


Littleover Community School



and Sixth Form Centre

Complaints Policy January 2026

School Leader	L Johnson		
Link Governor	B. Scanlon		
Policy approved on (date):		21/01/2026	
By:	Governing Board	Signed:	
Last reviewed on:		October 2025	
By:	L Johnson	Signed:	
Date of next review:		01/10/2026	

Contents

Littleover Community School complaints procedure	2
Who can make a complaint?	2
The difference between a concern and a complaint	2
How to raise a concern or make a complaint.....	3
Audio or Video evidence	4
Anonymous complaints	4
Third party complaints / Hearsay.....	4
Time scales.....	4
Complaints received outside of term time.....	4
Scope of this Complaints Procedure	5
Withdrawal of a Complaint	6
Resolution at a local level	6
Stage 1	7
Stage 2	9
Stage 3	10
Complaint Form	12
Roles and Responsibilities	14
Complainant	14
Investigator.....	14
Complaints Co-ordinator.....	15
Clerk to the Governing Body.....	15
Committee Chair	15
Committee Member	16
Serial and unreasonable complaints	18
Complaint Campaigns.....	19
Next Steps	19
Appendix A	20
Appendix B- Concern and Complaints Process.....	21

Littleover Community School complaints procedure

Littleover Community School aims to meet its statutory obligations when responding to complaints from parents/carers of pupils at the school, and others.

When responding to complaints, we aim to:

- Be impartial and non-adversarial
- Facilitate a full and fair investigation by an independent person or panel, where necessary
- Address all the points at issue and provide an effective and prompt response
- Respect complainants' desire for confidentiality
- Treat complainants with respect and courtesy
- Make sure that any decisions we make are lawful, rational, reasonable, fair and proportionate, in line with the principles of administrative law
- Keep complainants informed of the progress of the complaints process
- Consider how the complaint can feed into school improvement evaluation processes

We try to resolve concerns by informal means wherever possible. Where this is not possible, the formal complaints procedures will be followed.

This document meets the requirements of section 29 of the [Education Act 2002](#), which states that schools must have and make available a procedure to deal with all complaints relating to their school and to any community facilities or services that the school provides.

It is also based on [guidance for schools on complaints procedures](#) from the Department for Education (DfE), including the model procedures for complaints and for managing serial and unreasonable complaints.

Who can make a complaint?

This complaints procedure is not limited to parents or carers of children that are registered at the school. Any person, including members of the public, may make a complaint to [Littleover Community School](#) about any provision of facilities or services that we provide. Unless complaints are dealt with under separate statutory procedures (refer to 'scope' section below), we will use this complaints procedure.

The difference between a concern and a complaint

A concern may be defined as '*an expression of worry or doubt over an issue considered to be important for which reassurances are sought*'.

A complaint may be defined as '*an expression of dissatisfaction, however made, about actions taken or a lack of action*'.

It is in everyone's interest that concerns and complaints are resolved at the earliest possible stage. Many issues can be resolved informally, without the need to use the formal stages of the complaints procedure. [Littleover Community School](#) takes concerns seriously and will make every effort to resolve the matter as quickly as possible.

If you have difficulty discussing a concern with a particular member of staff, we will respect your views. In these cases, [The Headteacher](#) will refer you to another staff member. Similarly, if the member of staff directly involved feels unable to deal with a concern, [The Headteacher](#) will refer you to another staff member. The member of staff may be more senior but does not have to be. The ability to consider the concern objectively and impartially is more important.

We understand however, that there are occasions when people would like to raise their concerns formally. In this case, [Littleover Community School](#) will attempt to resolve the issue internally, through the stages outlined within this complaints procedure.

How to raise a concern or make a complaint

Concerns or complaints should initially be discussed informally with the relevant school employee or representative, e.g. the Curriculum Coordinator or Form Tutor, with a view to resolving the issue.

A concern or complaint can be made in person, in writing, by email or by telephone. They may also be made by a third party acting on behalf of a complainant, as long as they have appropriate consent to do so.

Concerns should be raised with either the relevant teacher or Headteacher. If the issue remains unresolved, the next step would then be to make a formal complaint.

Complainants should not approach individual Governors to raise concerns or complaints. Governors have no power to act on an individual basis and it may also prevent them from considering complaints at Stages 2 & 3 of the procedure.

