

LONDON BOROUGH OF BARKING AND DAGENHAM
CHILDREN'S SERVICES
SCHOOLS COMPLAINTS PROCEDURE
August 2012
Information for Parents

Background Information

From time to time, Children's Services receives complaints about schools from parents, pupils and members of the public. Changes in the law have now put most of the responsibility for dealing with complaints in the hands of the Head Teachers of schools or the School Governors. Additionally, the Secretary of State for Education can now investigate school complaints once all school-based stages have been exhausted.

This document explains how you should proceed if you wish to make a complaint about a school.

How to Proceed

Schools complaints procedures generally have three in-school stages:

Stage	Details	Timescale for response
Stage One	Complaint heard by staff member (although not if they are the subject of the complaint)	10 working days from receipt of complaint
Stage Two	Complaint heard by Head Teacher	10 working days from receipt of complaint
Stage Three	Complaint heard by Governing Body's Complaints Appeal Panel	20 working days from receipt of complaint

Stage 1

In the first instance, contact the school to discuss your problem or complaint. The School Office will be able to assist you in making arrangements to see class teachers and senior members of staff. In most cases your complaint will be dealt with to your satisfaction at this stage without the need to resort to a formal complaint.

Stage 2

If the initial discussions do not resolve your complaint, then you may use stage 2 of the school's formal complaint procedure by raising your complaint with the Head Teacher.

Stage 3

However, if this still does not resolve the matter and you wish to take your complaint further; contact the Chair of the Governing Body for the school, either via the school or by sending your complaint to Governors' Support, Children's Services, Roycraft House, 16, Lindon Road, Barking, Essex, IG11 8HE

Stage 3 is the last step of the process that is managed within the school / school governing body. If your problem/complaint remains unresolved after stage 3, then you may raise your complaint with the Secretary of State for Education. This is the fourth and final stage of the complaints process.

Stage 4

Please put your concerns directly to the Secretary of State for Education

Department for Education
Castle View House
East Lane
Runcorn
Cheshire
WA7 2GJ

Vexatious Complaints

There will be occasions when, despite all stages of the procedures having been followed, the complainant remains dissatisfied. If the complainant tries to reopen the same issue, the Chair of the Governing Body is able to inform them in writing that the procedure has been exhausted and that the matter is now closed at school level.

This does not preclude a complaint being escalated to Stage 4. The Secretary of State for Education will make an independent judgement about each case.