

Cheadle Primary School



Compliments, Comments & Complaints Policy 2026/27

We believe that Cheadle Primary School provides an excellent education and that the Headteacher and the whole school staff team work very hard to build positive relationships with clear lines of communication with parents and others. The result of this is that complaints should be kept to a minimum.

However, we do recognise that all schools are required by law to have a complaints policy and this school will take any complaint seriously and deal with it professionally following set procedures.

This policy should help resolve problems and provide a means for issues of concern to be raised and subsequently addressed. All complainants will be treated respectfully during and after the course of any complaints investigation and will receive a written response to their complaint, unless appropriate and reasonable measures have been put in place as a result of the 'Persistent and/or Vexatious Complainants' policy set out below.

The school would also like to hear from you if you are happy with the service it provides and would like to compliment the staff and its pupils and/or if you have any suggestions about how the school can improve the quality of its provision.

Expressing Approval

When things go well, it is very helpful if parents express their approval. Maintenance of high levels of staff commitment, morale and motivation are essential to the provision of the best education for your child. Positive feedback really helps.

To express your approval you can write, telephone, e-mail or speak personally to staff concerned or the headteacher. Your words will be appreciated.

Expressing Concerns

Cheadle Primary School is committed to providing a high-quality education for your child. Sometimes things may seem to go wrong which may lead you to expressing concerns.

Expressing Concerns (Stage 1)

There are inevitably issues that arise that, if dealt with promptly and in a considerate manner, will avoid the need for a formal complaint. Any problem or concern should be raised promptly with the class teacher or member of staff responsible for the area you are concerned about. If your concern is more serious you may prefer to make an appointment to discuss it with the headteacher or a member of the school's leadership team. All staff will make every effort to resolve your problem promptly at this informal stage.

Formal Complaints

Formal procedures will be invoked when initial attempts to resolve the issue are unsuccessful and the person raising the concern remains dissatisfied and wishes to take the matter further. All details of a complaint will be kept confidential except in so far as they need to be shared with people who might contribute to their resolution. The complaint will be dealt with in line with the school's complaints procedure.

In most cases it will be your choice as to whether to mount a formal complaint, but the school reserves the right to utilise the formal complaint procedures where the school feels that 'informal' methods of resolving concerns have been exhausted but a complainant clearly remains dissatisfied.

It should be noted that some outcomes of a complaint may lead to action being initiated under other formal procedures, such as safeguarding or disciplinary matters. Where this is the case, you will be advised and informed of the procedures that are to be followed. It should be noted, however, that the school will not necessarily be able to provide you with the details of the outcome of those procedures for data protection reasons or otherwise, depending on the circumstances.

If a formal complaint is made to the school, you will be provided with a copy of this complaints policy. It is not a requirement that a formal complaint is made in writing, but the school will need to be clear what the complaint is about, and may therefore request clarification from you before investigating the complaint.

Please be aware that the school reserves the right not to review a complaint made by a complainant that has not been brought to the attention of the school within 8 weeks of the alleged incident occurring. However, the school will consider any complaint outside of that timescale in certain circumstances.

Stage 2 (Head Teacher or Chair of Governors)

It may be that the Headteacher has not been aware of the concern raised prior to this point. At this stage, the Headteacher will seek to investigate your concerns, as well as attempting to resolve the matter to the satisfaction of all concerned. This may involve having a discussion/meeting with you.

If the complaint is about the Headteacher, it will be considered by the Chair of Governors ("the Chair") at this stage. The Chair will seek to resolve the matter through discussion with the Headteacher and you. In doing so and, if considered appropriate, the Chair may wish to meet with you in person.

The school will endeavour to respond, in writing, to a Stage 2 complaint within 10 working days after receiving the complaint.

Where concerns cannot be resolved by the Headteacher (or the Chair if applicable) then you will be advised that details of your continuing concerns will be accepted either in writing or verbally and then referred to the Governing Board's Complaints Committee (**Stage 3**). The attached form **Appendix 1** may be used for this purpose if you wish, and it would also be useful if you were able to state what actions you feel might resolve the problem.

Stage 3 (Governing Board Complaints Committee)

If a complaint has been referred to a governing board complaints committee ("the Panel") then the Panel will arrange to meet to consider the complaint. The Panel will endeavour to provide you with a written response within 10 working days after the meeting.

Membership of the Panel will do their best to ensure that there is a cross-section of the different categories of governor to ensure impartiality. The Headteacher and Chair of Governors will not be members of this panel, which will elect its own chair, although one or both may be present at the meeting held to consider the complaint.

