

(Book 2)

**Complaints Procedures for Children**

<b>Last review</b> March 2020	<b>Next Review</b> March 2022	<b>Coordinator</b> Director	<b>Nominated Trustees</b> EC&T Committee
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**Introduction**

Central to the work of The Mulberry Bush School is reflecting on our practice in order to improve outcomes for the children. Fielding and managing concerns or complaints is, therefore, an important part of this process.

It is in everyone's interest that any concerns or complaints about The Mulberry Bush School are resolved at the earliest possible stage.

**Aims**

The aims of the process are that the child should feel their complaint is heard and they are satisfied with the outcome.

Staff need to be clear about the difference between a concern and a complaint. Taking informal concerns seriously at the earliest stage will reduce the numbers that develop into formal complaints. The underlying principle is that concerns ought to be handled, if at all possible, without the need for formal procedures.

The requirement to have a complaints procedure need not in any way undermine efforts to resolve the concern informally. In most cases the staff members will receive the first approach. It is helpful when staff are able to resolve issues on the spot. This may include offering a clear explanation; in some cases, accepting that a situation could have been handled better; in other cases, an apology may be appropriate.

Addressing children's concerns and complaints quickly keeps us all safe, staff and children, and helps develop a shared understanding of the issues.

**Procedure**

- Any complaint made by a child should be listened to seriously and a "Report of Complaint" form completed. This has two sides. The first side is for recording the details of the complaint and the second side is for recording the management of the complaint.

- All complaint forms are available from the Director's office. Staff must sign the log when taking a form. This member of staff is then responsible for making sure the complaint form is completed by the child and that all subsequent work and discussions are completed by relevant staff before the form is returned to either the Head of Group Living or the Director. At this point the Complaints Officer (Director) will sign the form to indicate that the process is completed or will ensure that further work is undertaken in order that the complaint process can be finished so that the child is satisfied with the outcome.
- In some cases a child may not feel able to take part in the complaint process themselves but are happy for an adult to complete the procedure on their behalf. All adults must offer this opportunity to a child if they are making a complaint at any time.
- There may be occasions when a child does not want to make a complaint but an adult believes that there are grounds for a complaint. If this is the case the adult must complete the complaint process on the child's behalf.
- All adults must look to deal with the complaint as quickly as possible, and then inform the Director about it.
- If the adult feels uncomfortable with managing the complaint they should seek advice from a manager or the Complaints Officer (Director).
- Any complaint that may have child protection issues must be passed on as soon as possible to a Designated Safeguarding Lead or the Director.
- Any adult who is the subject of the complaint should not be involved in the management of it.
- At the end of the process, the complainant should be asked what they would like to happen with their complaint, i.e. how they would like it dealt with and what outcome they would like.
- All complaint forms should be seen by the Complaints Officer (Director) and filed in the Director's office.
- The complaint can be dealt with by any staff member as long as they are not the subject of the complaint. Staff should follow the process set out on the complaint forms, with the support of a line manager if necessary. They should ensure that at the end of the process, the form is signed off by the staff involved and the child and passed to either the Head of Group Living or the Complaints Officer (Director) for filing.

- If a child is asking how to complain, adults should try and help them make an informed decision as to what will happen with the different complaint routes they may choose.
- An example of the child complaint form and the procedure forms are attached as an appendix to this policy.

**Role of the Management Team**

The Complaints Officer (Director) should monitor complaints, ensuring they have been properly managed and resolved.

**Role of Staff**

All staff must be aware of this policy and must know how to help a child make a complaint should this be needed.

**Role of Children**

Pupils should make use of the complaints process and procedure when they are not happy with how something has been managed.

**Raising Awareness of this Policy**

School Leadership Team for staff  
All staff for the children.

**Monitoring the Effectiveness of the Policy**

Complaints Officer (School Director)  
Trustees via their visits  
Reg 44 Independent Visitor

## Appendix 1 - Report Sheet for Child's Complaint



01273 812345  
01273 812345  
01273 812345

Form no.

### Report of Complaint by a Young Person at The Mulberry Bush School

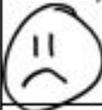
Please tell us about your complaint:

Child's Name: ..... Date: .....

Is the complaint for you? **Yes / No**      Who is the complaint for? .....

If your complaint is for someone else, do they know that you have complained? **Yes / No**

What are you unhappy about?



How did it start?

What happened next?

How did it end?

What do you want to happen to sort it out?

Staff member

Name:

Signature:

Child's signature

Date:

**To be completed by the staff member managing the complaint, a House Manager, the child and then the Child Complaints Officer (Director)**

**Action completed:**

**1. Staff member that is dealing with the complaint to indicate what action has been taken:**

Name:

Date:

Signature:

**2. Other relevant people informed; family, SW, TT etc. Identify where communications can be found including dates**

**3. House Manager or SLT (if complaint is about a House Manager) to indicate what has happened:**

House Manager/SLT to sign when action is complete:

Name:

Date:

Signature:

**Check with the complainant by asking:**

**4. Are you happy that your complaint has been sorted out? Yes / No**

Signature:

Date:

**5. If no, what else would you like to be done?**

**6. Director – Complaints Officer**

Name:

Date:

Signature:

## Appendix 2 - Complaints Procedure for Staff and Children Sheet

### Complaints Procedures for Children

We want you to tell us if you are not happy with the way you are looked after.

We want you to tell us if you have any other worries or complaints.

Telling us helps us to make sure we get it right.

We will listen and will try to make sure you feel okay about how we deal with what you tell us. You will not be punished or made to feel bad for complaining.

To help us get it right, we will need to know what you want to happen to make everything all right again.

The adults are here to keep everyone safe so you can tell any adult. It is probably best to tell your Key Worker, Teacher, Family Worker or your House Manager. If you want to you can talk to Lee, Claire, Angus, Jennifer or Jess.

There are lots of different ways you can let us know if you are unhappy about something.

1. Tell an adult who will listen and fill in a Complaints Form. (these are kept in Lee's office)
2. Fill in a Complaints Form yourself! Or ask an adult to help you.
3. Write it down or draw a picture of it and give it to an adult or put it in the Grumbles Box in your House
4. Talk to the VOICE representative (they are an independent advocate from an organization called VOICE) when they are visiting, or phone on 0808 800 5792, or use the children's phone in your House, which will put you directly through to VOICE. If you talk to them, they do not need to tell us what you say
5. Tell the people who look after you at home.
6. You can contact Ofsted on 0300 123 4666
7. You can also talk to your Social Worker or another member of staff from that department and make a complaint using their procedures. Get information on how to do this from your Key Worker or any other adult

What you say will be taken seriously and dealt with quickly.

**If you don't think anyone is listening please tell Lee!**



## Staff Guidelines Following a Complaint by a Young Person

**Aim:** It is an aim of the process that the child should feel their complaint is heard and they are satisfied with the outcome.

Addressing children's concerns and complaints quickly keeps us all safe, staff and children, and helps develop a shared understanding of the issues.

### Guidelines for adults:

- Any complaint made by a child should be listened to seriously and a Complaint Form must be completed, these are kept in Lee's office. The form has two sides, 1 side for recording the information and the other side for recording your management of the complaint. The complaint should also be logged in the Team Incident/Restraint Log
- The adult should look to deal with the complaint as quickly as possible, and then inform Lee (the Complaints Officer) about it.
- If the adult feels uncomfortable with managing the complaint, they should seek advice from a manager or Lee
- Any complaint that may have child protection issues should be passed on as soon as possible to either Claire, Angus or Lee
- Any adult who is the subject of the complaint should not be involved in the management of it
- At the end of the process, the complainant should be asked what they would like to happen with their complaint, i.e. how they would like it dealt with and what outcome they would like.
- All complaint forms should be seen by Lee and filed in his office.

If a child is asking how to complain, adults should try and help them make an informed decision as to what will happen with the different complaint routes they may choose.



