

# ASTON HALL J & I SCHOOL

## Complaints Policy

### General Principles

- This procedure for is intended to allow you to raise a concern\* or complaint\*\* relating to the school, or the services that it provides.
- An anonymous concern or complaint will not be investigated under this procedure, unless there are exceptional circumstances.
- To allow for a proper investigation, concerns or complaints should be brought to the attention of the school as soon as possible. In general, any matter raised more than 3 months after the event, being complained of, will not be considered.

### Section A: Raising a concern

#### **Informal Stage**

It is normally appropriate to communicate directly with the member of staff or Head of School concerned. This may be by letter, by e-mail, by telephone or in person by appointment. Many concerns can be resolved by a simple clarification or the provision of relevant information and it is anticipated that most concerns will be resolved within 5 school days at this informal stage.

In the case of serious concerns it may be appropriate to address them directly to the Executive Head Teacher or to the Chair of the Governing Body, if the complaint is about the Executive Head Teacher.

If you are uncertain about who to contact, please seek advice from the school office or the Clerk to the Governing Body.

It is at this informal stage that the school will take the concerns expressed seriously and hope to resolve the issue in an informal way. The school will aim to discuss ways of resolving the issue with the

parent/carer concerned and ask the complainant what actions they think will help positively resolve the issue at hand.

*\*A concern is defined as an expression of worry or doubt over an issue considered too important for which reassurances are sought.*

*\*\*A complaint is defined as a concern that has not been resolved.*

## **Section B: Raising a complaint**

### **1. Formal Stage**

If your concern is not resolved at the informal stage you must put the complaint in writing and pass it to the Head of School, (or to the Clerk to the Governing Body, for the attention of the Chair of Governors, if the complaint is about the Head Teacher) who will be responsible for ensuring that it is investigated appropriately.

A Complaint Form is provided to assist you (attached).

You should include details which might assist the investigation, such as names of potential witnesses, dates and times of events, and copies of relevant documents.

It is very important that you include a clear statement of the actions that you would like the school to take to resolve your concern. Without this, it is much more difficult to proceed.

Please pass the completed form, in a sealed envelope to the Head Teacher, Head of School or to the Clerk to the Governing Body, as appropriate.

The Head Teacher may invite you to a meeting to clarify your concerns and to seek an informal resolution. If you accept that invitation, you may be accompanied by a friend, if you wish, to assist you in explaining the nature of your concerns.

It is possible that your complaint will be resolved through a meeting with the Head Teacher (or Chair of the Governing Body). If not arrangements will be made for the matter to be investigated, using the appropriate

procedures. In any case you should learn in writing, usually within a maximum of 3 school days of the school receiving your formal complaint, of how the school intends to proceed. This notification should include an indication of the anticipated timescale moving forward.

Any investigation will begin as soon as possible and when it has been concluded, you will be informed in writing of its conclusion within a maximum of 10 school days.

However, if the investigation is likely to take longer than expected, you will be kept well informed at every stage.

## **2. Review Process (Complaints Review Panel)**

Any such request for a review must be made in writing to the Clerk to the Governing Body, within 10 school days of receiving notice of the outcome of the formal complaint stage. It must include a statement that explains the reasons why you are not happy with the outcome of the investigation.

The procedure described below will be followed.

A Review Request form is provided for your convenience (attached).

Any review of the process followed by the school will be conducted by the Complaints Review Panel. This will usually take place within 20 school days of the receipt of your request and all parties will be given a minimum of 5 school days' notice of the meeting.

The review will normally be conducted through a consideration of written submissions, but reasonable requests to make oral representations will be considered sympathetically.

1. The Complaints Review Panel will be made up of; 2 members of the Governing Body (who were not involved in the initial investigation into the complaint) and 1 independent member (a Director of the Multi Academy Trust board) who is independent of the day-to-day management and running of the school.
2. Once again, you may be accompanied by a friend, if you wish, to assist you in explaining the nature of your complaint.
3. All parties will receive relevant written evidence from the complainant prior to the Complaints Review Panel meeting.

4. The complainant will have the opportunity to explain their complaint, the reasons why they are unhappy and what they think will help resolve their complaint.
5. The panel will then invite representatives of the school (usually the person that has investigated the complaint) to make a response in full to the complainant.
6. You, and the school representative[s], will be informed in writing of the Complaints Review Panel outcome, usually within 10 school days of the panel meeting.
7. The matter will then be closed as far as the school is concerned.

This procedure is also to be followed when regarding concerns/complaints around children with SEND needs regarding the level of support the school provides these children. In this instance, the SENDCo may also be involved in the procedure at an informal stage to support resolving the matter as quickly as possible. In all other ways, the process is identical.

If you believe that the Governing Body has acted illegally or arbitrarily in handling the complaint, you can contact the Council's Complaints Manager in Children and Young People's Services for further advice.

This will normally include advising you to refer your complaint to the DfE.  
Website: [www.education.gov.uk](http://www.education.gov.uk) Tel: 03700002288 Address:  
Department for Education, Castle View house, East Lane, Runcorn,  
Cheshire WA7 2GJ.

### **Recording a formal complaint**

At the formal stage of the process a written record will be kept of the complaint, along with summaries of discussions with staff. All records relating to the complaint will be kept confidential and will be kept only for monitoring purposes and submission to relevant authorities, if and when requested.

**Aston Hall J & I School**

**Complaint Form**

Please complete this form and return it to the Head Teacher (or Clerk to the Governing Body), who will acknowledge its receipt and inform you of the next stage in the procedure.

Your name: .....

Relationship with school [ eg. parent /carer of a pupil on the schools roll ]:

.....

Child's name [ if relevant to your complaint ]:

.....

Your Address:

Daytime telephone number: .....

Evening telephone number: .....

Mobile .....

E mail address.....

Please give concise details of your complaint, [including dates, names of witnesses etc...], to allow the matter to be fully investigated:

You may continue on separate paper, or attach additional documents, if you wish.

Number of Additional pages attached =

What action, if any, have you already taken to try to resolve your complaint? [i.e. who have you spoken with or written to and what was the outcome?]

What actions do you feel might resolve the problem at this stage?

Signature:

Date:

School use:

Date Form received:

Received by:

Date acknowledgement sent:

Acknowledgement sent by:

Complaint referred to:			
Date:			

Aston Hall J & I School  
Complaint Review Request Form

Please complete this form and return it to the Head Teacher (or Clerk to the Governing Body), who will acknowledge its receipt and inform you of the next stage in the procedure.

Your name: .....

Your Address:

Daytime telephone number: .....

Evening telephone number: .....

Mobile .....

E mail .....

Dear Sir

I submitted a formal complaint to the school on ..... and am dissatisfied by the procedure that has been followed.

My complaint was submitted to ..... and I received a response from ..... on .....

I have attached copies of my formal complaint and of the response[s] from the school.

I am dissatisfied with the way in which the procedure was carried out, because:

You may continue on separate paper, or attach additional documents, if you wish.

Number of Additional pages attached =

What actions do you feel might resolve the problem at this stage?

Signature:

Date:

School use

Date Form received:

Received by:

Date acknowledgement sent:

Acknowledgement sent by:

Request referred to:			
Date:			