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BASED ON LOCAL AUTHORITY GUIDANCE	Model Procedures For Dealing With School Based Complaints 2020-2023
REVIEW DATE	Two years from publication.
TARGET AUDIENCE	All staff and parents regardless of race, gender, disability, religion and belief, sexual orientation, pregnancy or maternity, or gender reassignment.
STATUS	Approved

## HOW TO COMMENT OR COMPLAIN

### We care about what you think

Each day The Nobel School makes many decisions and tries hard to do the best for all our students. Your comments - either positive or negative - are helpful for future planning.

You may want to talk to us about a particular aspect of this school, though not actually make a complaint - you just want to get something 'off your chest'.

If you are dissatisfied about the way your child is being treated, or any actions or lack of action by us, please feel free to contact us using the details listed below.

### Our aims

- Your complaint will be dealt with honestly, politely and in confidence.
- Your complaint will be looked into thoroughly and fairly.
- If your complaint is urgent we will deal with it more quickly.
- We will keep you up to date with progress at each stage.
- You will get an apology if we have made a mistake.
- You will be told what we are going to do to put things right.
- You will get a full and clear written reply to formal complaints within **28 school days**

**The Nobel School**  
**Mobbsbury Way**  
**Stevenage**  
**SG2 0HS**

**01438 222600**

[www.thenobelschool.org](http://www.thenobelschool.org)



## How to make a complaint

### In the first instance – informal stage

If you have a concern about anything we do, or if you wish to make a complaint, you can do this by telephone, in person or in writing (by letter or email). We hope that most complaints can be settled quickly and informally, either by putting matters right or by giving you an explanation. If there is something you are not happy about, or you don't understand why we are doing something in a particular way, please discuss it with the class/form teacher or another appropriate member of staff, such as the Student Support Officer for the year group, or Special Educational Needs Co-ordinator (SENCo) if it is about Special Needs.

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. If the member of staff you speak to in the first instance is unable to resolve the matter to a satisfactory conclusion, there is the following next step.

### First - formal stage

Formal complaints must be made to the Headteacher in the first instance via the Headteacher's PA. The headteacher who will investigate your complaint and aim to inform you of the outcome within 10 school days.

If your first contact is with individual governors, they will advise you to take up your concerns with the appropriate member of staff or Headteacher. An individual governor should not be made aware of a potential complaint as they may be required to sit on a Panel in the event of a formal hearing (Stage Two) and should be impartial.

If your complaint is about the Headteacher, you should **write to the Chair of Governors**. If your child has a Statement of Special Educational Needs (SEN) or an Education, Health and Care Plan (EHCP) you might find it helpful to talk to our Special Educational Needs Co-ordinator (SENCo) or your child's named Special Needs Officer at the Local Authority. The SEND Information Advice and Support Service (SENDIASS – formerly Parent Partnership) may also be able to help you.

### Second - formal stage

If you remain dissatisfied following Stage 1 and wish to take your complaint further, you will be asked to complete the Formal Complaint Form in Appendix One or write a letter addressed to the Chair of Governors. In the letter you should:

- Make it clear why you are complaining.
- Say who you have spoken to already.
- Explain what you want to happen as a result of your complaint.

The Chair of Governors will arrange for your complaint to be considered and investigated under the arrangements approved by the Governing Body. This is likely to involve a panel of governors. If the Chair of Governors or another governor has been involved in discussions to help settle the disagreement at Stage 1, s/he will arrange for another governor to take charge of the investigation. The governor in charge of investigating the complaint may ask to meet you to discuss your concerns.

You should make sure that the governors' complaint panel is provided with any written information or evidence you intend to use in a formal hearing. You may bring a friend, representative or

interpreter to any meeting if you wish. The chair of the panel may invite any person who may help establish the facts of the complaint. The chair will tell you who this person is before the meeting. If any member of staff is required by the Governing Body to attend a meeting they will have the opportunity to be accompanied or represented as they wish. A member of staff named in a complaint may also choose to attend a meeting, even if not required to do so by the governors. They may be represented. If this happens, we will inform you in advance.

