work with you to ensure that the time allowed to deal with your concern or complaint is reasonable and helps to achieve an answer to the problem.

## Appendix B: Model complaint form

The person who experienced the problem should normally fill in this form. If you are making a complaint on behalf of someone else, please fill in Section B also. Please note that before taking forward the complaint we will need to be satisfied that you have the authority to act on behalf of the person concerned. If you are a pupil the school will help you complete this form, will explain it to you and will give you a copy of it when it is completed.

A. your details

Surname	
Forename(s)	
Title: Mr/Mrs/Ms/Other	
Address and postcode	
Daytime phone number	
Mobile phone number	
E-mail address	

How would you prefer us to contact you?

B. If you are making a complaint on behalf of someone else, what are their details?

<b>Their name in full</b>	
<b>Address and postcode</b>	
<b>What is your relationship to them?</b>	
<b>Why are you making a complaint on their behalf?</b>	

C. About your complaint (continue your answers on separate sheets of paper if necessary)

C.1 Name of the school you are complaining about.

C.2 What do you think they did wrong or did not do?

C.3 Describe how you have been affected.

C.4 When did you first become aware of the problem?

C.5 If it is more than three months since you first became aware of the problem, please give the reason why you have not complained before.

C.6 What do you think should be done to put matters right?

C.7 Have you already put your complaint to a member of staff? If so, please give brief details about how and when you did so.

Signature of complainant:

Date:

Signature if you are making a complaint on behalf of someone else Signature:      Date:

Please send this form and any documents to support your complaint to:

[Insert name of complaint handler] [Insert address and contact details of complaint handler]

#### Official Use

Date acknowledgement sent:

By whom:

Complaint referred to:

Date: