
We care about what you think

How to make a complaint

Each day this school makes many decisions and tries hard to do the best for all the children. 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 able to contact us using the details listed on the front page.

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.

For full details, please see our Complaints Procedure – a copy is available from the school website or from the school office.

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 come in and discuss it with the class teacher or another appropriate member of Staff, *e.g.* the SENCo (Mrs Summers) if it is about Special Educational Needs.

We know that it can feel uncomfortable to question or challenge, 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 first person you talk to cannot help you, make an appointment with the school office to speak with the Headteacher (Ms Adams).

You should be able to sort out your worries informally but sometimes this is not possible. In this case there is a next step.

First formal stage

Request a formal meeting with the Headteacher, who will investigate your complaint and aim to inform you of the outcome **within 10 school days (2 weeks)**.

If your complaint is about the Headteacher, you should **write to the Chair of Governors** (Mr Jarmo Kesanto).

Second formal stage

If you remain dissatisfied following Stage 1 and wish to take your complaint further, you will be asked to complete a form 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 should 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 should 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, 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
Telephone: 0370 000 2288

Advisory Centre for Education

72 Durnsford Road
London
N11 2EJ
www.ace-ed.org.uk
Phone: **0300 0115 142**

Children's Legal Centre

Riverside Office Centre
Century House North
North Station Road
Colchester
CO1 1RE
www.childrenslegalcentre.com
Phone: **0345 345 4345**

SENDIASS (formerly Parent Partnership)

Registry Office Block
CHR102
County Hall
Hertford
SG13 8DF
www.hertsdirect.org/parentpartnership
Email: parent.partnership@hertfordshire.gov.uk
Phone: **01992 555847**

Family Lives (formerly Parentline Plus)

15-17 The Broadway
Hatfield
Hertfordshire
AL9 5HZ
www.familylives.org.uk
Phone: **0808 800 2222**

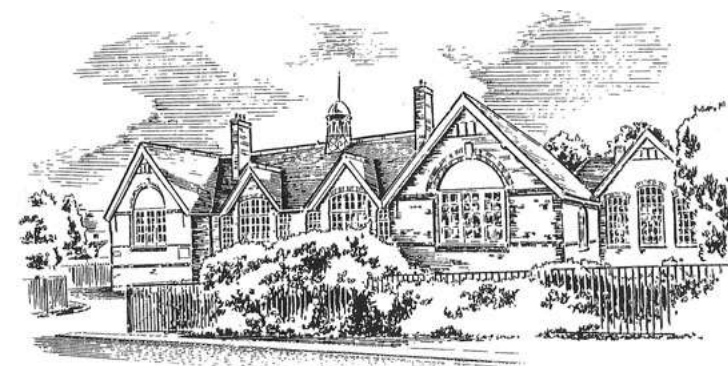
POhWER

Hertlands House
Primett Road
Stevenage
SG1 3EE
www.pohwer.net
Phone: **0300 456 2370**

National Youth Advocacy Service

Egerton House
Tower Road
Birkenhead
Wirral
CH41 1FN
www.nyas.net
Phone: **0808 808 1001**

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Merry Hill Infant School & Nursery

School Lane
Bushey
WD23 1ST

Phone: 020 8950 2166
Email: admin@merryhill.herts.sch.uk
Website: www.merryhill.org.uk