

Farney Close School Complaints Procedure

Who can make a complaint?

Anyone who has contact with the schools overall provision may make a complaint. For example, young people at the school, their parents / carers, social workers, member of staff, indeed, anyone who feels that they may want to make a complaint about an issue within the school or to do with its work.

What might people want to complain about?

People may want to complain about anything within the overall provision of the school. For example, within the school a minor complaint might be not liking the food on offer, or a sanction that has been given.

What if my complaint is not about the school ?

You may wish to complain about other people or agencies that are not directly connected to the school. If this is the situation, then we will try to advise you on the best way to deal with this.

How is a minor complaint different from a complaint which is more significant ?

A minor complaint is something that can be dealt with by a Link Worker or tutor, and does not involve anyone being at risk of harm either from another person, themselves, or a situation that they may put themselves in. Alongside this, other more significant complaints might be a view that there has been a lapse in what the school agrees to offer, or that it is not working within current legislation and guidance.

Who should a minor complaint be made to?

Initially you should speak to the relevant Link Worker or tutor about making a minor complaint. If they are not available you should speak to another member of staff.

How long will it take to deal with a minor complaint ?

We aim to resolve all minor complaints within two working days.

What will the Link Worker / Tutor do about the complaint?

If you are a young person, they will ask you to complete a “Minor Complaint” form with them. If you are an adult, they will register and outline your

complaint on a form. In both situations they will work with you to resolve the complaint. Depending on the nature of the complaint, the following action will take place.

- They may talk through the complaint with you and ensure that you are provided with the full information so that you are able to make an objective judgement on the situation.
- They may speak to other people connected to your complaint (if applicable) and call a meeting between you and them so you can discuss the situation.
- If the complaint is surrounding house issues a House Meeting maybe called so that discussion can take place. Likewise, if it is about class it may be discussed with your tutor, the relevant class teacher, or in tutor time.
- It may be that your complaint is relevant to be discussed within the school forum (This would only be with your agreement)
- It may be relevant to refer your complaint to a Senior Manager.
- It may be relevant to refer your complaint to the School Governors.

What if I am not happy with how the Link Worker or tutor deals with my complaint?

You should follow the guidelines set down in the Worries and Complaints leaflet and speak to the Head, the Deputy Head, or the Care Manager. You may of course, wish to take it a responsible person or organisation outside of school to act on your behalf.

What do I do if I have a significant complaint ?

If your complaint involves a person being at risk of harm, either from another person or themselves, or from a situation where they may put themselves at risk, or you hold the view that there has been a lapse in what the school agrees to offer, or that it is not working within current legislation and guidance, then you have a number of options available to you.

- You may wish to speak directly to the Head, Deputy or Care Manager.
- If your complaint is about the Deputy Head or Care Manager, you can speak to the Head.
- If your complaint is about the Head, you can speak either to the Deputy Head or Care Manager, who will refer the matter directly to the Chair of Governors or the Company Secretary. Alternatively you may approach them directly by telephone or in writing.

- You may of course, wish to take it to a responsible person or organisation outside of school to act on your behalf.

If I wish it, will my complaint be kept confidential?

Yes. However we should make you aware that the nature of your complaint may mean that we need to share it with others in order to collect all of the relevant information for your complaint to be dealt with fully. If this is the case then we will ask your permission to do this. If you do not allow this, it may mean that we will be unable to proceed any further or that we will have to consider another form of investigation.

How would a complainant know how to contact these people?

The information can be found in the New Pupil Pack, which is given to parents / carers when they first visit school. It is also found in the Child's Welcome Pack, which is given to all new pupils when they arrive, and on the display boards on each young persons House, and in the school's Worries and Complaint leaflet.

How would a person go about making a complaint?

This can be achieved in a variety of ways. For example, it may be just as simple as telling any of the above people that you want to make a complaint and what it's about. Alternatively, you may wish to telephone or write and arrange to see a specific person to discuss the matter, or to go through another person to make a complaint on your behalf, such as a person from the LEA, a Social Worker, an advocate, or any other responsible person you have chosen.

What if you do not want to talk to a member of staff or a senior manager at the school ?

Complaints can be made to Peter Copperthwaite, the Company Secretary and Governors representative, the young persons Social Worker or advocate, the schools independent counsellors, the school Independent visitors, Child Line, the referring LEA or agency, the Commission for Social Care Inspection (CSCI), or anyone the complainant feels able to complain to and who will responsibly act on their behalf.

Will all complaints be dealt with solely within the school ?

No. It may be that the nature of the complaint indicates that a person is at risk and that it needs to be referred to other agencies outside of the school. These may be: the Police, the Children Services, Child Protection, The Department for Education and Skills, or the Care Standards Commission.

What happens when a significant complaint has been made ?

Information will be collected from all involved parties in writing by one of the senior managers, or in the case of a complaint against a senior manager, by the Company Secretary. Once all of this information is collected, a decision will be made on how to proceed and to consider what action may be taken if any. You will be kept fully informed throughout the process. Naturally, if your complaint has to be dealt with by others outside of the school it may take longer.

How long will it take to deal with a significant complaint ?

The school will try to deal with complaints of this nature within five working days and you will be written to explain how your complaint was dealt with. This will however be dependant on how difficult it is to gather information from all parties or to arrange to meet with those involved.

What will happen if I am not happy with the way my complaint has been dealt with ?

If you are not happy with the outcome of your complaint you may appeal against the decision to the governors. In response to this they will set up a hearing with a panel made up of two governors and the independent visitor. You may be present at the hearing and you may bring a responsible person to accompany you. At the end of the hearing you will be notified of the outcome in writing within five working days. Alternatively, you may wish to take it a responsible person or organisation outside of school to act on your behalf.

What other policies within the school contain information about making complaints?

- The Bullying Policy,
- The Race Equality Policy,
- The Child Protection Policy and Procedure,
- The Worries and Complaints leaflet,
- The Staff Complaints procedure,
- The School Statement and Policy on Care and Control.