Complaints against school staff (except the Headteacher) should be made in the first instance, to [The Headteacher](#). Please mark them as Private and Confidential.

Complaints that involve or are about¹ the Headteacher should be addressed to [The Chair of Governors](#) via the [Clerk to Governors \(Clerk@Littleover.derby.sch.uk\)](mailto:Clerk@Littleover.derby.sch.uk). If posted to the school address please mark them as Private and Confidential.

Complaints about the Chair of Governors, any individual governor or the whole Governing body should be addressed to the Clerk to Governors. Please mark them as Private and Confidential.

For ease of use, a template Complaint Form is included at the end of this procedure. If you require help in completing the form, please contact the school office. You can also ask third party organisations like the Citizens Advice to help you.

In accordance with equality law, we will consider making reasonable adjustments if required, to enable complainants to access and complete this complaints procedure. For instance, providing information in alternative formats, assisting complainants in raising a formal complaint or holding meetings in accessible locations.

¹ This is not intended to include where the Headteacher has been involved for the purposes of attempting to resolve the complaint prior to stage 1.

Audio or Video evidence

Complainants should ensure that they obtain informed consent from all parties prior to recording conversations or meetings. Where obtained, the consent should be re-confirmed once recording has commenced.

We do not normally accept electronic, **or covert**, recordings as evidence when we are asked to consider a complaint. However, we may accept independently notarised transcriptions of recordings. We may also ask for the written consent of all recorded parties.

Anonymous complaints

We will not normally investigate anonymous complaints. However, the Headteacher or Chair of Governors, if appropriate, will determine whether the complaint warrants an investigation.

Third party complaints / Hearsay

A concern or complaint raised by an individual who themselves or their child is not directly involved or has not directly observed the events that are within the scope of the complaint is classed as a third party complaint.

In these circumstances the complainant must be prepared to provide a sufficient level of detail for the school to properly investigate. The complainant should also be aware that the school has an obligation to respect the confidentiality of parties directly involved in the events in question and thus may not be able to disclose details to third party complainants.

Time scales

You must raise the complaint within three months of the incident or, where a series of associated incidents have occurred, within three months of the last of these incidents. We will consider complaints made outside of this time frame if exceptional circumstances apply.

If at any point we cannot meet the timescales we have set out in this policy, we will:

- Set new time limits with the complainant
- Send the complainant details of the new deadline and explain the delay

Please note, that references to “days” refers to school days only, unless otherwise specified. Therefore, this time scale excludes bank holidays, in-service training days and the school holidays.

Complaints received outside of term time

We will consider complaints made outside of term time to have been received on the first school day after the holiday period.

Scope of this Complaints Procedure

This procedure covers all complaints about any provision of community facilities or services by [Littleover Community School](#), other than complaints that are dealt with under other statutory procedures, including those listed below.

Exceptions	Who to contact
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Admissions Statutory assessments of Special Educational Needs School re-organisation proposals 	<p>Concerns about admissions, statutory assessments of Special Educational Needs, or school re-organisation proposals should be raised with Derby City Council</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Safeguarding matters, or matters likely to require a Child Protection Investigation 	<p>Complaints about safeguarding, or child protection matters, are handled under our Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy and in accordance with relevant statutory guidance.</p> <p>If you have serious concerns, you may wish to contact the local authority designated officer (LADO) who has local responsibility for safeguarding. 01332 642376 cypsafeguarding@derby.gov.uk</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Exclusion/Suspension of children from school* 	<p>Further information about raising concerns about exclusion can be found at: www.gov.uk/school-discipline-exclusions/exclusions.</p> <p><i>*complaints about the application of the Behaviour Policy can be made through the school's complaints procedure.</i></p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Staff grievances 	<p>Complaints from staff will be dealt with under the school's internal grievance procedures.</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Staff conduct 	<p>Complaints about staff will be dealt with under the school's internal disciplinary procedures, if appropriate.</p> <p>Complainants will not be informed of any disciplinary action taken against a staff member as a result of a complaint. However, the complainant will be notified that the matter is being addressed.</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Recruitment 	<p>If you wish to complain about any part of a recruitment process, please contact the Headteacher within 10 school days of the close of the recruitment process.</p> <p>Please Note: There is no obligation for the school to provide feedback to unsuccessful candidates, though we usually offer this as a courtesy after interview.</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Complaints about services provided by other providers who may use school premises or facilities 	<p>Providers should have their own complaints procedure to deal with complaints about service. Please contact them direct.</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> National Curriculum – content* 	<p>Please contact the Department for Education at: www.education.gov.uk/contactus</p> <p><i>*complaints about the delivery of the curriculum can be made through the school's complaints procedure.</i></p>

If other bodies are investigating aspects of the complaint, for example the Police, Local Authority (LA) safeguarding teams or Tribunals, this may impact on the school's ability to adhere to the timescales within

this procedure or result in the procedure being suspended, until those public bodies have completed their investigations.

