



Complaints Procedure 2025-26

1. Introduction

Dorchester Primary School is committed to providing the highest standard of education and care. We recognise that, from time to time, parents or members of the community may have concerns. This procedure explains how concerns and complaints can be raised, how they will be handled, and the steps available if the issue is not resolved.

2. Aims

- To deal with concerns and complaints promptly, fairly and professionally.
- To ensure complaints are handled in a transparent, non-adversarial way.
- To support mutual understanding and resolution at the earliest possible stage.
- To ensure children's needs remain at the centre of the process.

3. Definitions

Concern: An issue raised informally with staff, usually resolved quickly.

Complaint: A formal expression of dissatisfaction requiring a formal response.

4. Who Can Make a Complaint

Anyone, including parents, carers, members of the public, or former pupils, may raise a complaint. Complaints may be made in person, by phone, in writing, or by email.

5. Time Limits

Complaints should normally be raised within three months of the event.

6. Equal Access

If a complainant needs additional support, the school will provide reasonable assistance.

7. Stages of the Procedure

Stage 1 – Informal Resolution

Raise the concern with the class teacher or relevant staff member as soon as possible. Most issues can be resolved at this stage. The school aims to resolve informal concerns within 10 school days.

Stage 2 – Formal Complaint to the Headteacher

Submit a Formal Complaint Form or email marked 'Formal Complaint'. The Headteacher will acknowledge within 5 school days and reply within 20 school days following investigation. If the complaint is about the Headteacher, write to the Chair of Governors.

Stage 3 – Review by the Governing Board's Complaints Panel

If dissatisfied, the complainant may request a review within 15 school days. A hearing will be held within 25 school days. A written outcome will normally follow within 10 school days.

8. Next Steps: Department for Education

Complainants may refer the matter to the DfE if they believe the school has acted unlawfully or failed to follow statutory duties.

9. Recording and Monitoring

The school keeps a confidential record of all formal complaints and reports anonymised themes to governors.

10. Serial or Unreasonable Complaints

The school may apply reasonable measures to manage persistent or unreasonable complainants.

11. Confidentiality

Information will be handled sensitively and in line with GDPR.

12. Policy Review

This procedure will be reviewed annually by the Governing Board.