Maple Tree Primary
Shaping Minds. Building Futures

Complaints Policy and Procedures

Maple Tree Primary School is a KS2 School for pupils who, for a variety of reasons, are unable to be educated within a mainstream school. Our vision is to develop well rounded, confident, and responsible individuals who aspire to achieve their full potential. We will do this by providing a welcoming, happy, safe, and supportive learning environment in which everyone is equal, and all achievements are celebrated.

Policy Owner	Date Reviewed	Policy Version No.	Next Review Date
Headteacher / Teacher in Charge	October 2026	2026/ 0001	October 2027

Maple Tree Primary School complaints procedure, as required by law in paragraph 33 [Part 7 of the Independent School Standards) and the number of complaints registered under the formal procedure during the preceding school year will be made available on request.

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 generally defined as 'an expression of dissatisfaction however made, about actions taken or a lack of action'.

It is in everyone's interest that complaints are resolved at the earliest possible stage. Many issues can be resolved informally (Stage 1), without the need to invoke formal procedures (Stages 2 & 3).

We take all concerns seriously and will make every effort to resolve any matter raised, as quickly as possible.

Who can make a complaint?

Any person, including members of the public, may make a complaint about any provision of facilities or services provided, unless separate statutory procedures apply (such as exclusions or admissions).

The complaints procedure does not apply to prospective students who have no right of complaint.

Anonymous complaints

We will not normally investigate anonymous complaints. However, the Headteacher/Teacher in Charge or the Head of Education, if appropriate, will determine whether the complaint warrants an investigation.

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.

Scope of this Complaints Procedure

This procedure covers all complaints about any provision of community facilities or services by Maple Tree Primary School, other than complaints that are dealt with under other statutory procedures, including those listed below.

EXCEPTIONS	WHO TO CONTACT
Admissions to schools	For concerns about admissions please see our Admissions Policy
Statutory assessments of Special Educational Needs	Special Educational Needs: The Complainant can use this policy to complain unless the Complainants child has an Education Health and Care Plan, and the Complainant wishes to appeal against a decision that the Local Authority has taken. If this is the case, the Complainant needs to contact the Local Authority
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
Freedom of Information	Subject Access Requests and Freedom of Information Requests: please see the School's Data Protection and Freedom of Information Policies
Exclusion of children from school	Further information about raising concerns about exclusion can be found at: www.gov.uk/school-discipline-exclusions/exclusions *complaints about the application of the behaviour policy can be made through the school's complaints procedure
Whistleblowing	We have an internal whistleblowing procedure for all our employees, including temporary staff and contractors
Staff grievances	Staff grievance, capability or disciplinary; these are covered by separate School Policies and 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

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 Maple Tree Primary School in relation to their complaint, we will suspend the complaints procedure in relation to their complaint until those legal proceedings have concluded.

If a complainant contacts Maple Tree Primary School again in relation to their complaint, the correspondence may then be viewed as 'serial' or 'persistent' and the school will not respond but will continue to complete the initial complaints procedure in full.

Complaints from Parents/Carers

The procedures set out below only relate to complaints from parents of pupils, i.e., persons for whom education is being provided at the school. The process set out below does not cover complaints from parents of pupils who have left (except in cases where the complaints process was started when the pupil was still being educated at the school).

It is expected that complaints are made as soon as possible after an incident arises (although three months is generally considered to be an acceptable time frame in which to lodge a complaint). The procedures below will be followed in the event of a complaint being made by parents or carers against the school (complaints are not limited to parents or carers of children that are registered at the school).

Informal Complaint (Stage 1)

If parents or carers have a complaint against the school, they may initially wish to make contact informally either by telephone, in writing or personally after making an appointment. In addition to this, a complaints form can be completed and emailed to the Headteacher/ Teacher in Charge/ Proprietor. The school will ask the complainant what they think might resolve the issue. The school will consider and resolve as quickly, and efficiently as possible the complaint and will respond with the outcome within *10 days*, (where further investigations are necessary that will exceed this time period, new time limits will be communicated with an explanation for the delay).

Formal Complaint (Stage 2)

1. If parents or carers are not satisfied with the response at Stage 1 they should write formally to the Headteacher/Teacher in Charge. The Headteacher/Teacher in Charge will investigate the complaint further and respond in writing within 10 days (where further investigations are necessary that will exceed this time period, new time limits will be communicated with an explanation for the delay). If the complaint is against the Headteacher/Teacher in Charger the complaint should be addressed to the Education Lead, (Terry McKenzie terrymckenzie@parkviewcare.co.uk). The Education Lead will investigate and respond within *20 days*.

Formal Complaint (Stage 3)

2. If the parents or carers are still not satisfied with the response at Stage 2 they should inform the Head of Education who will arrange a panel to hear the complaint.
3. The panel will comprise three people not directly involved in the matters detailed in the complaint. At least one member of the panel will be independent of the running and management of the school (The member should not only be outside the school's workforce, and not a member of governing body/proprietorial body, but also should not be otherwise involved with the management of the school).
4. The date of the panel meeting will take into account the availability of the parents or carers as well as the school and will take place within *30 days*.
5. Parents or carers will be invited to bring with them another person or persons to support them at the panel hearing if they wish. (The panel hearing does not confer a right on a parent to have a legal representative to make representations on their behalf at the hearing).
6. The panel will hear the complaint and will hear the outcome of the school's investigations and its response to these. The panel will then make findings and recommendations which will be communicated in writing within 10 days of the conclusion of the hearing to the Proprietor, Education Lead, the Headteacher/Teacher in Charge, the parent,

or carer and, where appropriate, the person complained about.

