

Complaints Procedure

Our vision: Templars, a place where everyone belongs. A place where everyone is proud to belong. A school where everyone is welcomed, feels safe and strives to achieve their full potential.


Our mission: Every child, Every day, Every chance.

Our values: Care, Respect and Honesty.

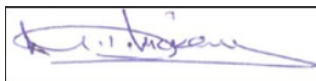
Document Control

<u>Item</u>	<u>Detail</u>
Policy Author	Helen Benarous/Headteacher
Policy Owner	Headteacher
Approval	Governing Board
Date Ratified	Autumn 25
Review Cycle	Annually
Next Review Due	Autumn 2026 (or sooner if statutory guidance)

Signatures

<u>Role</u>	<u>Name</u>	<u>Signature</u>	<u>Date</u>
Headteacher	Helen Benarous		8.11.25

Chair of Governors Martin Vickery



Distribution

- Available on the school website
- Available from the school office on request
- Shared with staff on Sharepoint

Safeguarding

At Templars Primary School, safeguarding and child protection are of the highest priority. The school is fully committed to ensuring the welfare and safety of every child. Safeguarding is regarded as the responsibility of all adults within our school community.

Pupils have the right to learn in a supportive, caring and safe environment that includes protection from all forms of abuse, including bullying. All members of staff remain vigilant for signs of any pupil in distress and are confident in applying the school's safeguarding processes to prevent and alleviate such concerns.

If any behaviour gives rise to a safeguarding concern, Templars Primary School procedures will always be followed in accordance with the Child Protection Policy. All concerns are referred to the Designated Safeguarding Team, whose members are identified on the staffroom noticeboard and the school website.

Who can make a complaint

This procedure is open to any individual, including members of the public, who wishes to raise a concern about any provision, facility or service that the school provides, unless a separate statutory process applies.

The difference between a concern and a complaint

- Concern: An expression of worry or doubt where reassurance is sought.
- Complaint: An expression of dissatisfaction about an action that has been taken or not taken.

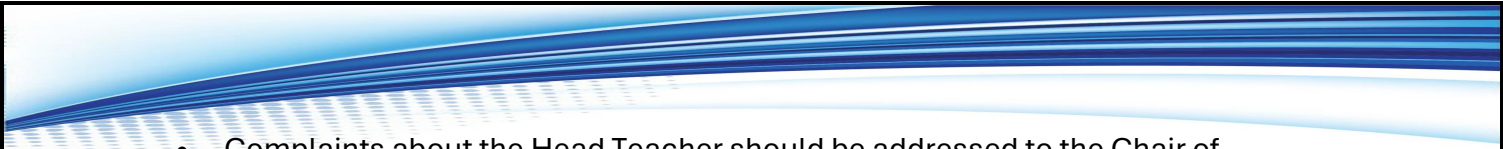
The school aims to resolve matters as early and informally as possible. Where a complainant feels unable to raise a concern with a particular member of staff, the Head Teacher, Mrs Helen Benarous, will refer the matter to another suitable colleague to ensure impartiality.

How to raise a concern or make a complaint

Concerns or complaints may be raised in person, by telephone, or in writing, including through a third party who has been given the complainant's consent to act on their behalf. In the first instance, concerns should be raised with the class teacher or Head Teacher. If the matter remains unresolved, the complainant should proceed to the formal stages of this procedure.

Complainants must not approach individual governors regarding a new complaint, as this may prevent them from considering an appeal impartially at a later stage.

- Complaints about members of staff (other than the Head Teacher) should be addressed to the Head Teacher, via the school office, and marked Private and Confidential.

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- Complaints about the Head Teacher should be addressed to the Chair of Governors, via the school office, and marked Private and Confidential.
 - Complaints concerning the Chair of Governors, any individual governor, or the Governing Body as a whole should be addressed to the Clerk to the Governing Body, via the school office, and marked Private and Confidential.

A template complaint form is provided at the end of this policy. Assistance in completing the form can be obtained from the school office or independent organisations such as Citizens Advice.

Reasonable adjustments

The school will make reasonable adjustments as required to ensure full access to this procedure. This may include accessible meeting venues, alternative formats, or practical assistance in completing forms.

Confidentiality and data protection

All complaints will be treated confidentially. Personal information will be processed in accordance with the United Kingdom General Data Protection Regulation (UK GDPR), the Data Protection Act 2018, and the school's Data Protection and Records Retention policies.

Anonymous complaints

Anonymous complaints will not normally be investigated. The Head Teacher or Chair of Governors will decide whether the matter warrants investigation in the interests of the school community.

Timescales

- Complaints should be raised within three months of the incident, or of the last incident in a series. Complaints received after this period will only be considered in exceptional circumstances.
- Complaints received outside of term time will be treated as having been received on the first school day after the holiday period.

Scope and exceptions (where alternative routes apply)

Certain matters must follow other statutory or regulatory procedures. Examples include:

- Admissions, statutory assessments of Special Educational Needs, or school re-organisation proposals: contact Coventry Local Authority.
- Curriculum matters: contact the Department for Education.
- Exclusions: refer to current Department for Education guidance on exclusions. Concerns about the application of the school's Behaviour Policy should be raised through this complaints procedure.

- Safeguarding and child protection matters: follow the school's safeguarding policy, or contact the Local Authority Designated Officers (LADOs) or the Multi-Agency Safeguarding Hub (MASH) if serious concerns exist.

