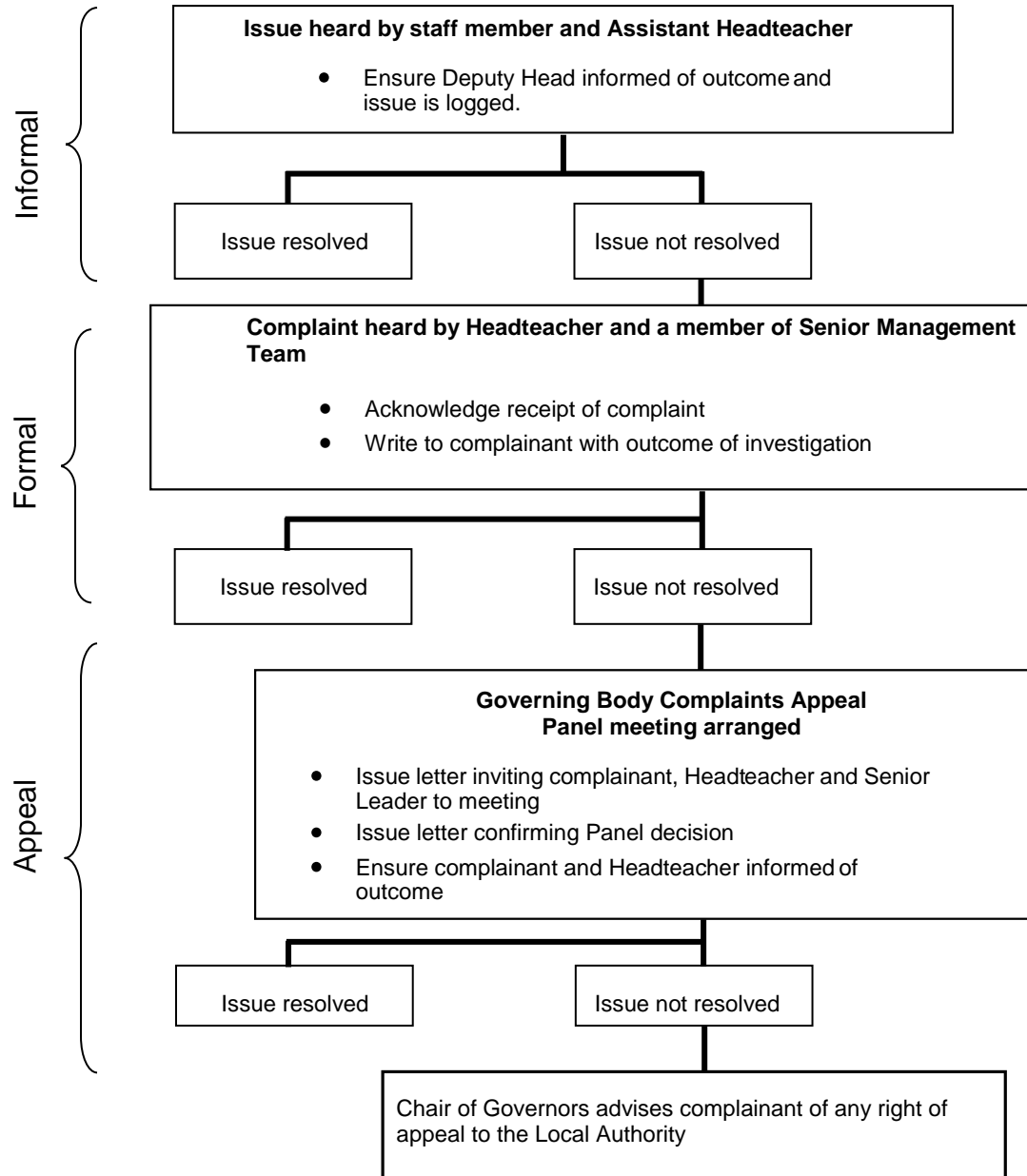




School Complaints Procedure: Flowchart



School Complaints Information for Parents and Carers

Why do we need a procedure?

Most concerns raised by parents and carers about school matters are handled quickly by school staff without the need for formal procedures. However, not all concerns can be resolved in this way and, under section 29 of the Education Act 2002, Governing Bodies of all maintained schools and nursery schools must have in place a procedure to deal with complaints relating to the school, and any community facilities or services that the school provides. It is an important legal principle that the particular procedure used, and the resolution of each complaint, are the responsibility of each individual Governing Body and not the Local Authority.

What to do if you have a complaint

It is in everyone's interest that complaints are resolved at the earliest possible stage. The experience of the first contact between the complainant and the school can be crucial in determining whether the complaint will become more serious. To that end, any member of the school staff should be able to deal with a complaint.

Stage 1: Issue heard by staff member and Assistant Headteacher

Parents can make an appointment for an informal meeting with the member of staff involved and an Assistant Headteacher.

The outcome of this meeting will be logged with the Deputy Headteacher. Most issues will be resolved at this stage.

Stage 2: Complaint heard by Headteacher and Member of the Senior Management Team

The complainant may be dissatisfied with the way the issue was handled at Stage 1. The complainant should submit their complaint in writing using the complaint procedure template which can be found on the school website. The Headteacher and another member of the senior management team should investigate the complaint, review all the information and discuss the findings, together with any recommendations with the complainant. As almost all complaints concern the day-to-day management of the school, few matters should need to go further.

An outcome letter will be sent to the complainant.

Stage 3: Complaint heard by Governing Body's Complaints Appeal Panel

If the complainant remains dissatisfied, he/she should write to the Chair of Governors, within 28 days, giving details of the complaint. Sometimes the Chair will be able to resolve the situation at this point, by speaking with or writing to the complainant and reassuring him or her that the school has taken the complaint seriously. Should, however, this prove not to be the case, the Chair, or a nominated Governor, will convene a Governing Body Complaints Appeal Panel, normally within 28 days, to which the complainant and Headteacher will be invited. The Panel can:

- Uphold the result of the Headteachers investigation
- Find the complaint was justified and overturn the original decision
- Recommend changes to the school's systems or procedures to ensure that problems of a similar nature do not recur
- Notify the complainant of their right to further appeal.

The Governors Panel's decision. The Chair of the Panel should ensure that the complainant and the Headteacher are notified of the Panel's decision, in writing, within a set deadline which is publicised in the school's procedure.

Who can go onto school premises?

Schools are private property. People do not have automatic right to enter. Parents have an 'implied licence' to come on to school premises at certain times, for instance:

- For appointments
- To attend school events
- To drop off or pick up younger children

Barring Individuals from school premises

Schools can bar someone from the premises if they feel that their aggressive, abusive or insulting behavior or language is a risk to staff or pupils. It's enough for a member of staff or a pupil to feel threatened. The school should tell an individual that they've been barred or they intend to bar them, in writing.

