



UPTON-BY-CHESTER HIGH SCHOOL COMPLAINTS POLICY AND PROCEDURE

Section 1 AIM OF THE COMPLAINTS POLICY AND PROCEDURE

Upton-by-Chester High School is committed to providing, at all times, a level of service that is friendly, efficient and customer focused. Whilst wishing to provide the highest possible standards of service and care we acknowledge that things might go wrong from time to time. On the occasions that this may happen we aim to:

- Ensure making a complaint is as easy and straightforward as possible.
- Treat all complaints seriously and confidentially.
- Resolve the problem quickly, effectively and, where possible, to the satisfaction of the complainant.
- Fully explain in our response why things went wrong and apologise if we accept that we are at fault.
- Learn from the complaint, so improving the service for the future.

Types of complaints

The type of complaint we may receive could include dissatisfaction with:

- The level or quality of service, and the failure to achieve the required standard of service.
- The way in which Upton-by-Chester High School has reached a decision, or with the action taken in implementing that decision
- The administrative process in handling any student issues
- The attitude or behaviour of a student.
- The attitude or behaviour of a school employee.

There are three stages to the complaints procedures:

Stage One – complaint heard informally by the members of staff involved (though not if they are the subject of the complaint)

Stage Two – Complaint is heard by the Headteacher

Stage Three – Complaint is heard by the Governors Complaints Appeal Panel

Vexatious Complaints

The school complaints procedure is designed to limit the number of complaints that become protracted. However, there will be occasions when, despite all stages of the procedures having been followed, the complainant remains dissatisfied. If the complainant tries to re-open the same issue, the Chair of the Governing Body is able to inform them in writing that the procedure has been exhausted and that the matter is now closed.



Time-Limits

Complaints will be considered, and resolved, as quickly and efficiently as possible. The complaints procedure will have realistic time limits, agreed with the complainant, for each action within each stage. Where further investigations are necessary new time limits can be set and the complainant given an explanation for the delay.

Section Two – MAKING A COMPLAINT

Stage One - Informal Complaint/Concern

We encourage the complainant to communicate directly with the member of staff concerned (unless the complaint is about that individual – see stage 2). This may be in person, by telephone or in writing. The member of staff will try to deal with the issues quickly and informally and will endeavour respond to you as soon as possible. Should this course of action be inappropriate or you are not satisfied with the response you can make a formal complaint.

Stage Two - Formal Complaint

If you are not satisfied with the informal response you can put your complaint in writing and email or post it to:

The Headteacher
Upton-by-Chester High School
St James Avenue
Upton
Chester
CH2 1NN

Email: admin@uptonhigh.co.uk

Once your complaint has been received we will contact you, within five school days, to acknowledge receipt. The complainant should include the following details which may assist the investigation:

- Dates and times of events.
- Provide names of potential witnesses.
- Copies of any relevant documents.

The Headteacher may wish to meet with the complainant to clarify some aspects of the complaint or obtain more details. If this is the case the PA to the Headteacher will make the arrangements.

The Headteacher will then:

- Consider all the issues, taking into account any additional information you may have provided;



- Make a decision based on these circumstances; and
- Write to you within 28 school days to tell you what they have decided. (The 28 day period starts on the first school day following receipt of your formal complaint – weekends, bank holidays and school holidays do not count as school days.)

If it is not possible to give you a full response within the 28 school days, we will write to you to explain why there will be a delay and when you can expect a full reply.

Stage Three – Governors Complaints Appeal Panel

If you are not satisfied with the response you have received from the Headteacher you should write to The Chair of Governors. Any such request must be made in writing within two weeks of receiving notice of the outcome from the Headteacher and include a statement specifying any perceived failures to follow the procedure.

We will write to you to acknowledge receipt of your appeal within five school days. The Chair of Governors may appoint a member of the governing body to investigate the complaints. A full reply will be sent within 28 school days. If it is not possible to give you a full response within this time, we will write to you to explain why there will be a delay and when you can expect a full reply

Section 3 COMPLAINT ABOUT THE HEADTEACHER

Informal Stage

The complainant is usually expected to arrange to speak directly with the Headteacher. Many concerns can be resolved by simple clarification or the provision of information. If the matter is not resolved, if both parties agree, then a third party may be invited to act as a mediator at a further meeting. A refusal, unreasonably, to attempt an informal resolution may result in the procedure being terminated forthwith. In the case of serious concerns it may be appropriate for the complainant to raise the complaint directly with the Chair of Governors.

Formal Stage

If the complaint is not resolved at the informal stage the complainant must put the complaint in writing and pass it to the Chair of Governors.

If you are making a formal complaint about the Headteacher you can put your complaint in writing and email or post it to:

Chair of Governors
c/o Upton-by-Chester High School
St James Avenue
Upton
Chester
CH2 1NN

Email: gov@uptonhigh.co.uk



The complainant should include the following details which may assist the investigation:

- Dates and times of events.
- Provide names of potential witnesses.
- Copies of any relevant documents.

Once your complaint has been received the clerk to the governing body will contact you, within five school days, to acknowledge receipt. The Chair of Governors will send a full reply within 28 school days. If it is not possible to give you a full response within this time, they will write to you to explain why there will be a delay and when you can expect a full reply.

Section 4 – REVIEW PROCESS

If you are not satisfied with the manner in which the process has been followed, or consider that the decision of the Headteacher or Chair is perverse, or that the Headteacher or Chair has acted unreasonably in considering the complaint, then the complainant may request that the Governing Body review the handling of the complaint. Any such request must be made in writing within 10 school days of receiving notice of the outcome from the Headteacher or Chair, and include a statement specifying any perceived failures.

Review Process

Any review of the process followed by the Headteacher or the Chair shall be conducted by a panel of three members of the Governing Body.

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

The panel will first receive written evidence from the complainant.

The panel will then invite the Headteacher or the Chair, as appropriate, to make a response to the complaint.

The panel may also have access to the records kept of the process followed.

The complainant, and the Headteacher or the Chair, as appropriate, will be informed in writing of the outcome. This may be to the effect that:

- There is insufficient evidence to reach a conclusion, so the complaint cannot be upheld
- The concern is not substantiated by the evidence
- The concern was substantiated in part or in full but that the procedural failure did not affect the outcome significantly so the matter is now closed.



If you are still not satisfied with the outcome

From 1 August 2012 complaints about maintained schools not resolved by the school that would have been considered by the Local Government Ombudsman or the local authority should be addressed to the Secretary of State for Education:

ministers@education.gsi.gov.uk

Tel: 020 7925 5065

Or visit the website: <https://www.gov.uk/complain-about-school>

Ofsted

Ofsted has limited legal powers to consider complaints about schools. Please visit the website below to see what complaints Ofsted can deal with.

<https://contact.ofsted.gov.uk/online-complaints-schools>

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