You will be given the opportunity to attend the complaints meeting to make representations in person, and you will have the right to bring a friend/family member or other supporter. The Panel will therefore meet at a time and a venue convenient to all parties. If you decide not to attend the complaints meeting, it may be held in your absence.

The Panel may request the services of a Clerk.

Governing Board Complaints Committee (the Panel) – Procedure

The Panel will want to ensure that the nature of the complaint is understood and, where possible, will seek to establish from you what actions you feel might resolve the problem. In helping to reach a conclusion, the Panel will seek to identify possible sources of information and advice to help collate the necessary evidence.

As indicated above, you will be given the opportunity to attend the complaints meeting and will have the right to bring a friend/family member or other supporter. In normal circumstances the Headteacher and/or Chair of Governors may also attend the meeting, but will not take any part in the decision-making process. A typical complaints meeting may adopt the following structure:

- The meeting will be as informal as possible.
- Witnesses may be required to attend but only for the part of the meeting in which they give their evidence.
- After introductions, you will be invited to explain your complaint, and you will be followed by your witnesses (if any).
- The Headteacher / Chair of Governors may ask questions of both you and your witnesses after each has spoken.
- The Headteacher / Chair of Governors will then be invited to explain the school's actions and will be followed by the school's witnesses.
- You may ask questions of both the Headteacher / Chair of Governors and the witnesses after each has spoken.
- The Panel may ask questions at any point.
- You will then be invited to sum up your complaint.

- The Headteacher / Chair of Governors will be invited to sum up the school's actions and response to the complaint.
- The panel chair will explain that both parties will hear from the Panel in writing within a set time scale.
- Both parties leave together while the panel remains to decide on the issues and reach a conclusion.

The above procedures for the complaints meeting may vary with the approval of all parties, for example you may wish to meet the Panel without the Headteacher being present. Where this is the case you should be aware that it will still be necessary for the Panel to meet with the Headteacher as part of the process.

Outcomes of Investigations

Whether the complaint has been investigated by the Headteacher, Chair of Governors or a complaints committee, a written response will be sent to you outlining the outcome of the investigation, detailing how the conclusion has been reached, and enclose a copy of the minutes. The letter will also tell you where to next take the complaint, if you are not satisfied with the response provided.

The Complaints Committee may reach the following conclusions:

- dismiss the complaint in whole or in part;
- uphold the complaint in whole or in part;
- decide on the appropriate action to be taken to resolve the complaint;
- recommend changes to the school's systems or procedures to ensure that problems of a similar nature do not recur

The aim of the investigation or review will always be to resolve the complaint and achieve reconciliation between you and the school. Nevertheless, it is acknowledged that sometimes you may not be satisfied with the outcome if matters are not found in your favour.

Persistent or Vexatious Complaints

You may remain dissatisfied despite all the procedures having been followed and reasonable responses being provided. It may be the case that it is not possible to resolve all your concerns and meet all your wishes. Sometimes it is preferable to 'agree to disagree' and move on.

If you do continue to make representations to the school on the same issues, the Governing Board reserves the right to inform you, in writing, that the appropriate procedures have all been followed, that all reasonable actions have been taken to try to resolve the issue and that the matter is now closed. Should you then write to the school again on the same issue (s), there is no obligation on the school to respond to you in that case.



CPS - COMPLIMENTS COMMENTS COMPLAINTS POLICY

Aspire, Believe, Achieve



Correspondence received from any complainant subsequent to closure will be kept on file, indefinitely, as will notes of telephone calls and any further personal calls referring to the matter.

The Role of Staffordshire County Council (Local Authority)

The Local Authority does not have a statutory duty to consider school complaints and you do not have a right of appeal to the Local Authority should you disagree with a decision of the governing board. You may, however, raise the matter with the Local Authority if you consider the complaint was not investigated properly or fairly. So long as the governing board followed a proper procedure and considered the complaint in a reasonable manner, then the Local Authority will simply inform you of that fact. It cannot reverse a decision of the governing board.

If you wish to raise the matter with the County Council then please contact:

complaints&customerfeedback@staffordshire.gov.uk

The role of the Secretary of State for Education (the Department for Education)

If you feel that the school has not followed the appropriate procedure, any relevant policies, or has failed to discharge a statutory duty, you may wish to refer your complaint to the Schools Complaints Unit (SCU) within the Department for Education at the address below:

The Schools Complaints Unit
Department for Education
2nd Floor Piccadilly Gate
Manchester
M1 2WD

Please note that the SCU will not re-investigate the substance of a complaint as this remains the responsibility of the governing body but, if legislative or policy breaches are found, SCU will report to the governing body and, if necessary, require it to take remedial action.

Our Values

Resilience Excellence Self-Awareness Positivity Empathy Communication Teamwork