

Please refer to the full Complaints Policy on our website here: <https://longbenton.org.uk/parents/policies>

If you need to raise an issue in the first instance, please do so with the relevant member of staff who will be happy to talk to you and seek to establish a solution. Please do not simply label your complaint “formal” unless it has been through the appropriate steps. A complaint does not become “formal” until it is at Stage 2 in our policy and will be treated by us as informal until that point.

<b>Informal complaints or concerns: Year 7</b>	Kat Lambert, Associate AHT (SLT)	<a href="mailto:year7@longbenton.org.uk">year7@longbenton.org.uk</a>
<b>Informal complaints or concerns: Year 8</b>		<a href="mailto:year8@longbenton.org.uk">year8@longbenton.org.uk</a>
<b>Informal complaints or concerns: Year 9</b>	Nicola McPherson, Associate AHT (SLT)	<a href="mailto:year9@longbenton.org.uk">year9@longbenton.org.uk</a>
<b>Informal complaints or concerns: Year 10</b>		<a href="mailto:year10@longbenton.org.uk">year10@longbenton.org.uk</a>
<b>Informal complaints or concerns: Year 11</b>	Abby Potts, Associate AHT (SLT)	<a href="mailto:year11@longbenton.org.uk">year11@longbenton.org.uk</a>
<b>Informal complaints or concerns: Sixth Form</b>		<a href="mailto:post16@longbenton.org.uk">post16@longbenton.org.uk</a>
<b>Complaints at Stage 1</b> <i>Where the complaint has been heard by staff above at informal / raising concern stage and parents/carers are still dissatisfied with outcomes.</i>	Kim Hay, Assistant Headteacher <i>The complaint may be handled by a different member of the Senior Team or SEND Team; they will be triaged to the appropriate member of senior staff.</i>	<a href="mailto:HAY@longbenton.org.uk">HAY@longbenton.org.uk</a>
<b>Complaints at Stage 2</b> <i>Where the complaint has been heard at Stage 1 and parents/carers are still dissatisfied with outcomes.</i>	Joe Elliott, Deputy Headteacher (Culture & Ethos) Sarah Willis, Deputy Headteacher (Quality of Education) Kelly Holbrook, Headteacher (Complaints regarding other staff members)	<a href="mailto:JE@longbenton.org.uk">JE@longbenton.org.uk</a> <a href="mailto:SW@longbenton.org.uk">SW@longbenton.org.uk</a> <a href="mailto:KHO@longbenton.org.uk">KHO@longbenton.org.uk</a>
<b>Complaints at Stage 3</b> Complaints about the headteacher or the running of the school	Sheila Palmerley, Chair of Governors	<a href="mailto:SLTAdmin@longbenton.org.uk">SLTAdmin@longbenton.org.uk</a> FAO Chair of Governors

This table outlines the complaints procedure / stages and timeframes outlined in our policy:

Complaint level		Direct to:	Expectation of response	Procedure
Raising concerns	Informal	School  LHS email address  Any staff member	1-2 days holding response; 4-5 days for resolution*	<p><b>Concerns can be raised verbally or by email or in writing.</b> The resolution to this concern may be made in writing via email, verbally on the phone or in person.</p> <p>Please do not come in person to school in the first instance unless urgent/safeguarding issue or by prior appointment. We reserve the right to refuse to see anyone who turns up to reception without prior arrangement.</p> <p><b><i>Where as a result of raising a concern the complainant still feels that the issue has not been addressed, or where the outcome has been that the complaint needs further investigation than can be resolved briefly, they may progress by making an informal complaint to Stage 1.</i></b></p> <p><b>Please note:</b> Parents cannot demand to see individual members of staff or individual members of the senior team. We reserve the right to decide as an organisation who is best to meet with parents and who best to deal with a complaint or concern. The school will not respond to threats (eg going to Ofsted or the press). Governors, the Local Authority and Ofsted will expect that a parent has used this complaints procedure in full/properly and exhausted all avenues before escalating a complaint to outside agencies. We do not respond to complaints raised informally via our social media channels.</p>
Stage 1	Informal	School  LHS email address  Any staff member but usually SLT	15 days	<p><b>Complainant contacts the school. The complainant must explain in writing:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- An overview of the complaint so far</li> <li>- Who has been involved</li> <li>- Why the complaint remains unresolved</li> <li>- Action they would like to be taken to put things right.</li> </ul> <p>The staff member will respond within 5 school days of having received the written complaint. They will explain what action they intend to take.</p> <p><i>The school reserves the right to direct parents back to raising concerns stage if this step has been missed.</i></p>

				<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Where the complaint is about a member of staff or a governor, the staff member will arrange an informal mediation meeting between the two parties to see if a resolution can be made.</li> <li>2. The staff member will provide a written confirmation of the outcome of their investigation within 10 school days of having sent confirmation of the intended action. Where the complainant is not satisfied with the outcome, they are able to progress to stage 2 of the complaints process, and launch a formal written complaint.</li> <li>3. The staff member will make a record of the concern and the outcomes of the discussion which will be held centrally for twelve months, in line with the principles of the Data Protection Act 1998.</li> </ol>
Stage 2	Formal	Headteacher, DHT or Chair of Governors	25 days	<p>The complainant may submit a formal complaints form to the Deputy Headteacher, Headteacher (or if the complaint is about the Headteacher, then the Chair of Governors). <b>Please complete and submit a copy of the form at the end of the complaints procedure (see page 7).</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. A written response will be sent within 10 school days of the date of receipt of the complaint to acknowledge receipt of the complaint and explain what action will be taken, giving clear timeframes.</li> <li>2. A log of all correspondence in relation to the complaint will be kept in accordance with the Data Protection Principles.</li> <li>3. The Headteacher or Chair of Governors will consider all relevant evidence; this may include but is not limited to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ a statement from the complainant,</li> <li>▪ where relevant a statement from an individual who is the subject of the complaint</li> <li>▪ any previous correspondence regarding the complaint</li> <li>▪ any supporting documents in either case</li> <li>▪ interview with anyone related to the complaint.</li> </ul> </li> </ol>