When the panel has fully investigated your complaint, the chair of the panel or the governor in charge of the investigation will write to you to tell you the findings. These findings will be reported to the Governing Body. The Chair of Governors will then write to you confirming the outcome of your complaint and any agreed actions to be taken. Our Governing Body will aim to deal with your complaint **within 28 school days**.

### **Further recourse**

Most complaints are resolved by this process. Should your complaint not be resolved, your further options are as follows:

- You can complain to the Secretary of State at the Department for Education:

The Secretary of State  
Department for Education  
Sanctuary Buildings  
Great Smith Street  
London  
SW1P 3BT  
Website: [www.education.gov.uk](http://www.education.gov.uk)  
Telephone: 0370 000 2288

- In the case of complaints about **Special Educational Needs provision**, you may wish to complain further to the Local Authority. This should be done by writing to the Children's Services Complaints Manager.

It should be noted however that if you wish to pursue this route, you must do so within **20 working days** of receiving the written outcome of the hearing into your complaint. After **20 working days** neither the school nor the Local Authority is under any obligation to investigate or progress your complaint any further.

## Useful contacts

Advisory Centre for Education  
72 Durnsford Road,  
London  
N11 2EJ

Web: [www.ace-ed.org.uk](http://www.ace-ed.org.uk)  
Phone: 0300 0115 142

POhWER  
Hertlands House  
Primett Road  
Stevenage  
SG1 3EE

Web: [www.pohwer.net](http://www.pohwer.net)  
Phone: 0300 456 2370

Children's Legal Centre  
Wellington House  
4<sup>th</sup> Floor, 90-92 Butt Road  
Colchester  
Essex  
CO3 3DA  
Web: [www.childrenslegalcentre.com](http://www.childrenslegalcentre.com)  
Phone: 0345 345 4345

National Youth Advocacy Service  
Freepost - NYAS  
Tower House  
1 Tower Road  
Birkenhead  
Wirral  
CH41 1FF  
Web: [www.nyas.net](http://www.nyas.net)  
Phone: 0345 345 4345

SENDIASS (Special Educational Needs &  
Disability Information Advice Support Service)  
Registry Office Block CHR102  
County Hall  
Hertford, SG13 8DF

Web:  
<https://www.hertssendiass.org.uk/home.aspx>  
Phone: 01992 555847

Family Lives  
(Formerly Parentline Plus)  
15-17 The Broadway  
Hatfield  
Hertfordshire  
AL9 5HZ  
Web: [www.familylives.org.uk](http://www.familylives.org.uk)  
Phone: 0808 800 2222



**Formal Complaint Form**

<b>Name:</b>		
<b>Address:</b>		
<b>Postcode:</b>		
<b>Email address:</b>		
<b>Telephone No:</b>	<b>Day:</b>	
	<b>Evening:</b>	
	<b>Mobile:</b>	
<b>What is the nature of your complaint? (Please use additional sheets if needed)</b>		

<p><b>Have you raised your issue(s) with your child's Class Teacher at the informal stage? If so, when did you do this?</b></p>	<p><b>Yes (inc. date)</b></p>	<p><b>No</b></p>
<p><b>Have you complained to the Headteacher at Stage 1?</b></p>	<p><b>Yes (inc. date)</b></p>	<p><b>No</b></p>
<p><b>What happened when you complained to the Headteacher?</b></p>		
<p> </p>		
<p><b>What are your desired outcomes?</b></p>		
<p> </p>		
<p><b>Signed:</b></p>	<p> </p>	
<p><b>Date:</b></p>	<p> </p>	

Please return your completed complaint form to the Head's PA either by email at [headspa@nobel.herts.sch.uk](mailto:headspa@nobel.herts.sch.uk) or in hard copy format and it will be passed to the Headteacher or Chair of Governors, depending on what stage the complaint is at and what it is regarding.