

Blaenau Gwent County Borough Council

**COMPLAINTS ABOUT SCHOOLS -
GENERAL NATURE**

1. The responsibility for dealing with complaints lies with the Governing Body. The LEA provides advice, support and guidance to pupils, parents, headteachers and governors about procedures and the resolution of complaints, as required.
2. Summary of Complaints procedure (as adopted by Governing Bodies of community and voluntary aided schools):-
 - (a) complaints should be referred to the Headteacher in the first instance (unless of such a serious nature it should be referred to the Chair of the Governing Body);
 - (b) if the Headteacher cannot resolve the complaint, it should be referred to the Chair of the Governing Body unless he/she has a prior involvement;
 - (c) if the Chair cannot resolve the complaint, it should be referred to the appropriate sub-committee of the Governing Body;
 - (d) at any stage, the Director of Education will provide advice and guidance (contact number: 355422);
 - (e) special procedures apply to certain types of complaint, e.g. about pupil exclusions and curriculum; and
 - (f) the LEA (other than the Director of Education) can only be directly involved if the matter is referred by the Governing Body.

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**COMPLAINTS ABOUT ASPECTS OF THE
CURRICULUM IN SCHOOLS**

1. Complaints about curriculum provision would include all aspects of the National Curriculum, courses leading to external qualifications, religious education and worship, operation of charging policies in relation to the curriculum and compliance with regulations in relation to provision of information and curriculum.
2. These procedures do not cover complaints about the actions of individual teachers or the Headteacher.
3. **Summary of Procedures:**

All curriculum complaints should first be discussed informally with the Headteacher. The Headteacher must inform the complainant that, if they are not satisfied with the Headteacher's decision, they can refer the complaint, in the first instance informally, but in writing to the Assistant Director/Chief Adviser, in the Education Department (contact number: 355336).

The written complaint will be considered and discussed with the relevant Link Adviser, the Headteacher and the complainant. The complainant will be informed of the outcome and any action proposed. The complainant will also be informed that they may make a formal complaint to the Governing Body in the first instance. When the Governing Body meet to consider the complaint, the complainant may make representation in person (accompanied if desired).

Each Governing Body should have in place arrangements and procedures for dealing with such complaints before any complaints are received.

On receipt of a curriculum complaint, the Governing Body should satisfy itself that the complaint has been fully investigated before making any decisions. The Governing Body will inform the complainant in writing of their decision and the reasons for it, and any action taken or proposed.

If the complainant is not satisfied with the Governing Body's decision, he/she may refer the complaint to the LEA by writing to the Director of Education.

If the complaint concerns religious worship or an agreed syllabus for religious education, the Director of Education will call a meeting of SACRE to act on behalf of the LEA to consider the complaint. In Voluntary Aided schools the relevant authority will be the independent church authority.

Other complaints will be considered by the Education Sub-Committee.

The complainant (accompanied by a friend if desired), school Governing Body and Link Adviser should be invited to the meeting to make representations.

A written report should be sent to the complainant following the meeting, detailing the decision taken and any action proposed. The complainant should be informed that if he/she is not satisfied with the LEA's decision, the complaint may be passed on to the relevant Cabinet Secretary at the National Assembly.

The LEA and individual schools will maintain a record of formal complaints.

**COMPLAINTS ABOUT SCHOOLS -
BULLYING AND RACIAL HARASSMENT - A SUMMARY**

1. The responsibility for dealing with complaints which involve harassment or bullying of pupils lies with the Governing Body.
2. The procedures for dealing with such complaints are the same as those for complaints of a general nature, except that:
 - (a) where appropriate, the Police should be informed; and
 - (b) the LEA will monitor all complaints which suggest that there has been a racial incident.
3. A racial incident is one in which the action is regarded as racist by the victim or anyone else.
4. Bullying and racial harassment may take various forms and includes name-calling, insults, graffiti, offensive or racist language or literature, as well as physical assault and the threat of physical assault.
5. Schools should log all incidents and the action taken and immediately report severe incidents to the Director of Education. The LEA will monitor the frequency and nature of racist incidents and the effectiveness of the action taken.
6. Schools should have clear policies and practices which promote harmony and which provide support for victims.