Local Safeguarding Contacts

- LADOs (Quality Assurance): Beki Habberley and Abby Poar – lado@coventry.gov.uk
Tel: 024 7697 6170
- MASH: MASH@coventry.gov.uk Tel: 024 7678 8555
- MASH Education Representative: Claire McElroy Email:
claire.mcelroy@coventry.gov.uk

Other investigations or legal action

Where the police, local authority safeguarding teams, tribunals, or courts are investigating related matters, the school may pause this complaints process until those proceedings are concluded. Should legal action be initiated, the school may suspend this procedure for that complaint until the case has been resolved.

Resolving complaints

At every stage, the school seeks to reach a resolution that may include one or more of the following:

- an explanation;
- an acknowledgement that the situation could have been handled differently;
- an assurance that the matter will not recur;
- a review of relevant policies or procedures;
- or a formal apology.

A complainant may withdraw their complaint at any point, preferably in writing.

Formal Procedure

Stage 1 – Investigation by the Head Teacher

- Submit to: Head Teacher (Mrs Helen Benarous) via the school office, marked Private and Confidential.
- Acknowledgement: within five school days.
- Investigation and response: normally within ten school days of receipt. Where additional time is required, the complainant will be informed of the revised response date.

The Head Teacher may delegate the investigation to a senior member of staff, but the final decision will remain with the Head Teacher. The written response will explain the investigation undertaken, the decision and its rationale, and any resulting actions. It will also outline the process for escalation should the complainant remain dissatisfied.

Complaints about the Head Teacher or the Governing Body:

- Address to the Chair of Governors (Mr Martin Vickery) via the school office, marked Private and Confidential.

- Where the complaint concerns the Chair or Vice-Chair, the whole or majority of the Governing Body, Stage 1 will be conducted by an independent investigator appointed by the governors.

Stage 2 – Governing Body Complaints Committee (final school stage)

If dissatisfied with the outcome of Stage 1, the complainant should write to the Clerk to the Governing Body (Capita Entrust) via the school office within seven school days of receiving the Stage 1 response.

- Acknowledgement: within seven school days.
- Hearing: the committee will aim to meet within twenty school days of the request. If three offered dates are declined without good reason, the committee may proceed on the basis of written submissions.

The committee will comprise at least three impartial governors with no prior involvement. Where necessary, governors from another school or from the Local Authority's Governor Services may be invited to ensure impartiality. An entirely independent panel may be convened if required.

At least five school days before the meeting, the Clerk will confirm arrangements and distribute all written materials. Covert recordings will not normally be accepted. Meetings will be held in private, and any electronic recording must have prior consent from all parties, sought only where a clear accessibility need exists.

Complainants may be accompanied by a friend or relative for support. Legal representation is not normally appropriate, except where a member of staff is attending as a witness and wishes to be supported by a union or legal representative.

Possible outcomes:

- Uphold the complaint in whole or in part;
- Dismiss the complaint in whole or in part;
- Recommend procedural or policy changes to prevent recurrence.

A formal decision letter, giving reasons and any resulting actions, will be issued within seven school days of the meeting.

Further escalation:

Once Stage 2 is complete, if the complainant believes the school has failed to follow this procedure correctly or has acted unlawfully or unreasonably under education law, they may refer the matter to the Department for Education. The Department will not reinvestigate the substance of the complaint but will consider whether the school has complied with legal obligations.

Contact details: www.education.gov.uk/contactus Telephone 0370 000 2288
Department for Education, Piccadilly Gate, Store Street, Manchester M1 2WD.

Roles and Responsibilities (summary)

Complainant – Present the complaint clearly and fully; co-operate with the school in seeking resolution; respond promptly to requests; treat all involved with respect; avoid publishing details on social media; request assistance where needed.

Investigator – Conduct open, thorough and fair enquiries; interview relevant individuals; review records; maintain secure notes; meet response deadlines; provide findings and recommendations to the decision-maker.

Complaints Co-ordinator – Keep the complainant informed; liaise between staff, governors, the Clerk and external agencies; manage information sharing and additional support needs; maintain comprehensive records.

Clerk to the Governing Body – Ensure all parties understand their legal duties under education, equality, freedom-of-information and data-protection legislation; arrange and service the committee meeting; collate and circulate documentation; minute proceedings; and notify all parties of the outcome.

Committee Chair and Members – Conduct proceedings fairly and courteously; remain impartial; focus on resolution and reconciliation where possible; ensure that new issues are only considered with both parties' agreement; and always give paramount consideration to the welfare of the child.

Contact Points (Templars Primary School)

- Head Teacher: Mrs Helen Benarous – via the school office (Private and Confidential)
- Chair of Governors: Mr Martin Vickery – via the school office (Private and Confidential)
- Clerk to the Governing Body: Capita Entrust – via the school office
- External Safeguarding Contacts: as listed in the “Scope and Exceptions” section above

Care, Respect and Honesty

- All complaints will be handled in a manner that reflects the school's values of care, respect and honesty, with the aim of achieving early and fair resolution.
- Staff and complainants are expected to communicate constructively, respectfully and courteously at all times.
- Where a matter falls under another statutory process (for example, admissions, exclusions or safeguarding), the school will signpost the complainant to the correct procedure to ensure clarity and fairness.



Complaint Form

Please complete and return to the appropriate designated officer as outlined within procedure who will acknowledge receipt and explain what action will be taken.

Your name:

Pupil's name:

Your relationship to the pupil:

Address / Postcode:

Daytime and evening telephone number / Email:

Please describe your complaint (including who at school you have already spoken to):



What outcome are you seeking at this stage?

Please list any accompanying documents:

Signature and Date

School's use only

Date acknowledgement sent:

By Whom:

Complaint referred to:

Date: