



Complaints Procedure Policy

This policy will be reviewed annually and more often should legislation or circumstances require it.

This policy was **last reviewed:**

September 2025

This policy **next review:**

September 2026

Approved by:

Elaine Healey
Chair of Governors

September 2025

Russell Scott Primary School – Complaints Procedure

The staff and governors of Russell Scott Primary School are committed to providing a high quality education for all pupils in a secure and supportive environment. Whilst all concerned strive to achieve their best for the welfare of the pupils at the school, it is appreciated that a parent, carer or member of the community may at times have a concern relating to an aspect of school life. This concern may be regarding a child's education, a service provided by the school or a particular incident which may have occurred. This policy outlines the procedure that should be followed in these cases, and the manner in which these complaints/concerns will be resolved.

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 this complaints procedure. At Russell Scott we take all concerns seriously and will make every effort to resolve the matter as quickly as possible.

How to raise a concern or make a complaint

Concerns can be raised with the school at any time and will often generate an immediate response, which will resolve the concern. Concerns can be made in person, in writing or by telephone. They may also be made by a third party acting on behalf of a complainant, as long as they have the appropriate consent to do so.

In the first instance a concern should be raised with the member of staff who has direct responsibility for the child's welfare i.e. the class teacher. This early raising of issues is encouraged so that any problems can be dealt with before they become a major issue. Russell Scott is committed to working together with parents and carers to find satisfactory solutions at the earliest possible stage. On some occasions the concern may require investigation or discussion with others, in which case an informal but informed response will be reported back to the parent or carer within a few days. If you have difficulty discussing a concern with a particular member of staff then you should raise your concern with either the headteacher or deputy headteacher.

If the issue remains unresolved, the next step is to make a formal complaint (see procedure below).

Complaints against school staff (except the headteacher) should be made to Mr Marsland via the school office. Please mark them as Private and Confidential.

Complaints that involve or are about the headteacher should be addressed to Mrs Elaine Healey (the Chair of Governors) via the school office. 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 the Governing Body via the school office. Please mark as Private and Confidential

For ease of use a template form is provided at the end of this procedure. If you require help in completing the form please ask at the school office or contact Citizens Advice. In accordance with equality law we will consider making reasonable adjustments if required, to enable complainants to access and complete this complaints procedure.

General information

We will not normally investigate anonymous complaints. However the headteacher will determine whether the anonymous complaint warrants an investigation.

You must raise the complaint within three months of the incident. We will only consider complaints made after this time frame in exceptional circumstances.

This procedure covers all complaints about any services provided by Russell Scott Primary School. It does not deal with complaints that are dealt with under other statutory procedures. These include:

- School admissions- *to complain contact Tameside MBC*
- Statutory assessments of SEN- *to complain contact Tameside MBC*
- School re-organisation proposals- *to complain contact Tameside MBC*
- Exclusion of children from school- *information at www.gov.uk/school-discipline-exclusions/exclusions*
- Whistleblowing- *school will follow internal whistleblowing procedure*
- Matters requiring a Child Protection Investigation- *school will follow Child Protection Policy. Contact Children's Social Care at the Public Service HUB (342- 4101) if serious concerns*
- Staff grievances- *school will follow internal grievance procedure*
- Staff conduct -*school will follow internal disciplinary procedure if appropriate*
- Complaints about services provided by other providers using school facilities- *to complain contact the provider directly*
- National curriculum –*contact Department for Education*

If other bodies are investigating aspects of the complaint this may impact on our ability to adhere to timescales within the procedure. If a complainant commences legal action against Russell Scott Primary School in relation to their complaint, we will consider whether to suspend the complaints procedure until those legal proceedings have concluded.

At each stage in the procedure the school wants 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
- An assurance that we will try to ensure the event will not recur
- An explanation of the steps taken to ensure that it will not happen again
- An undertaking to review policies in light of the complaint
- An apology

If a complainant wants to withdraw their complaint at any time, they will be asked to confirm this in writing.

Stage 1 of Making a Formal Complaint-

Formal complaints must be made to the headteacher (unless they are about the headteacher) to the school office as stated above. This should generally be done in writing using the Complaint Form.

The headteacher will record the date the complaint is received and will acknowledge receipt of the complaint within 5 school days. The headteacher will seek to clarify the nature of the complaint, ask what remains unresolved and note the outcome the complainant would like to see. This clarification may be in writing, over the phone, via email or in a face to face meeting. The headteacher may delegate the investigation of the complaint to another member of the senior leadership's team but he will not delegate the decision to be taken.

At the conclusion of their investigation, the headteacher will provide a written response within 15 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. This response will outline actions taken and an explanation of the decision made along with the reasons behind this decision.

If the complaint is about the headteacher or a member of the governing body, a suitably skilled governor will be appointed to complete the steps above. If the complaint is about the majority of the governing body, the Chair and Vice Chair or the entire governing body, an independent investigator will be appointed.

Stage 2 of Making a Formal Complaint

If you are dissatisfied with the outcome at Stage 1 and wish to take the matter further, then the complaint can be escalated to stage 2. This will involve meeting with members of the governing body's complaints committee. This is the final stage of the complaints procedure.

A request to escalate to Stage 2 must be made to the Clerk of the Governors (Mrs Sally Stahler) via the school office within 10 school days of the receipt of the stage 1 response.

The clerk will record the date the complaint is received and acknowledge receipt of the complaint. The clerk will aim to arrange a meeting with the governors and inform you of the date of the meeting within 15 school days of receiving the complaint.

The complaints committee will consist of three impartial governors with no prior involvement or knowledge of the complaint. The committee may invite you to attend this meeting or may decide to make their decision through studying written representations. If you are invited to attend this meeting you may bring an appropriate friend or relative someone for support.

At least 10 days before the meeting, the Clerk will confirm the date and time of the meeting, confirm the requirement to attend or not, and request copies of written material to be submitted at least 5 days before the meeting. Any written material will be shared with all parties before the meeting. New complaints will not be considered at this stage.

The meeting will be held in private. Electronic recordings of meetings are not permitted unless this is needed due to disability or special requirements. In these cases 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, decisions will be made on appropriate actions that will need taking.

The committee will provide you and the school with an explanation of their decision and the reason for it within 15 school days. Details will be included on how to contact the Department for education if you are dissatisfied with the way your complaint has been handled.

If the complaint is about the governing body, stage 2 will be heard by a committee of independent governors.

Next Steps

If after completion of Stage 2 of the procedure you are unhappy with the handling of the complaint, you can contact the Department for Education. They will not normally reinvestigate complaints or overturn decisions made. They will consider whether education legislation and statutory policies have been followed.

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

Email: www.education.gov.uk/contactus

Telephone: 0370 000 2288

Complaint Form

Please complete and return to the appropriate person (see procedure) who will acknowledge receipt and explain what action will be taken.

Your name:
Pupil's name (if relevant):
Your relationship to the pupil (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 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:

