



LONGWORTH UNDENOMINATIONAL PRIMARY SCHOOL POLICY DOCUMENT		
<b>Complaints Procedure</b>		Policy No: LPS-10 Issue No: 02
Next Review Date:	October 2018	Date: October 2017

**Introduction**

1. Governors of Longworth Undenominational School have adopted the following procedure to deal with formal complaints from members of the school community or general public about appropriate matters relevant to the running of the school. This procedure is to be used only when informal attempts to resolve problems have been unsuccessful.

**2. Framework of Principles**

- This procedure is designed to:
- be well publicised and easily accessible
  - be simple to understand and use
  - be impartial
  - be non-adversarial
  - allow swift handling with established time limits for action and keeping people informed of the progress
  - ensure a fair investigation by an independent person, where necessary
  - allow for a hearing of a panel of Governors, where appropriate
  - respect people’s desire for confidentiality, wherever possible
  - address all points of issue, provide an effective response and appropriate redress where necessary
  - provide information to the school’s Senior Management Team so that services can be improved.

**3. Informal Complaints**

Informal complaints are made either directly to the class teacher or to the head teacher. A record of these will be kept by the head teacher and monitored by the chair of governors

**4. Making a Formal Complaint**

**Stage 1**

Where informal attempts have been unsuccessful in resolving a complaint, the matter will be formally investigated by an appropriate person from the school. If the matter is about the day-to-day running of the school or the interpretation of school policies, by members of staff of the school or the actions or inactions of staff at the school, the matter should be investigated by the headteacher or a member of senior staff nominated by the headteacher. If the matter is about

school policies as determined by the Governing Body or the actions or inactions of the Governing Body, then the matter should be dealt with by the Chair of Governors or Governor nominated by the Chair.

A complainant wishing to instigate the formal procedure should be asked to complete a complaint form (Annex 1). The school should offer to help an individual to complete the form and the person providing this help should be unconnected with the complaint. It is essential to report the progress of any complaint and the final outcome. It is necessary that at each stage, the person investigating the complaint (the designated person) makes sure that they:

- establish what has happened so far, and who has been involved;
- clarify the nature of the complaint and what remains unresolved
- meet with the complainant or contact them (if unsure or further information is necessary);
- clarify what the complainant feels would put things right.
- interview those involved in the matter and/or those complained of allowing them to be accompanied if they wish;
- conduct the interview with an open mind and be prepared to persist in the questioning;
- keep notes of the interview.

## **5. Resolving the Complaint**

At each stage in the procedure, schools will want to keep in mind ways in which a complaint can be resolved. It might be sufficient to acknowledge that the complaint is valid in whole or in part. In addition, it may be appropriate to offer one or more of the following:

- an apology;
- an explanation;
- an admission that the situation could have been handled differently or better;
- an assurance that the event complained of will not recur;
- an explanation of the steps that have been taken to ensure that it will not happen again;
- an undertaking to review school policies in light of the complaint.

It would be useful if complainants were encouraged to state what actions they feel might resolve the problem at any stage. An admission that the school could have handled the situation better is not the same as an admission of negligence. Equally, an effective procedure will identify areas of agreement between the parties. It is also of importance to clarify any misunderstandings that might have occurred as this can create a positive atmosphere in which to discuss any outstanding issues.

If the school rejects the complaint, it is important to re-assure the complainant that the matter has been thoroughly investigated.

## **6. Stage 2**

Where the complainant is still not satisfied that their complaint has been dealt with fully and properly, they may choose to take it to a second stage. This stage will be referred to a panel of Governors established as outlined in Annex 2.

The Chair of the Panel will be elected by the Panel members and will be responsible for maintaining a further procedure as outlined in Annex 2.

## **7. Timescale**

Complaints need to be considered and resolved, as quickly and efficiently as possible. An effective complaints procedure must have realistic time limits for each action within each stage. However, where further investigations are necessary, new time limits can be set and the complainant sent details of the new deadline and an explanation for the delay.

## **8. Mediation**

If, at any time, throughout the procedure from informal to the final decision of the Panel, the school feels that external mediation would help resolve the complaint, they can access consultancy advice with the School Development Service (SDS). This procedure can only be used with the agreement of the complainant.

## **9. Monitoring Complaints**

As well as addressing an individual's complaint, the process of listening to and resolving complaints would contribute to school improvements. When individual complaints are heard, schools may identify issues that need to be addressed. The monitoring and review of complaints by the school and Governing Body can be useful to evaluating the school's performance. Any discussion of complaints by the Governing Body or others in the school community should not name or be able to identify individuals.

The Governing Body of Longworth Primary School adopted this policy on 10<sup>th</sup> October 2013 following consultation with staff and representatives of the recognised trade unions.

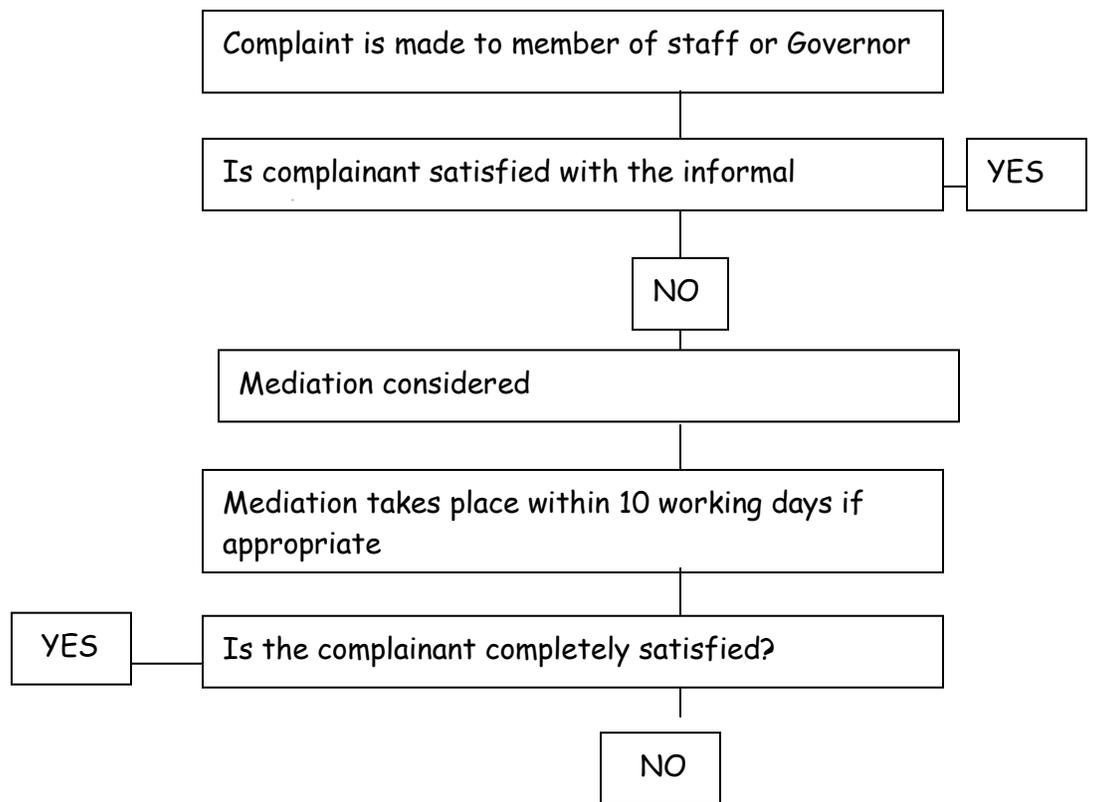
## **Change & approval**

Details of Changes:

Approval:

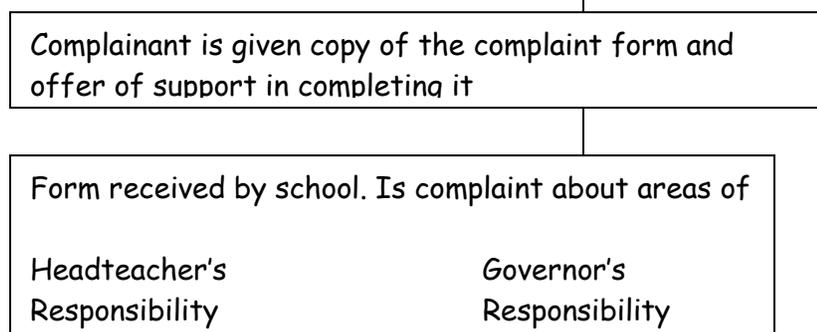
Approved by:	Signature:	Date:
<b>Headteacher</b> Neil Wilson		
<b>Chair of Governors</b> Stuart Warwick		

**Informal**

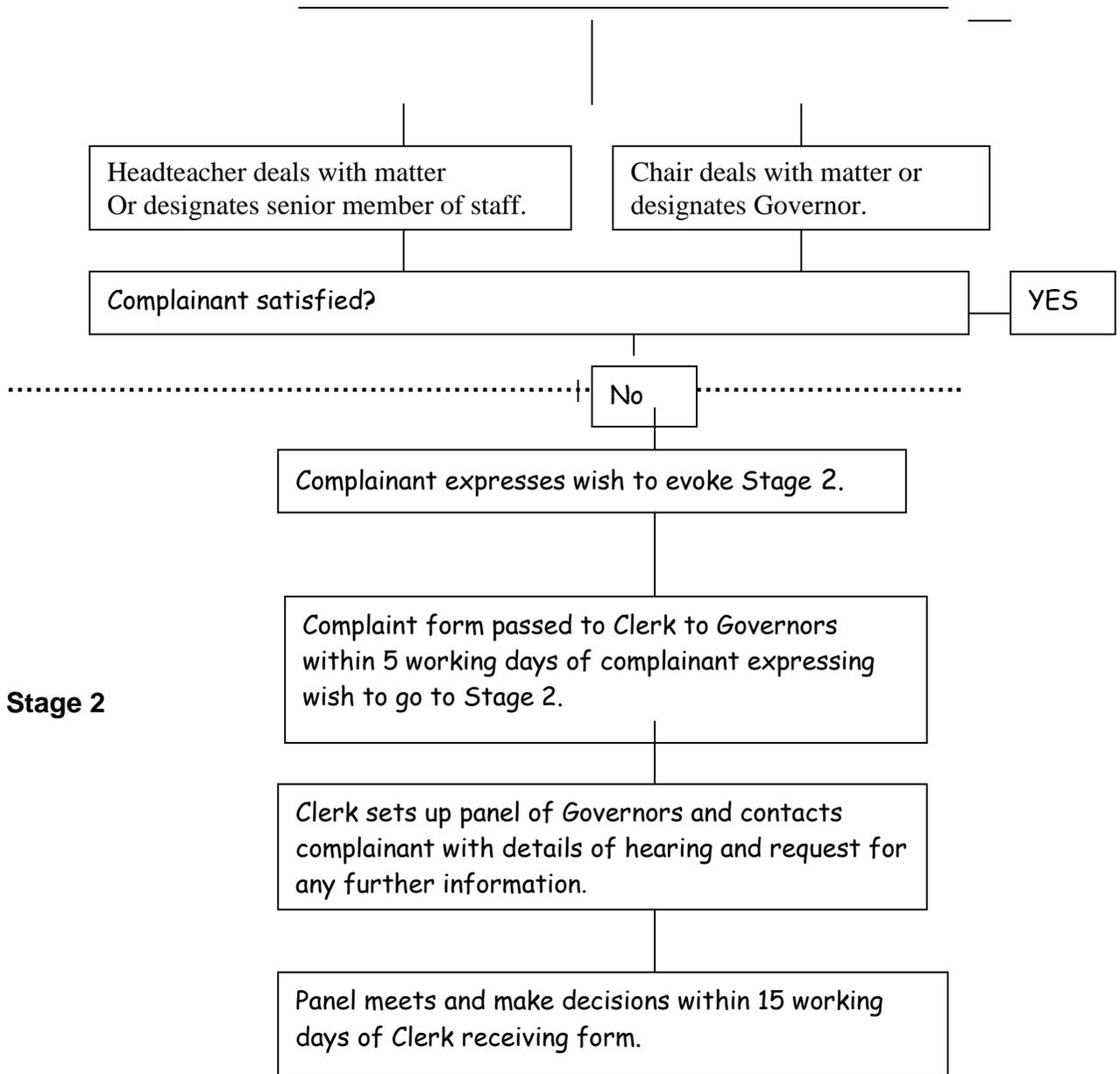


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**Stage 1**



See Annex 2



**Annex 1:**

Date form received:

Date response sent:

Received by:

Response sent by:

**Longworth Primary School: formal complaint form**

Please complete this form, and return it to the school office or to the head teacher who will acknowledge its receipt and inform you of the next stage of the procedure.

Your name:

Relationship with school (eg parent of a pupil on the school roll):

Pupil's name (if relevant to your complaint):

Your address:

Telephone numbers

Daytime:

Evening:

Email 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? (ie 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:

Date acknowledgement sent:

Received by:

Acknowledgement sent by:

## Notes

This form can be used by any person making a complaint about the operation of the school which is not covered by an alternative specific procedure. Complaints will most often come from parents or carers but may also come from pupils/students or members of the public, e.g. school neighbours. Anyone receiving this form should be advised verbally that help in completing it is available from the school. A member of school staff who is familiar with the process will be nominated to give help. If it is appropriate for a member of staff to look into this complaint, it will be returned to the headteacher. If it is appropriate that it should be dealt with by a Governor, it should be returned to the Clerk to the Governors at the school.

General complaints about the County Council's services should be directed to the Director of the Children, Young People & Families Directorate, Macclesfield House, New Road, Oxford.

