Complaints Procedure

Eleanor Palmer Primary School

Approved by Governing Body Staffing and Resources Committee	14 October 2026
Review date	Autumn 2029
Policy lead	Headteachers

This procedure is based on the London Borough of Camden model complaints procedure and has been tailored to Eleanor Palmer Primary School.

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 Eleanor Palmer 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. Individuals who are not parents or carers of children that are registered at the school should address their complaints to the Headteachers, via the school office.

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. Eleanor Palmer 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, the Headteachers will refer you to another staff member. Similarly, if the member of staff directly involved feels unable to deal with a concern, the Headteachers 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, Eleanor Palmer 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. It may also be made by a third party acting on behalf of a complainant, as long as they have appropriate consent to do so.

Concerns should normally be raised with either the class teacher or the Headteachers. We will generally respond within 15 school days. Should the concern be of sufficient seriousness or be unlikely to be resolved informally, the Headteachers may determine that it should be dealt with formally under Stage 1 of this procedure. We resolve most concerns informally but, 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. Governors have no power to act on an individual basis and it may also prevent them from considering complaints at Stage 2 of the procedure.

Formal complaints about school staff (except the Headteachers) should be made in the first instance to the Headteachers via the school office. Please mark them as Private and Confidential. The school will identify one Headteacher as the Stage 1 lead, taking account of the nature of the complaint and any previous involvement.

Complaints that involve or are about either Headteacher should be addressed to the Chair of Governors, via the Clerk to the Governing Body and 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 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 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, this may include providing information in alternative formats, assisting complainants in raising a formal complaint or holding meetings in accessible locations.

Anonymous complaints

The school will not normally investigate anonymous complaints. However, the Headteachers or Chair of Governors, as appropriate, will determine whether the complaint warrants an investigation.

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. The school will consider complaints made outside of this time frame if exceptional circumstances apply.

Complaints received outside of term time

The school 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 Eleanor Palmer Primary School, other than complaints that are dealt with under other statutory procedures, including those listed below.

Exceptions	Who to contact
Admissions to schools	Admissions to schools are covered by the Admissions Appeals Code.
Statutory assessments of Special Educational Needs	Concerns about statutory assessments of Special Educational Needs should be raised with the London Borough of Camden or your home borough as appropriate.
School re-organisation proposals	Concerns about school re-organisation proposals should be raised with the London Borough of Camden.
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). Camden Duty LADO can be contacted on 020 7974 3317 or LBCMASHadmin@camden.gov.uk.

Exceptions	Who to contact
Exclusion of children from school*	Further information about raising concerns about exclusion can be found at: www.gov.uk/school-discipline-exclusions/exclusions and in the school's Exclusions Policy. *Complaints about the application of the school's 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. 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 directly to the local authority or the Department for Education, 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 using school premises or facilities	Providers should have their own complaints procedure to deal with complaints about their service. Please contact them directly. This does not apply to extra-curricular provision arranged and offered by the school, but delivered by an external provider.
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 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 Eleanor Palmer 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, Eleanor Palmer Primary School wants to resolve the complaint. If appropriate, we will acknowledge that the complaint is upheld in whole or in part. In addition, we may offer one or more of the following:

- an explanation
- an admission that the situation could have been handled differently or better
- an assurance that we will try to ensure the event complained of will not recur
- an explanation of the steps that have been or will be taken to help ensure that it will not happen again and an indication of the timescales within which any changes will be made
- an undertaking to review school policies in light of the complaint

- an apology

Withdrawal of a Complaint

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

Stage 1

Formal complaints must be made to the Headteachers (unless the complaint is about one of the Headteachers). This may be done in person, in writing (preferably on the Complaint Form below), by email (preferably using the Complaint Form format) or by telephone. The school will identify one Headteacher as the Stage 1 lead for each complaint, depending on the nature of the complaint and any previous involvement.

The Stage 1 lead will record the date the complaint is received and will acknowledge receipt of the complaint in writing (either by letter or email) within three school days.

Within this response, the Stage 1 lead will seek to clarify the nature of the complaint, ask what remains unresolved and what outcome the complainant would like to see. The Stage 1 lead can consider whether a face-to-face meeting is the most appropriate way of doing this.

Note: The Stage 1 lead may delegate the investigation to the Deputy Headteacher or another suitable member of the school's senior leadership team, but not the decision as to the final Stage 1 response.

During the investigation, the Stage 1 lead 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 the investigation, the Stage 1 lead will provide a formal written response within twenty school days of the date of receipt of the complaint.

If the Stage 1 lead 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 Eleanor Palmer Primary School will take to resolve the complaint.

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

The aim of our complaints procedure is to reach a resolution for all parties. If, at the conclusion of Stage 1, the complainant remains dissatisfied and wishes to progress to Stage 2, the Chair of Governors will consider whether it would be appropriate for the actions in Stage 1 to be repeated or reviewed by a suitably skilled governor prior to the commencement of Stage 2.

Where such a decision is taken, it will ensure either that the complaint can be resolved prior to a Stage 2 hearing or that the Stage 2 hearing has a wider evidence base, with any concerns regarding the school fully reviewed in advance. This does not remove the complainant's right to proceed to Stage 2 in accordance with this procedure.

If the complaint is about a 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. The investigator should consider the wellbeing of the person complained about when planning the investigation, including appropriate support and the opportunity to be accompanied.

Complaints about a Headteacher or a member of the governing body must be made to the Clerk to the Governing Body, via the school office, and be marked Private and Confidential. A complaint about a Headteacher will be referred to the Chair of Governors.

If the complaint is:

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

Stage 1 will be considered by an independent investigator appointed by the governing body, with support from the London Borough of Camden where appropriate. At the conclusion of the 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 school's complaints procedure.

A request to escalate to Stage 2 must be made to the Clerk to the Governing Body, via the school office, marked Private and Confidential, within ten 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 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 complainant rejects the offer of three proposed dates, without good reason, the Committee 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 who will act as the Chair of the Complaints Committee. If there are fewer than three governors from Eleanor Palmer Primary School available, the Clerk will source additional independent governors through another local school or through the local authority'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.

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 eight 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 five school days before the meeting

Any written material will be circulated to all parties at least five 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. 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 Eleanor Palmer Primary School with a full explanation of their decision and the reason(s) for it, in writing, within fifteen 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 Eleanor Palmer Primary School.

If the complaint is jointly about the Chair and Vice-Chair, 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 Eleanor Palmer Primary School will take to resolve the complaint.

Next Steps

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

The Department for Education will not normally reinvestigate the substance of complaints or overturn any decisions made by Eleanor Palmer Primary School. It will consider whether Eleanor Palmer Primary School has adhered to education legislation and any statutory policies connected with the complaint.

The complainant can refer their complaint to the Department for Education online at: www.education.gov.uk/contactus, by telephone on 0370 000 2288 or by writing to:

Department for Education
Piccadilly Gate
Store Street
Manchester
M1 2WD

Policy for managing serial and unreasonable complaints

Eleanor Palmer Primary 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 our school. However, we do not expect our staff to tolerate unreasonable and unacceptable behaviour and will take action to protect staff from behaviour that is abusive, offensive or threatening.

Eleanor Palmer Primary School defines unreasonable behaviour as that which hinders our consideration of complaints because of the frequency or nature of the complainant's contact with the school, such as where the complainant:

- 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
- refuses to accept that certain issues are not within the scope of the complaints procedure
- insists on the complaint being dealt with in ways which are incompatible with the complaints procedure or with good practice
- introduces trivial or irrelevant information which they expect to be taken into account and commented on
- 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 complaints 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 and complicated contact with staff regarding the complaint in person, in writing, by email and by telephone while the complaint is being dealt with
- uses threats to intimidate
- uses abusive, offensive or discriminatory language or violence
- knowingly provides falsified information
- publishes unacceptable information on social media or other public forums

Complainants should try to limit their communication with the school that relates to their complaint while the complaint is being progressed. It is not helpful if repeated correspondence is sent by letter, phone, email or text, as it could delay the outcome being reached.

Whenever possible, the Headteachers or Chair of Governors will discuss any concerns with the complainant informally before applying an "unreasonable" marking.

If the behaviour continues, a Headteacher will write to the complainant explaining that their behaviour is unreasonable and asking them to change it. For complainants who excessively contact Eleanor Palmer Primary 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 be reviewed after six months.

In response to any serious incident of aggression or violence, we will immediately inform the police and communicate our actions in writing. This may include barring an individual from Eleanor Palmer Primary School.

Appendix 1 – Complaint Form

Please complete and return this form to the Headteachers, via the Eleanor Palmer Primary School office, marked Private and Confidential. The school will identify the appropriate Stage 1 lead, 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 and postcode:
Daytime telephone number:
Email address:
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 whom:	
Complaint referred to:	
Date:	

Appendix 2 – 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 Stage 1 lead or complaints committee that sets out the facts, identifies solutions and recommends courses of action to resolve problems

The Stage 1 lead 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 Headteachers are the school's complaints co-ordinators and have overall responsibility for ensuring that the complaints procedure is followed consistently. Either Headteacher may act as the Stage 1 lead and administrative functions may be delegated to the Deputy Headteacher or another member of staff as appropriate. The complaints co-ordinator should:

- ensure that the complainant is fully updated at each stage of the procedure
- liaise with staff members, the Headteachers, Chair of Governors, Clerk and local authority (if appropriate) to ensure the smooth running of the complaints procedure
- be aware of issues regarding sharing third-party information
- be aware of additional support that may be needed by complainants, including interpretation support or support 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 and the General Data Protection Regulations (GDPR)
- 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 the required 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, 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 or 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 or GDPR

- if a new issue arises, everyone is given the opportunity to consider and comment upon it; this may require a short adjournment
- 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

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 prior involvement in the complaint or the circumstances surrounding it
- the aim of the meeting should be to resolve the complaint and achieve reconciliation between the school and the complainant; it may only be possible to establish the facts and make recommendations
- many complainants will feel nervous and inhibited in a formal setting; parents and carers often feel emotional when discussing an issue that affects their child
- extra care needs to be taken when the complainant is a child or young person and present during all or part of the meeting
- the welfare of the child or young person is paramount

The committee should respect the views of a child or young person and give them equal consideration to those of adults. If the child or 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 or 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 or young person needs to attend. Agreement may not always be possible if the committee considers attendance would not be in the child or young person's best interests.

