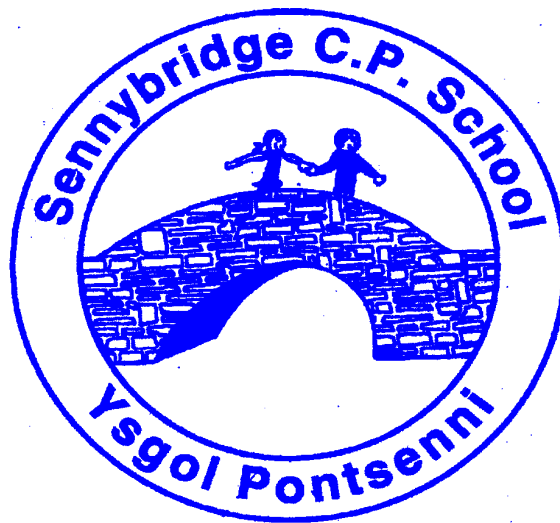


Sennybridge School Ysgol Pontsenni

Complaints Policy



This policy reflects the practice and consensus of opinion of the whole teaching staff and has the full agreement of the governing body.

COMPLAINTS POLICY

Introduction The Governing Body recognises that it is important that concerns and complaints are dealt with appropriately and aims to ensure that if you have a concern or complaint it is taken seriously and is dealt with quickly, fairly and thoroughly. In order to do this the Governing Body has adopted the policy and procedures set out below.

In setting out this policy and procedure the Governing Body has had regard to the Welsh assembly Government Circular 03/2004, 'School Governing Bodies Complaints Procedures' and guidance document no 011/2012.

However, because unjustified complaints can be distressing to all parties the Governing Body would encourage you initially to see whether your concern can be addressed without recourse to the complaints procedures.

Dealing with a concern If you have a concern about something which you think is happening, or not happening, in school, you are encouraged to take this up informally with a teacher, The Head Teacher, The Chair of Governors, or with who will usually be able to resolve your concern immediately, rather than use this procedure. However this policy and procedure is in place for you to use if your concern is not resolved informally, or the matter is more serious.

What is a complaint? Our definition of a complaint is a formal expression of dissatisfaction, however made, about the standard of services, facilities or activities, or actions or lack of action, by the School or its staff, affecting an individual or group.

The following are not complaints:

- A request for a service
- A request for information or explanation of a policy or practice
- Matters for which there is a right of appeal or a legal remedy
- Matters appropriate to be dealt with under other procedures.

What complaints can be dealt with under these procedures? General complaints about issues within school, or activities, facilities or services offered by the school to the wider community can be dealt with under these procedures. The school and the LA must follow other procedures for complaints about:-

- the curriculum
- the level of special educational needs provision
- exclusions
- collective worship
- child protection

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- staff disciplinary action
- criminal matters
- admissions
- school transport provision
- harassment and bullying
- whistle blowing

We will advise you if your complaint should be dealt with under one of these separate arrangements.

Staff will need to follow the Grievance Procedure for any complaints about their personal treatment. If your complaint is about a Child Protection issue then it will be dealt with under the All Wales Child Protection Procedures. In some cases a complaint may lead to disciplinary action against a member of staff and there is a separate procedure that needs to be followed by the school in dealing with disciplinary matters. If disciplinary action is taken you will not be told the details of this because of the employment rules on confidentiality, however, you will be informed when the matter has been resolved.

Who can complain? Pupil, parents, staff, members of the local community, governors and others.

Who should you complain to? The Governing Body have appointed a Complaints Officer who will deal with all complaints in the first instance and all complaints should be addressed to the Complaints Officer in the first instance. If the complaint is about the Complaints Officer then the complaint should be addressed to the Headteacher in the first instance. Whether your complaint is made verbally or in writing we will acknowledge all complaints in writing in order to ensure that we are clear about the nature of your complaint, what has happened so far, who has been involved, what remains unresolved.

Publication and Review The Governing Body will review this policy at least annually and will update it in accordance with changes in legislation and other policies. The Governing Body will make copies of this policy available to all parents, pupils, staff, governors, the LEA, the Diocesan Authority (where appropriate) and all those who request a copy, in accordance with the school's Freedom of Information Publication Scheme, and will publish a summary in the school prospectus.

Confidentiality Complaints will be dealt with confidentially, with information being provided only to those who need to know the details in order to resolve the complaint.

Timetable All complaints will be dealt with as soon as possible. We will aim to acknowledge all complaints in writing within 3 school days of receipt where possible. We aim usually, to have dealt with all complaints within a period of no longer than 20 school days. Where there are particularly complex issues that may take longer to investigate we will keep you informed of progress and deal with them as quickly as we can. Where a Governing Body Complaints Committee is called we will aim to convene this as soon as possible and usually within no longer than 15 school days of the notification of the requirement.

Anonymous complaints We will not investigate or record anonymous complaints except where these contain an allegation of a child protection or criminal nature. We shall pass these to the appropriate body to consider.

Malicious complaints Complainants are reminded that documentation relating to the complaint will be made available to any person against whom a complaint is made, in order that they may answer the complaint. A person who is the subject of a complaint may exercise their right to representation or legal action where appropriate.

Complaints which are withdrawn we shall acknowledge these in writing and record them.

Recording, Reporting and Monitoring We shall keep a record of all complaints including withdrawn complaints.

The record will include:

- Name of the complainant
- Date complaint first received
- Date acknowledged
- A brief description of the complaint
- Date of withdrawal of the complaint (if appropriate)
- Whether the complaint was investigated
- The outcome of the investigation (at each stage of the procedure)
- Date of notification to the complainant of the outcome of the investigation
- Any issues for action by the school/staff/Governors
- Action taken/to be taken as a result of the investigation
- Full account of the proceedings, evidence and documentation, and record of the outcome of any hearing by the Complaints Committee
- Date of notification to complainant of outcome of Complaints Committee
- Action taken/to be taken as a result of Complaints Committee

The Complaints Officer will provide the headteacher with a report for the Governing Body summarising numbers of complaints, issues and key trends identified in complaints. The Governing Body will ensure that issues for action identified as a result of a complaint are implemented.

Data Protection The information provided to us during the investigation of a complaint will be used solely for the purpose of dealing with the complaint or any appeal and will not be passed to anyone other than those directly concerned with the issue. If your complaint is about the delivery of the service we may need to disclose the information you provide to the person delivering the service in order to deal with it properly. If your complaint is about a person we will disclose the information to that person in order that they are able to respond to the complaint. We may be required to disclose the records to the LA, or the Welsh Assembly Government, if they are required to audit the procedure. The record may also be inspected by Estyn under Section 10 of the School Inspections Act.

Retention of Documentation We shall retain all documentation in relation to complaints on a confidential file until all aspects of the procedure, including any investigation by the LEA and the Welsh assembly Government, is completed. Unless the Governing Body has been notified of an appeal to the LA or to the Welsh Assembly Government it will destroy all documentation other than the record of the complaint after 6 weeks. Thereafter we shall retain only the record of the complaint which will be retained, usually for a maximum period of 3 years.

How to obtain advice, support and guidance There are a number of avenues open to parents, pupils, staff and governors to obtain advice and support if they have concerns about issues in school. These include

- The Headteacher
- The Chairman of the Governing Body
- Trade Union representatives (at either local or regional level).
 - The LEA
 - The Welsh Assembly Government

Date: May 2019