Where a complaint covers multiple concerns and one or more of those concerns falls within the exceptions above, the school may suspend the complaints procedure in relation to the overall complaint until the other process(es) have concluded.

If a complainant commences legal action, or indicates the possibility of legal action, against [Littleover Community School](#) in relation to their complaint, we will consider whether to suspend the complaints procedure in relation to their complaint until those legal proceedings have concluded.

Resolving complaints

At each stage in the procedure, [Littleover Community School](#) will seek to resolve the complaint. If appropriate, we will acknowledge that the complaint is upheld in whole or in part. In addition, we may offer one or more of the following:

- an explanation
- an admission that the situation could have been handled differently, or better
- an assurance that we will try to ensure the event complained of will not recur
- an explanation of the steps that have been or will be taken to help ensure that it will not happen again and an indication of the timescales within which any changes will be made
- an undertaking to review school policies in light of the complaint
- an apology

The school will not disclose any measures taken under the staff disciplinary policy other than to advise the matter has been dealt with.

Withdrawal of a Complaint

If a complainant wants to withdraw their complaint, we will ask them to confirm this in writing. If they fail to confirm in writing, the school will write to the complainant advising the school will consider the matter closed unless the complainant confirms otherwise within 10 school days.

Resolution at a local level

This stage of the policy will apply to all concerns and complaints raised directly with the school. Concerns or complaints should initially be discussed informally with the relevant school employee or representative, for example the Curriculum Coordinator or form tutor, with a view to resolving the issue.

The Headteacher is responsible for overseeing this part of the process, but this may be initially or fully delegated to an appropriate member of school staff. The member of staff dealing with the concern should ensure they have a clear understanding of the issue(s), what it is that the complainant considers should have been done, or where they feel the school has not met reasonable expectations, as well as the resolution being sought.

Resolution at a local level gives all parties the opportunity to explore the issues causing concern and to seek to resolve them without recourse to formal stages.

The Headteacher, or relevant member of school staff, may attempt resolution directly through meetings or other conversations with the complainant, or in other ways which may include involving other members of staff.

The Headteacher or relevant staff member should make a note of any agreed actions using the form at Appendix A; this will be retained as a record.

In normal circumstances, resolution discussions are expected to take place within 10 school days of the school being notified of the concern or complaint. During this period, every effort should be made to resolve the situation on an informal basis, and all parties will be expected to fully engage with efforts to achieve this resolution. Despite the best efforts of all parties, there may be occasions where informal resolution is not possible, in which case the complainant may progress the issue to Stage 1, as set out below

Stage 1

Formal complaints must be made to the Headteacher (unless they are about the Headteacher), via the school office. This may be done in person, in writing (deleted preferably on the Complaint Form), delete by telephone, or by email

- Contact details <http://www.littleover.derby.sch.uk/contact.php>

Whilst administration staff may acknowledge the arrival of the Stage One complaint to the school, it will be the Headteacher, who will record the date on which the complaint is received and will then formally acknowledge receipt of the complaint in writing (either by letter or email) within 5 school days, thereby initiating the process outlined below.

Within this response, the Headteacher will seek to clarify the nature of the complaint, ask what remains unresolved and what outcome the complainant would like to see. The Headteacher can consider whether a face to face meeting is the most appropriate way of doing this.

Note: The Headteacher may delegate the investigation to another member of the school's senior leadership team, but not the decision to be taken.

During the investigation, the investigator will:

- if necessary, interview those involved in the matter and/or those complained of, allowing them to be accompanied if they wish
- keep a written record of any meetings/interviews in relation to their investigation.

At the conclusion of their investigation, the Headteacher will provide a formal written response within 10 school days of the date of receipt of the complaint.

If the Headteacher is unable to meet this deadline, they will provide the complainant with an update and revised response date.

