



Anfield Road Primary School
School Concerns and Complaints Policy

Chair of Governors:	Leigh Crockett
Headteacher:	Claire Drew-Williams
Date of adoption:	22/06/2026
Date of next review:	22/06/2028

1. Introduction

Anfield Road Primary School is committed to providing the highest quality education and care for all pupils. We recognise that, on occasion, parents, carers, or members of the community may wish to raise concerns or make a complaint. This policy sets out a clear, fair, and transparent process for doing so.

The school aims to resolve concerns swiftly, informally where possible, and always with respect, clarity, and a focus on positive outcomes for children.

2. Purpose of the Policy

This policy aims to:

- Provide a straightforward process for raising concerns or complaints.
- Ensure complaints are handled promptly, fairly, and consistently.
- Promote resolution at the earliest possible stage.
- Support strong relationships between school and families.
- Ensure all parties are treated with dignity and respect.

3. Scope of the Policy

This policy covers complaints relating to:

- The quality of education provided.
- Behaviour, safeguarding, or pastoral matters.
- Communication, administration, or school procedures.
- Conduct of staff or school leadership.
- Any other matter not covered by statutory procedures.

Separate statutory procedures apply to:

- Admissions
- Exclusions
- Special Educational Needs (SEN) assessments
- Child protection concerns
- Staff grievances or disciplinary matters

Where a complaint falls under a statutory process, the school will direct the complainant to the correct procedure.

Complaints not in scope of school procedure

A complaints procedure should cover all complaints about any provision of facilities or services that a school provides with the **exceptions** listed below, for which there are separate (statutory) procedures

Exceptions	Who to contact
Admissions to schools	Complaints about the admissions process or decisions must be directed to Liverpool City Council School Admissions (0151 233 3006 / schooladmissions@liverpool.gov.uk). Complaints about admission appeal hearings should be made to the Local Government & Social Care Ombudsman.
EHCP Educational Needs (SEN)	Concerns relating to Education, Health and Care Plans (EHCPs), statutory assessments, or decisions made by the Local Authority must be directed to Liverpool City Council SEND Team (0151 233 3000 / send@liverpool.gov.uk). Parents wishing to appeal an EHCP decision may contact the SEND Tribunal. Concerns relating to SEN support provided by the school (not linked to EHCP decisions) should be raised with the SENCO in the first instance. SENCO for lower school (EYFS- Chloe Ryder, KS1- Christine Turner/ KS2- Denise Costello)
Any Safeguarding concerns	Any safeguarding concern about a child should be reported directly to Liverpool Children's Services (Careline) on 0151 233 3700. Concerns relating to the conduct of a member of school staff should, in the first instance, be addressed to the Headteacher, Mrs C. Drew-Williams. If the concern relates to the conduct of the Headteacher, the complaint should be addressed to the Chair of Governors, Mr Leigh Crockett, who may refer the matter to the Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO).

Exclusion of children from school	Further information about raising concerns about exclusion can be found at: www.gov.uk/school-discipline-exclusions/exclusions
Whistleblowing	Whistleblowing concerns fall outside the scope of the school's complaints procedure. The school's Whistleblowing Policy can be found on the school website under Statutory Policies. Whistleblowing applies when an individual is not satisfied with the way a complaint or concern has been handled and believes there may be wrongdoing, malpractice, or a failure to follow statutory duties
Staff grievances and disciplinary procedures	These matters will invoke the school's internal grievance procedures. Complainants will not be informed of the outcome of any investigation. We will work alongside Carol Kelly (SIL HR) who will support the process.

4. Principles for Handling Complaints

- **Respect:** All complaints are taken seriously and handled sensitively.
- **Fairness:** Each complaint is considered objectively and without prejudice.
- **Timeliness:** The school aims to respond within the timescales set out in this policy.
- **Confidentiality:** Information is shared only with those who need to know.
- **Resolution:** The focus is on achieving a fair and constructive outcome.

5. Stages of the Complaints Process

Stage 1: Informal Resolution

Most concerns can be resolved quickly through informal discussion.

- 1) Parents/carers should first raise the issue verbally with the relevant class teacher or staff member, or email the school outlining their concern. The aim at this stage is to resolve the matter informally, either through discussion, a telephone call, or a face-to-face meeting where appropriate.
- 2) If the matter remains unresolved, it may be escalated to a member of the senior leadership team (SLT), including the Deputy Headteachers, Mr Griffiths and Mrs Beaumont.

Mr Aidan McCartney Head of Upper school (years 5 & 6)

Ms Denise Costello Head of Middle school (years 2, 3 & 4)

Mrs Jen Elliot Head of First School (Years 1 & 2)

Mrs Christine Turner Head of Early Years (Nursery & Reception)

- All complaints regarding any member of staff should be directed to the Headteacher.
- The Headteacher has the authority to designate responsibility for investigating or responding to the complaint to a member of the Senior Leadership Team or to the relevant Head of School/Year Group where appropriate.
Any delegated action will be carried out on behalf of the Headteacher, who retains overall responsibility for the process and outcome.
- The school will only address complaints or concerns about a child from a parent or legal guardian. The school is not obligated to respond to complaints or requests for information made by individuals who do not have parental responsibility.
- The school aims to resolve informal concerns within **10 school days**.

If the concern cannot be resolved informally, the complainant may proceed to Stage 2.

Stage 2: Formal Complaint to the Headteacher

A formal complaint should be submitted in writing to the Headteacher, Mrs C Drew-Williams. The complaint should include:

- A clear description of the issue
- Steps already taken to resolve it
- The desired outcome
- If we feel as though the case requires further investigation or time, this will be communicated via letter.

Process:

- Your complaint will be acknowledged via Holding letter within **5 school days**.
- An investigation will be carried out, which may include meeting with the complainant.
- A written response will be provided within **14 school days** of acknowledgment.

If the complaint concerns the Headteacher, it should be addressed directly to the Chair of Governors, Mr Leigh Crockett.

Stage 3: Complaint to the Governing Body

If the complainant is dissatisfied with the Headteacher's response, they may request that the matter be reviewed by the Governing Body's Complaints Panel.

Requests must be made in writing to the Chair of Governors within **10 school days** of receiving the Stage 2 outcome.

Complaints Panel Process:

- The Chair of Governors and another member of the body, not previously involved, will be convened.
- The complainant will be invited to attend a meeting and may bring a companion.
- The panel will review the evidence and reach a conclusion.
- A written outcome will be provided within **14 school days** of the meeting.

The panel's decision is the final stage within the school.

Roles and Responsibilities Within the Complaints Process

Complaints Co-ordinator:

Role of Complaints co-ordinator is Miss Katie Murphy as the Headteachers PA and the Director for Extended School Services and Parent Relations. You can email your complaint to K.murphy@anfieldroadprimary.co.uk or admin@anfieldroadprimary.co.uk

The complaints co-ordinator will:

- Ensure the complainant is fully updated at each stage of the procedure
- Liaise with staff members, the Headteacher, Chair of Governors, Clerk, and the Local Authority (where appropriate) to support the smooth running of the process
- Be aware of issues relating to:
 - sharing third-party information
 - additional support needs, including interpretation support or support for children/young people making a complaint
- Maintain accurate and confidential records throughout the process

The school is committed to handling all complaints sensitively, securely, and in line with GDPR and safeguarding requirements. Information shared during the complaints process will only be disclosed to those who need to know in order to investigate, respond, or fulfil statutory duties. Personal data, third-party information, and details relating to staff or pupils will be protected at all times, and records will be stored confidentially in accordance with the school's Data Protection Policy.

Clerk to the Governing Body

The Clerk, Miss Rebecca Denby, acts as the contact point for the complainant and the Complaints Committee. The Clerk will:

- Ensure all parties understand the Equality Act 2010, the Freedom of Information Act 2000, the Data Protection Act 2018, and GDPR
- Set the date, time, and venue of the meeting, ensuring accessibility and convenience for all invited parties

- Collate and distribute relevant written materials (e.g., Stage 1 paperwork, submissions from the school and complainant) within agreed timescales
- Record the proceedings and circulate the minutes
- Notify all parties of the committee's decision

Committee Chair

The Chair of the Complaints Committee and Head of Governing Body, Mr Leigh Crockett will be nominated in advance of the meeting and will ensure that:

- Both parties are asked (via the Clerk) to provide any additional information by a specified date
- The meeting is conducted in an informal, non-adversarial manner, with courtesy and respect for all participants
- Complainants who may be unfamiliar with formal meetings are put at ease, especially where the complainant is a child or young person
- The remit of the committee is clearly explained
- Written material is shared with all attendees, provided this does not breach confidentiality or data protection requirements
- Any new issues raised during the meeting are considered fairly, with adjournments if necessary
- Both the complainant and the school have the opportunity to present their case and seek clarity
- The issues are fully addressed and key findings of fact are established
- The committee acts independently, with no member having prior involvement or external interest
- The meeting is appropriately minuted
- They liaise with the Clerk and the Complaints Co-ordinator

Committee Members

Committee members must ensure that:

- The meeting is independent, impartial, and clearly seen to be so
- No governor participates if they have had prior involvement in the complaint or related circumstances
- The aim of the meeting is to resolve the complaint and support reconciliation where possible
- They recognise that complainants may feel nervous, emotional, or inhibited, particularly when discussing matters affecting their child
- Additional care is taken when a child or young person is present for all or part of the meeting
- The child's welfare is paramount, and their views are given equal consideration
- Where the child is the complainant, the committee checks in advance whether support is needed to help them present their complaint
- Where the parent is the complainant, they are asked which parts of the meeting (if any) the child should attend, while being advised that the committee may override this if attendance is not in the child's best interests

6. Unreasonable or Persistent Complaints

The school may implement measures if a complainant's behaviour becomes unreasonable, including excessive communication, aggressive behaviour, or refusal to engage with the process. Any such action will be proportionate and clearly communicated.

7. Record Keeping

The school maintains a confidential record of all formal complaints, including:

- The nature of the complaint
- Actions taken
- Outcomes
- Any recommendations for school improvement

Records are retained in line with statutory guidance.

8. Confidentiality

All complaints are handled with discretion. Information is shared only with those directly involved in investigating or responding to the complaint.

9. Monitoring and Review

The Governing Body monitors complaints annually to identify patterns, ensure fairness, and support school improvement. This policy is reviewed every 2 years.