Appendix 3 – Model Procedure for a Governors' Complaints Committee (Stage 2)

When should a complaints committee be convened?

A committee will be convened if a complainant requests Stage 2 after receiving the formal Stage 1 response and the Complaints Committee decides that a meeting will be held to consider the complaint.

The request should be made in writing, outlining what action has been taken by the school so far and what outcome the complainant would like. The complainant should state why the Stage 1 response was not satisfactory and what would satisfy their complaint.

The following sets out the procedure that will be followed when the Complaints Committee decides that a meeting will be held to resolve the complaint.

Who should attend?

The Chair will invite the Stage 1 lead and/or the person who carried out the Stage 1 investigation to attend the meeting. They will prepare a written report for the panel in response to the complaint.

Witnesses, including a Headteacher if they are the subject of the complaint, are not required to attend. Both parties have the right to call witnesses, subject to the approval of the Chair, and both parties have

the right to question witnesses if called. Witnesses are only required to attend for the part of the hearing for which they give their evidence.

The meeting

The aim of the meeting will be to resolve the complaint and achieve reconciliation between the school and the complainant. However, it has to be recognised that sometimes it may only be possible to establish facts and make recommendations which will satisfy the complainant that their complaint has been taken seriously.

The panel will take into account that many parents are unused to dealing with groups of people in formal situations and may feel inhibited when speaking to the panel. The Chair will therefore ensure that proceedings are as informal as possible.

If either party wishes to introduce previously undisclosed evidence or witnesses, it is in the interests of natural justice to adjourn the meeting so that the other side has time to consider and respond to the new evidence.

If the conduct of one of the parties is such that the hearing cannot proceed, the panel will adjourn. The panel may restart the hearing following the adjournment. However, if the conduct continues, it will decide to reach its decision based on written submissions and will inform the parties of this in writing.

The process

Whilst the panel may ask clarifying questions of either party at any point, the process of the complaint panel will normally be as follows:

a. Welcome and introductions from the Chair.

b. The Chair explains the purpose of the meeting, the procedure and confirms that all written evidence has been made available to all parties.

c. The complainant is invited to explain their complaint, followed by any witnesses they wish to call. Witnesses should only attend the part of the meeting concerning themselves.

d. The Stage 1 lead and/or Stage 1 investigator may then question the complainant and any witnesses.

e. The panel may then question the complainant and any witnesses.

f. The Stage 1 investigator is invited to explain the school's actions, including those taken to address the complaint at Stage 1, followed by any witnesses for the school.

g. The complainant may question the investigator and any witnesses the school wishes to call.

h. Any remaining witnesses leave.

i. The Stage 1 lead or investigator is invited to make a final statement, briefly summing up the school's position. New evidence should not be introduced at this point.

j. The complainant is invited to make a final statement, briefly summing up their position. New evidence should not be introduced at this point.

k. The Chair explains that the panel will now consider its decision and that a written decision will be sent to both parties within fifteen school days.

l. The complainant and school representatives leave.

m. Panel deliberations and decision.

The decision

The panel will then consider the complaint and all the evidence presented. It will:

- reach a unanimous, or at least a majority, decision on the complaint

- decide upon the appropriate action to be taken to resolve the complaint
- where appropriate, recommend changes to the school's systems or procedures to ensure that problems of a similar nature do not happen again

A written statement outlining the decision of the panel will be sent to the complainant and the school within fifteen school days. The letter to the complainant will explain how to contact the Department for Education if they remain dissatisfied with the way the complaint has been handled.

The school will ensure that a copy of all correspondence and notes are kept on file in the school's records. These records will be kept separately from the pupil's personal records.

Summary of complaint panel timescales

Action	Timescale
Acknowledgement of Stage 2 request	within 5 school days of receipt
Committee meeting	aim to convene within 20 school days of receipt of the Stage 2 request
Notice of meeting	at least 8 school days before the meeting
Further written material submitted	at least 5 school days before the meeting
Written material circulated to all parties	at least 5 school days before the meeting
Written decision	within 15 school days of the panel meeting

Contact details

Formal complaints should normally be submitted via the Eleanor Palmer Primary School office and marked Private and Confidential. The Headteachers can also be contacted using the details below:

Name	Role	Email
Natalie Stevenson	Headteacher	natalie@eleanorpalmer.camden.sch.uk
Sally Hill	Headteacher	sally@eleanorpalmer.camden.sch.uk

Eleanor Palmer Primary School office: admin@eleanorpalmer.camden.sch.uk / 0207 4852155]