The response will detail any actions taken to investigate the complaint and provide a full explanation of the decision made and the reason(s) for it. Where appropriate, it will include details of actions [Littleover Community School](#) will take to resolve the complaint.



The Headteacher will advise the complainant of how to escalate their complaint should they remain dissatisfied with the outcome of Stage 1.

If the complaint is about the Headteacher, or a member of the Governing Body (including the Chair or Vice-Chair), a suitably skilled Governor will be appointed to complete all the actions at Stage 1. In this scenario, this will be in lieu of stage 2.

Complaints about the Headteacher or member of the Governing Body must be made to the Clerk, via the school office.

If the complaint is:

- jointly about the Chair and Vice Chair or
- the entire Governing Body or
- the majority of the Governing Body

Stage 1 will be considered by an independent investigator appointed by the Governing Body or Derby City Council. At the conclusion of their investigation, the independent investigator will provide a formal written response.

The Headteacher may have some initial involvement in a concern to try and achieve resolution, prior to a formal complaint being raised. This in itself is not normally viewed as a complaint "about the Headteacher". The school's approach is that, wherever possible, the Headteacher is given the opportunity to investigate any formal complaint and provide a formal response before the next stage.

Stage 2

If the complainant is dissatisfied with the outcome at Stage 1 and wishes to take the matter further, they can escalate the complaint to Stage 2 – the Chair of Governors.

A request to escalate to Stage 2 must be made to the Clerk, via the school office, within 10 school days of receipt of the Stage 1 response.

- <http://www.littleover.derby.sch.uk/contact.php>
- clerk@littleover.derby.sch.uk

The Clerk will record the date the complaint is received and acknowledge receipt of the complaint in writing (either by letter or email) within 5 school days.

Within this response, the Chair of Governors will review Stage 1, seek to clarify the nature of the complaint, ask what remains unresolved and what outcome the complainant would like to see. The Chair of Governors can consider whether a face to face or telephone meeting is the most appropriate way of doing this.

The Chair of Governors may delegate the investigation and response to another governor e.g. the Vice-Chair of Governors.

At their discretion, the Chair of Governors (or delegate) may ask for a Governors Complaints Committee to be formed. The Clerk to Governors will provide at least two additional Governors. This will be in lieu of stage 3. Such a decision will be made prior to a formal response.

During the investigation, the Chair of Governors (or delegate) may, if necessary

- Interview those involved in the matter and/or those complained of, allowing them to be accompanied if they wish. The Headteacher will normally be present in any meeting involving school staff or students.
- Request the Headteacher to re-interview those involved in the matter and/or those complained of, allowing them to be accompanied if they wish. The Headteacher will be given direction as to the scope of the re-interview.

At the conclusion of their investigation, the Chair of Governors (or delegate) will aim to provide a formal written response within 15 school days of the date of receipt of the complaint.

If the Chair of Governors (or delegate) is unable to meet this deadline, they will provide the complainant with an update and revised response date.

The response will detail any actions taken to investigate the complaint and provide a full explanation of the decision made and the reason(s) for it. Where appropriate, it will include details of actions Littleover Community School will take to resolve the complaint.

The Chair of Governors (or delegate) will advise the complainant of how to escalate their complaint should they remain dissatisfied with the outcome of Stage 2.

Stage 3

If the complainant is dissatisfied with the outcome at Stage 2 and wishes to take the matter further, they can escalate the complaint to Stage 3 – a meeting with members of the Governing Body's Complaints Committee, which will be formed of the first three, impartial, Governors available. This is the final stage of the complaints procedure.

A request to escalate to Stage 3 must be made to the Clerk, via the school office, within 10 school days of receipt of the Stage 2 response.

- <http://www.littleover.derby.sch.uk/contact.php>
- clerk@littleover.derby.sch.uk

The Clerk will record the date the complaint is received and acknowledge receipt of the complaint in writing (either by letter or email) within 5 school days.

Requests received outside of this time frame will only be considered if exceptional circumstances apply.

The Clerk will write to the complainant to inform them of the date of the meeting. They will aim to convene a meeting within 15 school days of receipt of the Stage 3 request. If this is not possible, the Clerk will provide an anticipated date and keep the complainant informed.

If the complainant rejects the offer of three proposed dates, without good reason, the Clerk will decide when to hold the meeting. It will then proceed in the complainant's absence on the basis of written submissions from both parties.

The Complaints Committee will consist of at least three Governors with no prior involvement or knowledge of the complaint. Prior to the meeting, they will decide amongst themselves who will act as the Chair of the Complaints Committee. If there are fewer than three Governors from Littleover Community School available, the Clerk will source any additional, independent governors through another local school or through their LA's Governor Services team, in order to make up the committee. Alternatively, an entirely independent committee may be convened to hear the complaint at Stage 3.

The committee will decide whether to deal with the complaint by inviting parties to a meeting or through written representations, but in making their decision they will be sensitive to the complainant's needs.

If the complainant is invited to attend the meeting, they may bring someone along to provide support. This can be a relative, or friend. Generally, we do not encourage either party to bring legal representatives to the committee meeting, however, there may be occasions when legal representation is appropriate.

For instance, if a school employee is called as a witness in a complaint meeting, they may wish to be supported by Union and/or legal representation.

Note: Complaints about staff conduct will not generally be handled under this complaints procedure. Complainants will be advised that any staff conduct complaints will be considered under staff disciplinary procedures, if appropriate, but outcomes will not be shared with them.

Representatives from the media are not permitted to attend.

At least 10 school days before the meeting, the Clerk will:

- confirm and notify the complainant of the date, time and venue of the meeting, ensuring that, if the complainant is invited, the dates are convenient to all parties and that the venue and proceedings are

accessible

- request copies of any further written material to be submitted to the committee at least **5** school days before the meeting.

Any written material will be circulated to all parties at least **3** school days before the date of the meeting. The committee will not normally accept, as evidence, recordings of conversations that were obtained covertly and without the informed consent of all parties being recorded.

The committee will also not review any new complaints at this stage or consider evidence unrelated to the initial complaint to be included. New complaints must be dealt with from Stage 1 of the procedure.

The meeting will be held in private. Electronic recordings of meetings or conversations are not normally permitted unless a complainant's own disability or special needs require it. Prior knowledge and consent of all parties attending must be sought before meetings or conversations take place. Consent will be recorded in any minutes taken.

The committee will consider the complaint and all the evidence presented. The committee can:

- uphold the complaint in whole or in part
- dismiss the complaint in whole or in part.

If the complaint is upheld in whole or in part, the committee will:

- decide on the appropriate action to be taken to resolve the complaint
- where appropriate, recommend changes to the school's systems or procedures to prevent similar issues in the future.

The Chair of the Committee will provide the complainant and [Littleover Community School](#) with a full explanation of their decision and the reason(s) for it, in writing, within **5** school days.

The letter to the complainant will include details of how to contact the Department for Education if they are dissatisfied with the way their complaint has been handled by [Littleover Community School](#).

If the complaint is:

- jointly about the Chair and Vice Chair or
- the entire Governing body or
- the majority of the Governing body

Stage 3 will be heard by a committee of independent, co-opted governors.

The response will detail any actions taken to investigate the complaint and provide a full explanation of the decision made and the reason(s) for it. Where appropriate, it will include details of actions [Littleover Community School](#) will take to resolve the complaint.

The response will also advise the complainant of how to escalate their complaint should they remain dissatisfied.

Complaint Form

Please complete and return to *Headteacher / Clerk (school to delete as appropriate)* who will acknowledge receipt and explain what action will be taken.

Date of Submission
Your name:
Student's name (if relevant):
Student's Year Group and Form
Your relationship to the student (if relevant):
Address:
Postcode: Day time telephone number: Evening telephone number:
Please give details of your complaint, including whether you have spoken to anybody at the school about it.

**What action, if any, have you already taken to try and resolve your complaint?
(Who did you speak to and what was the response?)**

What actions do you feel might resolve the problem at this stage?

Are you attaching any paperwork? If so, please give details.

Signature:

Date:

Official use

Date acknowledgement sent:
By who:
Complaint referred to:
Date:

Roles and Responsibilities

Complainant

The complainant will receive a more effective response to the complaint if they:

- explain the complaint in full as early as possible
- co-operate with the school in seeking a solution to the complaint
- provide the level of detail necessary for the school to properly investigate
- respond promptly to requests for information or meetings or in agreeing the details of the complaint
- ask for assistance as needed
- treat all those involved in the complaint with respect
- refrain from publicising the details of their complaint on social media and respect confidentiality.

Investigator

The investigator's role is to establish the facts relevant to the complaint by:

- providing a comprehensive, open, transparent and fair consideration of the complaint through:
 - sensitive and thorough interviewing of the complainant to establish what has happened and who has been involved
 - interviewing staff and children/young people and other people relevant to the complaint
 - consideration of records and other relevant information
 - analysing information
- liaising with the complainant and the complaints co-ordinator as appropriate to clarify what the complainant feels would put things right.

The investigator should:

- conduct interviews with an open mind and be prepared to persist in the questioning
- keep notes of interviews or arrange for an independent note taker to record minutes of the meeting
- ensure that any papers produced during the investigation are kept securely pending any appeal
- be mindful of the timescales to respond
- prepare a comprehensive report for the headteacher or complaints committee that sets out the facts, identifies solutions and recommends courses of action to resolve problems.

The Headteacher or complaints committee will then determine whether to uphold or dismiss the complaint and communicate that decision to the complainant, providing the appropriate escalation details.

Complaints Co-ordinator

(This could be the Headteacher / designated Complaints Governor or other staff member providing administrative support)

The complaints co-ordinator should:

- ensure that the complainant is fully updated at each stage of the procedure
- liaise with staff members, Headteacher, Chair of Governors, Clerk and LAs (if appropriate) to ensure the smooth running of the complaints procedure
- be aware of issues regarding:
 - sharing third party information
 - additional support. This may be needed by complainants when making a complaint including interpretation support or where the complainant is a child or young person
- keep records.

Clerk to the Governing Body

The Clerk is the contact point for the complainant and the committee and should:

- ensure that all people involved in the complaint procedure are aware of their legal rights and duties, including any under legislation relating to school complaints, education law, the Equality Act 2010, the Freedom of Information Act 2000, the Data Protection Act (DPA) 2018 and the General Data Protection Regulations (UK GDPR)
- set the date, time and venue of the meeting, ensuring that the dates are convenient to all parties (if they are invited to attend) and that the venue and proceedings are accessible
- collate any written material relevant to the complaint (for example; stage 1 paperwork, school and complainant submissions) and send it to the parties in advance of the meeting within an agreed timescale
- record the proceedings
- circulate the minutes of the meeting
- notify all parties of the committee's decision.

Committee Chair

The committee's chair, who is nominated in advance of the complaint meeting, should ensure that:

- both parties are asked (via the Clerk) to provide any additional information relating to the complaint by a specified date in advance of the meeting
- the meeting is conducted in an informal manner, is not adversarial, and that, if all parties are invited to attend, everyone is treated with respect and courtesy
- complainants who may not be used to speaking at such a meeting are put at ease. This is particularly important if the complainant is a child/young person

- the remit of the committee is explained to the complainant
- written material is seen by everyone in attendance, provided it does not breach confidentiality or any individual's rights to privacy under the DPA 2018 or UK GDPR.

If a new issue arises it would be useful to give everyone the opportunity to consider and comment upon it; this may require a short adjournment of the meeting

- both the complainant and the school are given the opportunity to make their case and seek clarity, either through written submissions ahead of the meeting or verbally in the meeting itself
- the issues are addressed
- key findings of fact are made
- the committee is open-minded and acts independently
- no member of the committee has an external interest in the outcome of the proceedings or any involvement in an earlier stage of the procedure
- the meeting is minuted
- they liaise with the Clerk (and complaints co-ordinator, if the school has one).

Committee Member

Committee members should be aware that:

- the meeting must be independent and impartial, and should be seen to be so

No Governor may sit on the committee if they have had a prior involvement in the complaint or in the circumstances surrounding it.

- the aim of the meeting should be to resolve the complaint and achieve reconciliation between the school and the complainant

We recognise that the complainant might not be satisfied with the outcome if the meeting does not find in their favour. It may only be possible to establish the facts and make recommendations.

- many complainants will feel nervous and inhibited in a formal setting. Parents/carers often feel emotional when discussing an issue that affects their child.
- extra care needs to be taken when the complainant is a child/young person and present during all or part of the meeting

Careful consideration of the atmosphere and proceedings should ensure that the child/young person does not feel intimidated.

The committee should respect the views of the child/young person and give them equal consideration to those of adults.

If the child/young person is the complainant, the committee should ask in advance if any support is needed to help them present their complaint. Where the child/young person's parent/carer is the complainant, the committee should give the parent/carer the opportunity to say which parts of the meeting, if any, the child/young person needs to attend.



However, the parent should be advised that agreement might not always be possible if the parent wishes the child/young person to attend a part of the meeting that the committee considers is not in the child/young person's best interests.

- the welfare of the child/young person is paramount.



Serial and unreasonable complaints

Littleover Community School is committed to dealing with all complaints fairly and impartially, and to providing a high quality service to those who complain. We will not normally limit the contact complainants have with our school. However, we do not expect our staff to tolerate unacceptable behaviour and will take action to protect staff from that behaviour, including that which is abusive, offensive or threatening.

Littleover Community School defines unreasonable behaviour as that which hinders our consideration of complaints because of the frequency or nature of the complainant's contact with the school, such as, if the complainant:

- refuses to articulate their complaint or specify the grounds of a complaint or the outcomes sought by raising the complaint, despite offers of assistance
- refuses to co-operate with the complaints investigation process
- refuses to accept that certain issues are not within the scope of the complaints procedure
- insists on the complaint being dealt with in ways which are incompatible with the complaints procedure or with good practice
- introduces trivial or irrelevant information which they expect to be taken into account and commented on
- raises large numbers of detailed but unimportant questions, and insists they are fully answered, often immediately and to their own timescales
- makes unjustified complaints about staff who are trying to deal with the issues, and seeks to have them replaced
- changes the basis of the complaint as the investigation proceeds
- repeatedly makes the same complaint (despite previous investigations or responses concluding that the complaint is groundless or has been addressed)
- refuses to accept the findings of the investigation into that complaint where the school's complaint procedure has been fully and properly implemented and completed, including referral to the Department for Education
- seeks an unrealistic outcome
- makes excessive demands on school time by frequent, lengthy and complicated contact with staff regarding the complaint in person, in writing, by email and by telephone while the complaint is being dealt with
- uses threats to intimidate
- uses abusive, offensive or discriminatory language or violence
- knowingly provides falsified information
- publishes unacceptable information on social media or other public forums.

Complainants should try to limit their communication with the school that relates to their complaint, while the complaint is being progressed. It is not helpful if repeated correspondence is sent (either by letter, phone, email or text), as it could delay the outcome being reached.

Whenever possible, the Headteacher or Chair of Governors will discuss any concerns with the complainant informally before applying an 'unreasonable' marking.

If the behaviour continues, the headteacher will write to the complainant explaining that their behaviour is unreasonable and ask them to change it. For complainants who excessively contact [Littleover Community School](#) causing a significant level of disruption, we may specify methods of communication and limit the number of contacts in a Communication Plan. This will be reviewed after six months.

In response to any serious incident of aggression or violence, we will immediately inform the Police and communicate our actions in writing. This may include barring an individual from [Littleover Community School](#).

Complaint Campaigns

Where Littleover Community School receives multiple complaints that match one or more of the following criteria:

- All appear based on, or around, the same subject
- Complainants are unconnected with the school

The school may choose to respond in one or more of the following ways:

- A templated response to all complainants
- Publishing a single response on the school's website, and directing complainants to that response

Next Steps

If the complainant believes the school did not handle their complaint in accordance with the published complaints procedure or they acted unlawfully or unreasonably in the exercise of their duties under education law, they can contact the Department for Education after they have completed Stage 3.

The Department for Education will not normally reinvestigate the substance of complaints or overturn any decisions made by [Littleover Community School](#). They will consider whether [Littleover Community School](#) has adhered to education legislation and any statutory policies connected with the complaint.

The complainant can refer their complaint to the Department for Education online at: www.education.gov.uk/contactus, by telephone on: 0370 000 2288 or by writing to:

Department for Education
Piccadilly Gate
Store Street
Manchester
M1 2WD.

For more information or to refer a complaint, see the following webpage:

www.gov.uk/complain-about-school

Appendix A

Resolution at a Local Level

To be completed by a member of staff (may be shared with the complainant if requested)

School:	
Name of Complainant:	
Name of Child and Year Group:	
Date of Contact	
Who or what the complaint is against:	
Nature of Concern	
Actions Taken	
Review Date	
Signature:	Date:

Appendix B- Concern and Complaints Process

