



Craig Y Parc Complaints and Representations Policy v2

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Our Vision, Mission and Values



Vision

To give children and young people with additional learning needs every opportunity to pursue their fullest potential, by providing a specialised service through a holistic integrated approach.'



Mission

'To provide a safe, caring and stimulating environment for all pupils, challenging them to achieve their maximum potential through equal access to an appropriate and relevant curriculum.'



Values

Belonging

We are a community with a shared purpose, everyone is accepted, everyone matters.

Commitment

every day we strive to make a positive difference for the children, young people and their families.

Ambition

we have high expectations; we will never settle for 'OK'

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About this policy

Anyone who feels that they have an issue with the school (or a member of staff of the school) that has not been dealt with to their satisfaction may make a complaint.

This policy explains how to make a complaint about the school and/or a member of staff of the school.

The aim of the document is to secure the successful resolution of any issues raised.

Anyone who feels that they have a complaint to make should read this document before taking any action. The steps laid out in the document must then be followed so that all parties have the opportunity to put their point forward.

The person making the complaint may ask for assistance if they feel they need help in following this procedure. Details of where help may be obtained are given on page 5 of the document.

Craig Y Parc Special School are committed to dealing effectively with all concerns and complaints. In doing so we aim to clarify any issues about which you are not sure. This complaints procedure supports our commitment and is a way of ensuring that anyone with an interest in the school can raise a concern or a complaint, with confidence that it will be heard and, if well-founded, addressed in an appropriate and timely fashion.

The difference between a concern and a complaint

A concern may be defined as *'an expression of worry or doubt over an issue considered to be important for which reassurances are sought'*.

A complaint may be defined as *'an expression of dissatisfaction however made, about actions taken or a lack of action'*.

Have you asked us yet?

As a school we hope that most concerns / complaints can be settled quickly, without the need to use a formal procedure. This may be achieved by first speaking to the relevant person at the school. So, as a first step we ask for issues relating to:

- A class / therapy situation – you speak to the class teacher / therapist
- The school site – you speak to the headteacher
- A member of staff – you speak to the headteacher
- The headteacher – you speak to the divisional director for education – contact details can be found later in the document.

When to use this procedure?

When you have raised a concern or made a complaint (as described above) but feel that you have not received a satisfactory answer.

Making a complaint

Complaints that are made anonymously will be recorded but investigation will be at the discretion of the school depending on the nature of the complaint.

Where complaints are considered to have been made only to cause harm or offence to individuals or the school, the governing body will ensure that records are kept of the investigations that are made and what actions are taken, including the reasons for 'no action'

How will your complaint be handled?

We will consider all your concerns and complaints in an open and fair way. We believe that all complainants have a right to be heard, understood and respected. We will listen to what you have to say and investigate your concern according to the timeframe identified in the complaints procedure flowchart, appendix B.

At all times, the school will respect the rights and feelings of those involved and make every effort to protect confidential information.

School staff have the same right to being treated with dignity and respect. We expect you to be polite and courteous in all your dealings with the school including when you are making a complaint. Any form of aggressive, abusive or unreasonable behaviour; unreasonable demands or; unreasonable, persistent or vexatious complaining will not be tolerated. The definition of a vexatious complainant is given below.

If you follow this formal procedure we will usually respond in the way we explain below. However, there are some matters that cannot be dealt with at the school. If your complaint / concern is about a matter the school cannot deal with, we will tell you who you should make your complaint to and how to go about it.

If the matter that you wish to raise is not covered by this procedure, we will advise you who to contact / how to proceed to get an answer.

If your concern or complaint is about another body as well as the school we will work with them to decide how to handle your concern.

In some cases the timescales for dealing with your concerns or complaints may need to be extended. If this is the case, we will discuss this with you to let you know the reason and to agree a new timescale with you.

Some concerns / complaints may raise issues that have to be dealt with in another way. Should this be the case, we will explain why this is so, how the matter will need to be handled and who will deal with it.

If the Headteacher feels that a complainant is unreasonable, overly persistent or vexatious then their case may be referred to the Divisional Director for Education at Salutem for further consideration. If the director decides that the complaint is not unreasonable or vexatious it will continue to follow the process outlined in the policy.

If the director decides the complaint is unreasonable or vexatious the complainant will be told and the matter will be closed.

Unreasonable or vexatious complaints can be characterised as:

- Complaints which are obsessive, persistent, harassing, prolific or repetitious.
- Complaints which are designed to cause disruption or annoyance.
- An unreasonable or vexatious complainant can be characterised as one who:
- Insists on pursuing unmeritorious complaints in an unreasonable manner.
- Demands redress which lacks any serious purpose or value.

If it is found that the complaint is justified, if possible, we will put right any mistakes we have made and we will apologise. We aim to learn from mistakes and use that experience to improve what we do in the future.

How to raise a concern or make a complaint

A concern or complaint can be made in person, in writing or by telephone. They may also be made by a third party acting on behalf of a complainant, as long as they have appropriate consent to do so.

If the issue remains unresolved, the next step is to make a formal complaint.

Complaints against school staff (except the Headteacher) should be made in the first instance, to Clair Spring (the Headteacher) clair.spring@ambitoeducation.co.uk.

Complaints which involve or are about the Headteacher should be addressed to Mr. Chris Brown Divisional Director, chris.brown@salutemsharedservices.co.uk.

For ease of use, a template complaint form is included at the end of this procedure. If you require help in completing the form, please contact the school office. You can also ask third party organisations such as Citizens Advice to help you.

In accordance with equality law, we will consider making reasonable adjustments if required, to enable complainants to access and complete this complaints procedure. For instance, providing information in alternative formats, assisting complainants in raising a formal complaint or holding meetings in accessible locations and at convenient times acceptable to all.

Timescales

You must raise the complaint within three months of the incident or, where a series of associated incidents have occurred, within three months of the last of these incidents. We will consider complaints made outside of this time frame if exceptional circumstances apply.

If at any point we cannot meet the timescales we have set out in this policy, we will:

- Set new time limits with the complainant

➤ Send the complainant details of the new deadline and explain the delay

Complaints received outside of term time

We will consider complaints made outside of term time to have been received on the first school day after the holiday period.

If other bodies are investigating aspects of the complaint, for example the police, local authority (LA) safeguarding teams or Tribunals, this may impact on our ability to adhere to the timescales within this procedure or result in the procedure being suspended until those public bodies have completed their investigations.

If a complainant commences legal action against Craig Y Parc in relation to their complaint, we will consider whether to suspend the complaints procedure in relation to their complaint until those legal proceedings have concluded.

Withdrawal of a Complaint

If a complainant wants to withdraw their complaint, we will ask them to confirm this in writing.

Answering your concern or complaint

There are up to three stages: A, B and C. Most complaints can be resolved at stages A or B. You can bring a relative or companion to support you at any time during the process but you will be expected to speak for yourself, unless you require special assistance. We also recognise that when the complainant is a pupil it is reasonable for the companion to speak on their behalf and / or advise the pupil.

As far as possible, your concern or complaint will be dealt with on a confidential basis. However, there could be occasions when the person dealing with your concern or complaint will need to consider whether anyone else within the school needs to know about your concern or complaint, so as to address it appropriately. If you are a pupil under 16 and wish to raise a concern or bring a complaint, we will ask for your permission before we involve your parent(s) or carer(s). If you are a pupil under 16 and are involved in a complaint in any other way, we may ask your parent(s) or carer(s) to become involved and attend any discussion or interview with you.

Stage A

If you have a concern, you can often resolve it quickly by talking to a teacher. You should raise your concern as soon as you can; normally we would expect you to raise your issue within 10 school days of any incident. The longer you leave it the harder it might be for those involved to deal with it effectively.

If you are a pupil, you can raise your concerns with your school council representative, form tutor or a teacher chosen to deal with pupil. This will not stop you, at a later date, from raising a complaint if you feel that the issue(s) you have raised have not been dealt with properly.

We will try to let you know what we have done or are doing about your concern normally within 10 school days, but if this is not possible, we will talk to you and agree a revised timescale with you. The person overseeing your concern or complaint will keep you informed of the progress being made. This person will also keep a log of the concern for future reference.

Stage B

In most cases, we would expect that your concern is resolved informally. If you feel that your initial concern has not been dealt with appropriately you should put your complaint in writing to the headteacher. We would expect you to aim to do this within five school days of receiving a response to your concern as it is in everyone's interest to resolve a complaint as soon as possible. The form at Appendix A you may find useful. If you are a pupil we will explain the form to you, help you complete it and give you a copy. If your complaint is about the headteacher, you should put your complaint in writing to the divisional director, addressed to the school, to ask for your complaint to be investigated. In all cases. You will be invited to discuss your complaint at a meeting. Timescales for dealing with your complaint will be agreed with you. We will aim to have a meeting with you and to explain what will happen, normally within 10 school days of receiving your letter. The headteacher (or Director if complaint concerns the Headteacher) will complete the investigation and will let you know the outcome in writing within 10 school days of completion.

Stage C

If you are not happy with the outcome of the investigation you can escalate this to our Head Office who will complete another investigation according to the same timescales above. The investigator will be someone completely independent of your Service to ensure that its handled objectively and fairly. Salitem may also choose to appoint an independent third party to undertake stage C investigations and provide a written report to all parties concerned.

The outcome at stages B and C

The outcome will be to:

- Uphold the complaint, in whole or in part
- Dismiss the complaint, in whole or in part

If the complaint is upheld, the company will:

- Decide the appropriate action to resolve the complaint
- Where appropriate, recommend changes to the school's systems or procedures to prevent similar issues in the future

The school will inform those involved of the decision in writing within 10 school days.

Salutem Head Office

Minton Place, Victoria Street, Windsor, England SL4 1EG

01753255777

If you remain unhappy about the Head Office outcome you can submit your complaint to:

- **Your Local Authority's complaints department**

Our commitment to you

In all cases the school and proprietor will ensure that complaints are dealt with in an unbiased, open, and fair way. We will take your concerns and complaints seriously and, where we have made mistakes, will try to learn from them. If you need help to make your concerns known, we will try and assist you.

If you are a young person and need extra assistance you may want to contact MEIC which is a national advocacy and advice helpline for children and young people. Advice and support can also be accessed from the Children's Commissioner for Wales

MEIC may be contacted by freephone: 0808 802 3456, or text: 84001. This service is operated 24 hours a day. The Children's Commissioner for Wales can be contacted by freephone: 0808 801 1000 (Monday to Friday 9a.m. to 5p.m.), text: 80 800 (start your message with COM) or e-mail: advice@childcomwales.org.uk (<mailto:advice@childcomwales.org.uk>).

Appendix A

Complaint Form

Please complete and return to Headteacher, Clair Spring, who will acknowledge receipt and explain what action will be taken.

Your name:
Pupil's name (if relevant):
Your relationship to the pupil (if relevant):
Address:
Postcode:
Day time telephone number:
Evening telephone number:
Please give details of your complaint, including whether you have spoken to anybody at the school about it:

What actions do you feel might resolve the problem at this stage?:

Are you attaching any paperwork? If so, please give details:

Signature:

Date:

Official use

Date acknowledgement sent:

By who:

Complaint referred to:

Date:

Appendix B

Complaints Procedure Flowchart

This flowchart shows, at a glance, how a complaint will be progressed.