7. If a parent does not exercise the right to attend a panel hearing, the panel will meet in line with this policy. The school's arrangements for the panel hearing will be reasonable in order to facilitate the parent(s) exercising the right of attendance.
8. A written record of all complaints and their resolution, whether they proceeded to a panel hearing or not, will be kept on the school premises by the Headteacher/Teacher in Charge (Equality Act 2010) and made available to the Proprietor and Ofsted inspectors on request. The school will record the progress of the complaint and the final outcome. These records and any correspondence relating to a complaint will remain confidential, except where the Secretary of State or a body conducting an inspection under section 163 of the Education Act 2002 requests access to the records.

9. The number of complaints registered under the formal procedure during the preceding school year will be provided on request.

Complaints from Pupils

The procedures below will be followed in the event of a pupil making a complaint against a member of staff, a fellow pupil or any other person or situation either in school or outside.

Pupils may wish to talk to an adult they trust about a situation relating to school or to a situation outside school.

Pupils are reminded that, although they may speak to any member of staff, there may be occasions where information will have to be referred to other agencies such as Children's Services.

Within school, pupils may talk to any member of Education Staff.

A pupil may merely need a trusted adult to talk a situation through with and may not be making a formal complaint. However, all actual complaints made by pupils will be recorded by the member of staff in the Complaints Log. The school response to the complaint will also be recorded. If the complaint is serious the pupil's parents/carers will be informed of both the complaint and the outcome. Some complaints will be referred to other agencies or to the Local Authority. If necessary, a meeting will be called to discuss the issues further.

A pupil may ask to speak to an adult from an outside agency. The school will, wherever possible, put the pupil in contact with a representative of the appropriate agency. The referral will be noted in the young person's file.

If the complaint is an allegation against a member of staff, then the school's safeguarding policy must be followed in addition to recording the complaint. Failure to follow this process may result in disciplinary action.

Unreasonable Complainants

The school is committed to dealing with all complaints fairly and impartially, and to providing a high-quality service to those who complain. We will not normally limit the contact complainants have with the school. However, we do not expect our staff to tolerate unacceptable behaviour and will take action to protect staff from that behaviour, including that which is abusive, offensive, or threatening.

The school defines unreasonable complainants as 'those who, because of the frequency or nature of their contacts with the school, hinder our consideration of their or other people's complaints'.

A complaint may be regarded as unreasonable when the person making the complaint:

- refuses to articulate their complaint or specify the grounds of a complaint or the outcomes sought by raising the complaint, despite offers of assistance.
- refuses to co-operate with the complaints investigation process while still wishing their complaint to be resolved.
- refuses to accept that certain issues are not within the scope of a complaint's procedure.
- insists on the complaint being dealt with in ways which are incompatible with the adopted complaints procedure or with good practice.
- introduces trivial or irrelevant information which the complainant expects to be taken into account and commented on, or raises large numbers of detailed but unimportant questions, and insists they are fully answered, often immediately and to their own timescales.

- makes unjustified complaints about staff who are trying to deal with the issues and seeks to have them replaced.
- changes the basis of the complaint as the investigation proceeds.
- repeatedly makes the same complaint (despite previous investigations or responses concluding that the complaint is groundless or has been addressed).
- refuses to accept the findings of the investigation into that complaint where the school's complaint procedure has been fully and properly implemented and completed including referral to the Department for Education.
- seeks an unrealistic outcome.
- makes excessive demands on school time by frequent, lengthy, complicated, and stressful contact with staff regarding the complaint in person, in writing, by email and by telephone while the complaint is being dealt with.

A complaint may also be considered unreasonable if the person making the complaint does so either face-to-face, by telephone or in writing or electronically:

- maliciously.
- aggressively.
- using threats, intimidation, or violence.
- using abusive, offensive, or discriminatory language.
- knowing it to be false.
- using falsified information.
- publishing unacceptable information in a variety of media such as in social media websites and newspapers.

Complainants should limit the numbers of communications with the school while a complaint is being progressed. It is not helpful if repeated correspondence is sent (either by letter, phone, email, or text) as it could delay the outcome being reached.

Whenever possible, the Teacher in Charge or the Education Lead will discuss any concerns with the complainant informally before applying an 'unreasonable' marking.

If the behaviour continues the Teacher in Charge will write to the complainant explaining that their behaviour is unreasonable, asking them to change it. For complainants who excessively contact the school causing a significant level of disruption, we may specify methods of communication and limit the number of contacts in a communication plan. This will usually be reviewed after 6 months.

In response to any serious incident of aggression or violence, the concerns and actions taken will be put in writing immediately and the police informed. This may include banning an individual from the school.

Barring from the School Premises

Although fulfilling a public function, Schools are private places. The public has no automatic right of entry. Schools will therefore act to ensure they remain a safe place for pupils, staff, and other members of their community.

If an individual's behaviour is a cause for concern, a school can ask him/her to leave school premises. In serious cases, the Headteacher/Teacher in Charge or the local authority can notify them in writing that their implied licence to be on school premises has been temporarily revoked subject to any representations that the person may wish to make.

Schools should always give that person the opportunity to formally express their views on the decision to bar in writing. Anyone wishing to complain about being barred can do so, by letter or email, to the proprietor. The decision to bar should then be reviewed, taking into account any representations and either confirmed or lifted. If the decision is confirmed the person should be notified in writing, explaining how long the bar will be in place and when the decision will be reviewed, usually after 6 months.

Complaints about barring cannot be escalated to the Department for Education. Once the school's own complaints procedure has been completed, the only remaining avenue of appeal is through the Courts; independent legal advice must therefore be sought.

Maple Tree Primary School Complaints Form

First Name | Last Name

Child's Name (if applicable)

Phone Number | Email

Complaint information

Complaint Date

Complaint details

What action would you like to be taken to resolve the issue?

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