				<p>4. The Headteacher or Chair of Governors may decide to have a meeting with the complainant (and where relevant, the subject of the complaint) if they feel that it would be appropriate for the investigation.</p> <p>5. After considering the available evidence, the Headteacher or Chair of Governors can:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Uphold the complaint and direct that certain action be taken to resolve it</li> <li>▪ Reject the complaint and provide the complainant with details of the stage three appeals process</li> <li>▪ Uphold the complaint in part: in other words, the Headteacher may find one aspect of the complaint to be valid, but not another aspect. They may direct for certain action to be taken to resolve the aspect that they find in favour of the complainant.</li> </ul> <p>6. The Headteacher or Chair of Governors must inform the complainant of their decision in writing within 15 school days of having issued written acknowledgement of the receipt of the complaint. They must explain clearly why they have come to the decision that they made. They must detail any agreed actions as a result of the complaint. Finally, they must provide the complainant with details of how to progress the complaint to stage three if they are not satisfied, providing them with the contact details of the clerk to the governors (see the end of the procedure for these)</p>
Stage 3	Formal	Complaints Appeal Panel (Governing Body)	25 days	<p>If the complainant wishes to appeal a decision at stage 2 of the procedure, or they are not satisfied with the action that the Headteacher or Chair of Governors has taken in relation to the complaint, the complainant is able to appeal this decision and progress to Stage 3.</p> <p>They must write to the clerk to the Governing Body as soon as possible after receiving notice of the Headteacher or Chair of Governor’s decision, briefly outlining the content of the complaint and requesting that a complaints appeal panel is convened.</p> <p>The clerk (or nominated person) will fulfil the role of organising the time and date of the appeal hearing, inviting all the attendees, collating all the relevant documentation and distributing this 5 days</p>

				<p>in advance of the meeting, recording the proceedings in the form of minutes, and circulating these and the outcome of the meeting.</p> <p>The complainant must request an appeal panel within 10 school days of receiving the Headteacher or Chair of Governor’s decision or it will not be considered, except for in exceptional circumstances. On receipt of this written notification, the following steps will be followed:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. The clerk will write to the complainant within five school days to confirm receipt of the appeal request and detail further action to be taken.</li> <li>2. The clerk will convene a panel of two school governors. All three panel members will have no prior knowledge of the content of the complaint.</li> <li>3. The appeal hearing will take place within 25 school days of receipt of the date of the confirmation letter from the clerk to the complainant, confirming the appeal.</li> <li>4. In addition to the panel, the following parties will be invited, where applicable: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- the complainant</li> <li>- the Headteacher who dealt with the complaint at Stage 2</li> <li>- where the complaint regards a member of staff, the staff member who is the subject of the complaint.</li> </ul> </li> </ol> <p>The complainant is also able to bring a companion with them to the hearing if they wish. Where the subject of the complaint is a member of staff, that staff member is also able to bring a companion with them.</p> <p>The companion will be a friend or a colleague. Neither party is able to bring legal representation with them. If after the hearing any party feels that legal action is necessary, please see the contact details at the end of the procedure.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. If the attendance of any pupils is required at the hearing, parental permission will be sought if they are under the age of 18. Extra care will be taken to consider the vulnerability of children where they are present at a complaints hearing.</li> <li>2. Where the complaint is about a governor/trustee, the complainant may request that the appeal is heard by an entirely independent panel. It is at the discretion of the governing body</li> </ol>
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				<p>who will notify the clerk of their decision. Where an entirely independent panel is required, timescales may be affected while the school source appropriate individuals for the review.</p> <p>3. The panel can make the following decisions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- Dismiss the complaint in whole or in part</li><li>- Uphold the complaint in whole or in part</li><li>- Decide on the appropriate action to be taken to resolve the complaint</li><li>- Recommend changes to the school's systems or procedures to ensure that problems of a similar nature do not recur.</li></ul> <p>4. All parties who attended the meeting will be informed in writing of the outcome of the appeal within 5 school days (excluding those which fall in the school holidays).</p> <p>This is the final stage at which the school will consider the complaint. If the complainant remains dissatisfied and wishes to take the complaint further, please see the contact details at the end of the document. The school will not consider the complaint beyond this.</p>
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\*working days, not including weekends



**Appendix - Complaints Form**



**Longbenton High School Formal Complaints Form**

Name	
Name of pupil, year group and your relationship to them (where applicable)	
Contact address	
Contact telephone day	
Contact telephone mobile	
Contact email address	
Details of the complaint ( <i>please continue on a separate sheet if necessary</i> )	
Action taken so far (including staff member who has dealt with it so far) or solutions offered	



The reason that this was not a satisfactory resolution for you
What action would you like to be taken to resolve the problem?

Signed: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

<i>Official use</i> Date received:	Signed: