



Headteacher: Mrs Katie Smith NPQH
Website: www.glusburn.n-yorks.sch.uk
Reg Charity No 1060322
01535 632145
admin@glusburn.n-yorks.sch.uk
Colne Road, Glusburn, BD20 8PJ

GLUSBURN COMMUNITY PRIMARY AND NURSERY SCHOOL

Complaints procedure

Article 3. Best interests of the child -When adults make decisions, they should think about how their decisions will affect children. All adults should do what is best for children. Governments should make sure children are protected and looked after by their parents, or by other people when this is needed. Governments should make sure that people and places responsible for looking after children are doing a good job.

This policy was adopted by the Governing Body on	SEPTEMBER 2026
This policy is scheduled for review on	SEPTEMBER 2027

1. LEGAL FRAMEWORK

This policy is based on the Department for Education's statutory guidance 'Best practice guidance for school complaints procedures 2020' (updated January 2023) and the Education Act 2002.

The policy also takes into account:

- The Education (Independent School Standards) Regulations 2014
- The Data Protection Act 2018 and UK General Data Protection Regulation (UK GDPR)
- The Data (Use and Access) Act 2025
- The Freedom of Information Act 2000
- The Equality Act 2010
- Health and Safety at Work Act 1974
- Keeping Children Safe in Education 2026

Who can make a complaint?

This complaints procedure is not limited to parents or carers of children that are registered at the school. Any person, including members of the public, may make a complaint to [Glusburn Community Primary School](#) about any provision of facilities or services that we provide. Unless complaints are dealt with under separate statutory procedures (such as appeals relating to exclusions or admissions), we will use this complaints procedure.

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'*.

It is in everyone's interest that concerns and complaints are resolved at the earliest possible stage. Many issues can be resolved informally, without the need to use the formal stages of the complaints procedure. [Glusburn Community Primary School](#) takes concerns seriously and will make every effort to resolve the matter as quickly as possible.

If you have difficulty discussing a concern with a particular member of staff, we will respect your views. In these cases, [Katie Smith \(Headteacher\)](#), will refer you to another staff member. Similarly, if the member of staff directly involved feels unable to deal with a concern, [Katie Smith \(Headteacher\)](#), will refer you to another staff member. The member of staff may be more senior but does not have to be. The ability to consider the concern objectively and impartially is more important.

We understand however, that there are occasions when people would like to raise their concerns formally. In this case, [Glusburn Community Primary School](#) will attempt to resolve the issue internally, through the stages outlined within this complaints procedure.

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 on a complainant, as long as they have appropriate consent to do so.

Concerns should be raised with either the class teacher or headteacher. If the issue remains unresolved, the next step is to make a formal complaint.

Complainants should not approach individual governors to raise concerns or complaints. They have no power to act on an individual basis and it may also prevent them from considering complaints at Stage 2 of the procedure.

Complaints against school staff (except the headteacher) should be made in the first instance, to [Katie Smith \(the headteacher\)](#) via the school office. Please mark them as Private and Confidential.

Complaints that involve or are about the headteacher should be addressed to [Claire Clayton-Stead](#) (the Chair of Governors), via the school office. Please mark them as Private and Confidential.

Complaints about the Chair of Governors, any individual governor or the whole governing body should be addressed to [Marion Moraghan](#) (the Clerk to the Governing Body) via the school office. Please mark them as Private and Confidential.

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 like the 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.

Complaints Made on Social Media

We do not accept complaints made via social media platforms (e.g., Facebook, Twitter, Instagram). This is because:

- Social media is not a secure or confidential way to communicate
- We cannot verify the identity of the complainant
- It is difficult to investigate complaints made publicly
- It may breach the privacy of staff, pupils or other parents

If you make a complaint on social media, we will:

- Ask you to contact us through one of the official channels listed above (in person, in writing, by email, or by telephone)
- Not respond to the complaint on social media

- Not engage in public discussions about the complaint

We ask that all members of our school community refrain from discussing complaints on social media, as this can:

- Breach confidentiality
- Damage relationships within the school community
- Undermine the complaints process
- Cause distress to those involved

If you have concerns about the school, please raise them through the proper channels so we can investigate and respond appropriately.

Anonymous complaints

We will not normally investigate anonymous complaints. However, the headteacher or Chair of Governors, if appropriate, will determine whether the complaint warrants an investigation.

Duplicate Complaints

If we receive duplicate complaints (i.e., the same complaint from different people, such as married parents), we will:

- Inform all complainants that we have received duplicate complaints
- Investigate the complaint once
- Provide the same response to all complainants
- Offer to meet with all complainants together, or separately if they prefer

Serial or Persistent Complaints

If a complainant raises the same issue repeatedly, despite the school having followed its complaints procedure and provided a final response, we will:

- Inform the complainant that we have already investigated their complaint and provided a response
- Explain that we will not investigate the same complaint again unless new evidence comes to light
- Inform the complainant that we will not respond to further correspondence on the same issue

This does not prevent the complainant from raising a new, separate complaint about a different issue.

See the section on "Unreasonable Complaints and Unreasonable Complainant Behaviour" below for more information.

Time scales

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.

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.

For the purposes of this policy, "school days" means days when the school is open to pupils. This excludes weekends, bank holidays, and school holidays.

If a deadline falls during a school holiday period, the deadline will be extended to the first school day after the holiday period ends.

Flexibility in Exceptional Circumstances

We will make every effort to meet the timeframes set out in this policy. However, if exceptional circumstances prevent us from doing so, we will:

- Inform the complainant as soon as possible
- Explain the reason for the delay
- Provide a revised timeframe
- Keep the complainant updated on progress

Examples of exceptional circumstances may include:

- Key witnesses or decision-makers being unavailable due to long-term absence
- The need to seek legal advice on complex matters
- The need to coordinate with external agencies (e.g., police, social care)
- School closure due to unforeseen circumstances
- The complexity of the complaint requiring additional investigation time

Scope of this Complaints Procedure

This procedure covers all complaints about any provision of community facilities or services by [Glusburn Community Primary School](#) other than complaints that are dealt with under other statutory procedures, including those listed below.

Exceptions	Who to contact
• Admissions to schools • Statutory assessments of Special Educational Needs • School re-organisation proposals	Concerns about admissions, statutory assessments of Special Educational Needs, or school re-organisation proposals should be raised with the local authority i.e. North Yorkshire County Council .
• Matters likely to require a Child Protection Investigation	Complaints about child protection matters are handled under our child protection and safeguarding policy and in accordance with relevant statutory guidance. If you have serious concerns, you may wish to contact the local authority designated officer (LADO) who has local responsibility for safeguarding or the Multi-Agency Safeguarding Hub (MASH). LADO: Susan Crawford 01609 532152 07813 005161
• Exclusion of children from school*	Further information about raising concerns about exclusion can be found at: www.gov.uk/school-discipline-exclusions/exclusions .

	<i>*complaints about the application of the behaviour policy can be made through the school's complaints procedure.</i>
Whistleblowing	We have an internal whistleblowing procedure for all our employees, including temporary staff and contractors. The Secretary of State for Education is the prescribed person for matters relating to education for whistleblowers in education who do not want to raise matters direct with their employer. Referrals can be made at: www.education.gov.uk/contactus. Volunteer staff who have concerns about our school should complain through the school's complaints procedure. You may also be able to complain direct to the LA or the Department for Education (see link above), depending on the substance of your complaint.
Staff grievances	Complaints from staff will be dealt with under the school's internal grievance procedures.
Staff conduct	Complaints about staff will be dealt with under the school's internal disciplinary procedures, if appropriate. Complainants will not be informed of any disciplinary action taken against a staff member as a result of a complaint. However, the complainant will be notified that the matter is being addressed.
Complaints about services provided by other providers who may use school premises or facilities	Providers should have their own complaints procedure to deal with complaints about service. Please contact them direct.
National Curriculum - content	Please contact the Department for Education at: www.education.gov.uk/contactus
Data protection complaints	Data protection complaints are handled under our data protection complaints procedure. These complaints have a different statutory timeframe: Acknowledge within 30 days Investigate without undue delay

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 [Glusburn Community Primary School](#) 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.

Resolving complaints

At each stage in the procedure, Glusburn Community Primary School wants to resolve the complaint. After investigating, we will reach one of the following conclusions:

- Upheld: We agree that the complaint is justified, either in whole or in part
- Partially upheld: We agree with some elements of the complaint but not others
- Not upheld: We do not agree that the complaint is justified

If the complaint is upheld or partially upheld, we will explain what went wrong and what we will do to put it right.

Withdrawal of a Complaint

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

Stage 1

Formal complaints must be made to the headteacher (unless they are about the headteacher), via the school office. This may be done in person, in writing (preferably on the Complaint Form), or by telephone.

The headteacher (or person investigating the complaint) will record the date the complaint is received and will acknowledge receipt of the complaint in writing (either by letter or email) within **FIVE** school days.

Within this response, the headteacher will seek to clarify the nature of the complaint, ask what remains unresolved and what outcome the complainant would like to see. The headteacher can consider whether a face to face meeting is the most appropriate way of doing this.

Note: The headteacher may delegate the investigation to another member of the school's senior leadership team but not the decision to be taken.

During the investigation, the headteacher (or investigator) will:

- if necessary, interview those involved in the matter and/or those complained of, allowing them to be accompanied if they wish
- keep a written record of any meetings/interviews in relation to their investigation.

At the conclusion of their investigation, the headteacher (or investigator) will provide a formal written response within **FIFTEEN** school days of the date of receipt of the complaint.

If the headteacher is unable to meet this deadline, they will provide the complainant with an update and revised response date.

The response will detail any actions taken to investigate the complaint and provide a full explanation of the decision made and the reason(s) for it. Where appropriate, it will include details of actions **Glusburn Community Primary School** will take to resolve the complaint.

The headteacher will advise the complainant of how to escalate their complaint should they remain dissatisfied with the outcome of Stage 1.

If the complaint is about the headteacher, or a member of the governing body (including the Chair or Vice-Chair), a suitably skilled governor will be appointed to complete all the actions at Stage 1.

Complaints about the headteacher or member of the governing body must be made to the Clerk, via the school office.

If the complaint is:

- jointly about the Chair and Vice Chair or
- the entire governing body or
- the majority of the governing body

Stage 1 will be considered by an independent investigator appointed by the governing body. At the conclusion of their investigation, the independent investigator will provide a formal written response.

Stage 2

If the complainant is dissatisfied with the outcome at Stage 1 and wishes to take the matter further, they can escalate the complaint to Stage 2 – a meeting with members of the governing body's complaints committee, which will be formed of the first three, impartial, governors available. This is the final stage of the complaints procedure.

A request to escalate to Stage 2 must be made to the Clerk, via the school office, within **FIVE** school days of receipt of the Stage 1 response.

The Clerk will record the date the complaint is received and acknowledge receipt of the complaint in writing (either by letter or email) within the next **FIVE** school days.

Requests received outside of this time frame will only be considered if exceptional circumstances apply.

The Clerk will write to the complainant to inform them of the date of the meeting. They will aim to convene a meeting within **TWENTY** school days of receipt of the Stage 2 request. If this is not possible, the Clerk will provide an anticipated date and keep the complainant informed. If the first date is not acceptable, the committee will aim to offer a further two dates for the panel to meet. If the complainant rejects the offer of three proposed dates, without good reason, the Clerk will decide when to hold the meeting. It will then proceed in the complainant's absence on the basis of written submissions from both parties.

The complaints committee will consist of at least three governors with no prior involvement or knowledge of the complaint. Prior to the meeting, they will decide amongst themselves who will act as the Chair of the Complaints Committee. If there are fewer than three governors from **Glusburn Community Primary School** available, the Clerk will source any additional, independent governors through another local school or through their LA's Governor Services team, in order to make up the committee. Alternatively, an entirely independent committee may be convened to hear the complaint at Stage 2.

The committee will decide whether to deal with the complaint by inviting parties to a meeting or through written representations, but in making their decision they will be sensitive to the complainant's needs.

The committee may also decide to hold a virtual meeting (e.g., via Microsoft Teams or Zoom) if:

- This is more convenient for all parties
- There are concerns about the safety of staff or governors
- The complainant has accessibility needs that would be better met virtually
- Travel to the school would present a significant barrier to participation

If a virtual meeting is held, the same procedures will apply as for an in-person meeting, including:

- Clear ground rules will be established in advance
- All participants will receive clear instructions on how to join
- The chair will maintain control and may mute or remove disruptive participants
- The meeting will be minuted in the same way as an in-person meeting

If the complainant is invited to attend the meeting, they may bring someone along to provide support. This can be a relative or friend. Generally, we do not encourage either party to bring legal representatives to the committee meeting. However, there may be occasions when legal representation is appropriate.

For instance, if a school employee is called as a witness in a complaint meeting, they may wish to be supported by union and/or legal representation.

Note: Complaints about staff conduct will not generally be handled under this complaints procedure. Complainants will be advised that any staff conduct complaints will be considered under staff disciplinary procedures, if appropriate, but outcomes will not be shared with them.

Representatives from the media are not permitted to attend.

At least **FIVE** school days before the meeting, the Clerk will:

- confirm and notify the complainant of the date, time and venue of the meeting, ensuring that, if the complainant is invited, the dates are convenient to all parties and that the venue and proceedings are accessible
- request copies of any further written material to be submitted to the committee at least **THREE** school days before the meeting.

Any written material will be circulated to all parties at least **THREE** school days before the date of the meeting. The committee will not normally accept, as evidence, recordings of conversations that were obtained covertly and without the informed consent of all parties being recorded.

The committee will also not review any new complaints at this stage or consider evidence unrelated to the initial complaint to be included. New complaints must be dealt with from Stage 1 of the procedure.

The meeting will be held in private. Electronic recordings of meetings or conversations are not normally permitted unless a complainant's own disability or special needs require it. Prior knowledge and consent of all parties attending must be sought before meetings or conversations take place. Consent will be recorded in any minutes taken.

The committee will consider the complaint and all the evidence presented. The committee can:

- uphold the complaint in whole or in part.
- dismiss the complaint in whole or in part.

If the complaint is upheld in whole or in part, the committee will:

- decide on the appropriate action to be taken to resolve the complaint
- where appropriate, recommend changes to the school's systems or procedures to prevent similar issues in the future.

The Chair of the Committee will provide the complainant and **Glusburn Community Primary School** with a full explanation of their decision and the reason(s) for it, in writing, within **FIVE** school days.

The letter to the complainant will include details of how to contact the Department for Education if they are dissatisfied with the way their complaint has been handled by **Glusburn Community Primary**.

If the complaint is:

- jointly about the Chair and Vice Chair or
- the entire governing body or
- the majority of the governing body

Stage 2 will be heard by a committee of independent, co-opted governors.

The response will detail any actions taken to investigate the complaint and provide a full explanation of the decision made and the reason(s) for it. Where appropriate, it will include details of actions **Glusburn Community Primary School** will take to resolve the complaint.

The response will also advise the complainant of how to escalate their complaint should they remain dissatisfied.

During all stages the person investigating the complaint, or the clerk must ensure receipt of any complaint correspondence.

Next Steps

REFERRING COMPLAINTS TO THE DEPARTMENT FOR EDUCATION

If the complainant believes the school did not handle their complaint in accordance with the published complaints procedure, or they believe the school acted unlawfully or unreasonably in the exercise of their duties under education law, they can contact the Department for Education (DfE) after they have completed Stage 2.

What the DfE Will Do

The DfE will check whether the complaint has been dealt with properly by the school. They will consider whether the school:

- Has a published complaints procedure that meets the statutory requirements
- Followed its own complaints procedure
- Acted reasonably in the circumstances

What the DfE Will Not Do

The DfE will not:

- Re-investigate the substance of the complaint
- Overturn a school's decision about a complaint
- Direct a school to take specific action
- Consider complaints about matters where there is a separate statutory process (e.g., exclusions, admissions, SEN)

How to Contact the DfE

The complainant can refer their complaint to the Department for Education:

- Online at: www.education.gov.uk/contactus
- By telephone: 0370 000 2288
- In writing to:
Department for Education
Piccadilly Gate
Store Street
Manchester
M1 2WD

The DfE will usually expect the complainant to have completed the school's complaints procedure (including Stage 2) before they will consider the complaint.

RECORDING AND MONITORING COMPLAINTS

Recording Complaints

We will record all complaints received, including:

- The date the complaint was received
- The name of the complainant (unless the complaint is anonymous)
- The nature of the complaint
- How the complaint was investigated
- The outcome of the complaint (upheld, partially upheld, or not upheld)
- Any actions taken as a result of the complaint
- Whether the complaint was resolved at Stage 1 or escalated to Stage 2

Records will be kept securely and in line with our data retention schedule and the UK GDPR.

Correspondence, statements and records relating to individual complaints will be kept confidential except where:

- The Secretary of State or a body conducting an inspection under section 109 of the Education and Skills Act 2008 requests access to them
- Disclosure is required in the course of a school inspection
- Disclosure is required for other legal reasons

Monitoring Complaints

The headteacher will report to the governing body on a termly basis on:

- The number of complaints received
- The nature of complaints
- How complaints were resolved
- Any patterns or trends identified
- Any lessons learned and actions taken to improve school procedures

This information will be anonymised to protect the identity of complainants.

The governing body will review the effectiveness of this complaints procedure annually and make any necessary amendments.

Learning from Complaints

We will use information from complaints to:

- Identify any areas where we can improve our policies, procedures or practices
- Identify training needs for staff
- Improve communication with parents and the wider community
- Identify any patterns or trends that may indicate systemic issues

All staff will be informed of any changes to policies or procedures that result from complaints, and will receive appropriate training where necessary.

CONFIDENTIALITY AND DATA PROTECTION

Our Legal Obligations

We will treat all complaints confidentially and in line with our obligations under the UK General Data Protection Regulation (UK GDPR), the Data Protection Act 2018, and the Data (Use and Access) Act 2025.

Personal Information

When handling complaints, we will only collect and process personal information that is necessary to investigate and resolve the complaint. This may include:

- The complainant's name and contact details
- Details of the complaint
- Information about the people involved in the complaint
- Witness statements
- Relevant documents and correspondence

We will only share personal information with those who need to see it to investigate and resolve the complaint. This may include:

- The person investigating the complaint
- The headteacher or senior leaders
- Members of the governing body (if the complaint reaches Stage 2)
- External advisors (e.g., HR, legal advisors) if necessary
- Relevant staff members who are involved in or affected by the complaint

We will not share personal information with anyone else unless:

- We have the individual's consent
- We are required to do so by law
- It is necessary to protect a child or vulnerable adult from harm

Confidentiality of Outcomes

We will inform complainants of the outcome of their complaint. However, we cannot share details of any disciplinary action taken against staff members, as this is confidential between the school and the staff member.

Retention of Records

We will retain records of complaints in line with our data retention schedule. Currently, we retain complaint records for:

- Six years from the date the complaint was resolved

After this period, records will be securely destroyed unless there is a legal reason to retain them for longer (e.g., if legal proceedings are ongoing).

Your Rights Under Data Protection Law

Under data protection law, you have the right to:

- Access the personal information we hold about you (subject access request)
- Request that we correct inaccurate information
- Request that we delete your information in certain circumstances
- Object to our processing of your information in certain circumstances

If you wish to exercise any of these rights, please contact:

- The school office: 01535 632145 or admin@glusburn.n-yorks.sch.uk

If you are unhappy with how we have handled your personal information, you can complain to the Information Commissioner's Office (ICO):

- Website: www.ico.org.uk
- Telephone: 0303 123 1113
- Address: Information Commissioner's Office, Wycliffe House, Water Lane, Wilmslow, Cheshire, SK9 5AF

School complaints - What a stage 2 panel meeting might look like

The role of the chair

It is the chair of the panel's responsibility to manage the meeting and to set the tone of the meeting. As far as possible it should be informal, and the chair should ensure that everyone is treated with respect. You should be aware that it could be an emotional process for attendees.

Who would be in attendance?

- The panel members
- The clerk//minute taker
- Panels do have the option of dealing with the complaint by written representation rather than by inviting parties to the meeting. If the panel so wishes, the following can be invited to attend:
- The complainant (and their supporter)
- The school representative (and their supporter)
- The person who investigated the complaint at stage 1
- Witnesses would join the meeting as required

Who joins the meeting when?

The panel will decide what the hearing will look like to ensure that it is a fair and thorough process. Both the complainant and the school representative will join the meeting at the same time to listen to what the other has to say, and hear their responses to questions. If there is likely to be distress caused by jointly giving evidence, the complainant and school representative can give evidence separately. Witnesses are permitted to be in the room for the entire meeting but it is considered best practice for them to be in attendance when presenting their own statement.

What an agenda might look like

- 1- Chair to welcome all present, to make introductions.
- 2- Chair to outline the format of the meeting.
- 3- The complainant is invited to present their case. This may include the calling of witnesses.
- 4- The panel and the school representative to have the opportunity to question the complainant (and witnesses).
- 5- The school is invited to explain their response. This may include the calling of witnesses.
- 6- The panel and the complainant to have the opportunity to question the school representative (and witnesses)
- 7- The school representative to make a summary statement
- 8- The complainant to make a summary statement
- 9- The chair should thank all for attending and explain how they will be informed of the outcome.
- 10- With the exception of the panel members and the clerk, all other attendees leave the meeting.
- 11- Panel discussion and decision making. If further information is needed to support decisions, this can happen and any delay must be explained to both parties.

12- The panel and the clerk draft a decision letter

What information should be circulated with the agenda?

A copy of the schools complaints procedure

A copy of the original complaint

Copies of correspondence between the complainant and the school in connection with the complaint including the outcome of the stage 1 process

Any other relevant information provided by either party, including witness statements.

Any relevant guidance issued by the local authority eg model policies, best practice guidance

What are the decisions to be made?

Dismiss all or part of the complaint

Uphold all or part of the complaint

Consider what actions (within the gift of the panel) to propose/recommend

Consider what recommendations the school needs to consider to prevent similar problems arising in future.

The panel's decision is the final stage of the school complaints process. Complainants must be given the contact details for the DfE so that they can escalate the matter further if they wish.

Complaint Form

Please complete and return to [Katie Smith, Headteacher, unless defined above](#), 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:

DATA PROTECTION NOTICE

The information you provide on this form will be used to investigate and resolve your complaint. We will only share your information with those who need to see it for this purpose.

For more information about how we use your personal information, please see our Privacy Notice for Parents/Carers, available on our website or from the school office.

By submitting this form, you consent to us processing your personal information for the purpose of investigating and resolving your complaint.

Official use

Date acknowledgement sent:

By who:

Complaint referred to:

Date:

Roles and Responsibilities

Complainant

The complainant will receive a more effective response to the complaint if they:

- explain the complaint in full as early as possible
- co-operate with the school in seeking a solution to the complaint
- respond promptly to requests for information or meetings or in agreeing the details of the complaint
- ask for assistance as needed
- treat all those involved in the complaint with respect
- refrain from publicising the details of their complaint on social media and respect confidentiality.

Investigator

The investigator's role is to establish the facts relevant to the complaint by:

- providing a comprehensive, open, transparent and fair consideration of the complaint through:
 - sensitive and thorough interviewing of the complainant to establish what has happened and who has been involved
 - interviewing staff and children/young people and other people relevant to the complaint
 - consideration of records and other relevant information
 - analysing information
- liaising with the complainant and the complaints co-ordinator as appropriate to clarify what the complainant feels would put things right.

The investigator should:

- conduct interviews with an open mind and be prepared to persist in the questioning
- keep notes of interviews or arrange for an independent note taker to record minutes of the meeting
- ensure that any papers produced during the investigation are kept securely pending any appeal
- be mindful of the timescales to respond
- prepare a comprehensive report for the headteacher or complaints committee that sets out the

facts, identifies solutions and recommends courses of action to resolve problems.

The headteacher or complaints committee will then determine whether to uphold or dismiss the complaint and communicate that decision to the complainant, providing the appropriate escalation details.

Complaints Co-ordinator

The complaints co-ordinator should:

- ensure that the complainant is fully updated at each stage of the procedure
- liaise with staff members, headteacher, Chair of Governors, Clerk and LAs (if appropriate) to ensure the smooth running of the complaints procedure
- be aware of issues regarding:
 - sharing third party information
 - additional support. This may be needed by complainants when making a complaint including interpretation support or where the complainant is a child or young person
- keep records.

Clerk to the Governing Body

The Clerk is the contact point for the complainant and the committee and should:

- Ensure that all people involved in the complaint procedure are aware of their legal rights and duties, including any under legislation relating to school complaints, education law, the Equality Act 2010, the Freedom of Information Act 2000, the Data Protection Act (DPA) 2018, the General Data Protection Regulations (GDPR), and the Data (Use and Access) Act 2025
- set the date, time and venue of the meeting, ensuring that the dates are convenient to all parties (if they are invited to attend) and that the venue and proceedings are accessible
- collate any written material relevant to the complaint (for example; stage 1 paperwork, school and complainant submissions) and send it to the parties in advance of the meeting within an agreed timescale
- record the proceedings
- circulate the minutes of the meeting
- notify all parties of the committee's decision.

Committee Chair

The committee's chair, who is nominated in advance of the complaint meeting, should ensure that:

- both parties are asked (via the Clerk) to provide any additional information relating to the complaint by a specified date in advance of the meeting
- the meeting is conducted in an informal manner, is not adversarial, and that, if all parties are invited to attend, everyone is treated with respect and courtesy

- complainants who may not be used to speaking at such a meeting are put at ease. This is particularly important if the complainant is a child/young person
- the remit of the committee is explained to the complainant
- Written material is seen by everyone in attendance, provided it does not breach confidentiality or any individual's rights to privacy under the DPA 2018, GDPR, or Data (Use and Access) Act 2025
- If a new issue arises it would be useful to give everyone the opportunity to consider and comment upon it; this may require a short adjournment of the meeting
- both the complainant and the school are given the opportunity to make their case and seek clarity, either through written submissions ahead of the meeting or verbally in the meeting itself
- the issues are addressed
- key findings of fact are made
- the committee is open-minded and acts independently
- no member of the committee has an external interest in the outcome of the proceedings or any involvement in an earlier stage of the procedure
- the meeting is minuted
- they liaise with the Clerk (and complaints co-ordinator, if the school has one).

Committee Member

Committee members should be aware that:

- the meeting must be independent and impartial, and should be seen to be so

No governor may sit on the committee if they have had a prior involvement in the complaint or in the circumstances surrounding it.

- the aim of the meeting should be to resolve the complaint and achieve reconciliation between the school and the complainant

We recognise that the complainant might not be satisfied with the outcome if the meeting does not find in their favour. It may only be possible to establish the facts and make recommendations.

- many complainants will feel nervous and inhibited in a formal setting

Parents/carers often feel emotional when discussing an issue that affects their child.

- extra care needs to be taken when the complainant is a child/young person and present during all or part of the meeting

Careful consideration of the atmosphere and proceedings should ensure that the child/young person does not feel intimidated.

The committee should respect the views of the child/young person and give them equal consideration to those of adults.

If the child/young person is the complainant, the committee should ask in advance if any support is needed to help them present their complaint. Where the child/young person's parent is the

complainant, the committee should give the parent the opportunity to say which parts of the meeting, if any, the child/young person needs to attend.

However, the parent should be advised that agreement might not always be possible if the parent wishes the child/young person to attend a part of the meeting that the committee considers is not in the child/young person's best interests.

- the welfare of the child/young person is paramount.

During all stages the person investigating the complaint, or the clerk must ensure receipt of any complaint correspondence.

APPENDIX [X]: ACCESSIBILITY STATEMENT

We are committed to making our complaints procedure accessible to all members of our school community.

If you need support to access this complaints procedure, we can:

- Provide this policy in large print, audio format, Braille, or other accessible formats
- Arrange for an interpreter if English is not your first language
- Provide support to complete the complaint form
- Hold meetings in accessible locations
- Hold meetings virtually if this is more accessible for you
- Make other reasonable adjustments to meet your needs

Please contact the school office if you require any support:

- Telephone: 01535 632145
- Email: admin@glusburn.n-yorks.sch.uk
- In person: Glusburn Community Primary School, Colne Road, Glusburn, Keighley, BD20 8PJ

We will work with you to ensure you can access the complaints procedure in a way that meets your needs.

APPENDIX: SUMMARY FOR PARENTS/CARERS

HOW TO MAKE A COMPLAINT

Step 1: Talk to us informally

- Speak to your child's class teacher or the headteacher
- Many concerns can be resolved quickly and informally

Step 2: Make a formal complaint (Stage 1)

- If your concern is not resolved, make a formal complaint to the headteacher (or Chair of Governors if the complaint is about the Headteacher)
- Use the complaint form or write to us
- We will acknowledge within 5 school days
- We will investigate and respond within 15 school days

Step 3: Escalate to governing body (Stage 2)

- If you're unhappy with the Stage 1 response, you can escalate to Stage 2
- A panel of governors will hear your complaint
- You must request this within 5 school days of receiving the Stage 1 response
- The panel will meet within 20 school days
- You can attend the meeting and bring a supporter
- The panel will write to you within 5 school days of the meeting

Step 4: Contact the Department for Education

- If you believe we didn't follow our complaints procedure properly, you can contact the DfE
- The DfE will not re-investigate your complaint
- They will check that we followed our procedure correctly

WHAT WE EXPECT FROM YOU

- Treat staff with respect
- Provide clear information about your complaint
- Respond promptly to requests for information
- Work with us to resolve the complaint
- Don't discuss the complaint on social media

WHAT YOU CAN EXPECT FROM US

- We will take your complaint seriously
- We will investigate thoroughly and fairly
- We will keep you informed
- We will respond within the timescales in our policy
- We will treat you with respect
- We will keep your complaint confidential

NEED HELP?

- Contact the school office: 01535 632145
- Email: admin@glusburn.n-yorks.sch.uk
- We can provide this information in other formats
- We can arrange an interpreter if needed
- We can help you complete the complaint form