

REPRESENTATION AND COMPLAINTS PROCEDURE

General Principles

1.1 Rossendale School is committed to ensuring that representations made by young people and/or their parents or carers are heard and resolved promptly.

1.2 Rossendale School's policy is to institute a representation and complaints procedure, thus implementing the guidelines drawn up by the Department of Health and DFE

A separate complaints' file is kept containing all representations and complaints received by Rossendale School, which is monitored by the Headteacher.

A representation and complaints leaflet is given on admission to each child and parent / carer as part of their induction to the school.

1.3 Where possible, complaints should be resolved informally. If possible the complainant should raise their issue directly with the person concerned and try to resolve the issue informally. Simple explanation and discussion will resolve many complaints. Such informal complaints and their resolution should be logged.

1.4 Child Protection and/or Disciplinary Procedures take precedence over the investigation of a complaint.

Should the investigation of a complaint lead to information that points to a child protection issue/or potential disciplinary procedure, the complaints procedure will be suspended and the complainant informed of this and likely time scales, and ultimately the outcomes.

1.5 The relevant LEA will be informed of all written complaints and their outcomes.

Parents and carers making a written complaint will be informed of LEA complaints procedures and given the name of a contact person in the LEA.

For looked after children, their Social Worker will be informed and the complaint may be passed to their relevant complaints officer.

Representation and Complaints Procedure

a) **Stages**

Rossendale School has a set of procedures outlining how children should be treated. One of the most important is the representations and complaints procedure, which indicates how children/parents/carers who receive a service from Rossendale School can make representation and complaints, so that their views are made known.

It is imperative that accurate and detailed records are kept at each stage of procedures.

The stages of the procedure are:

**Stage 1
Informal**

Child (or another party) makes Representation

Staff Member

Matter Resolved

**Stage 2
Informal**

Child (or another party) not satisfied –
Complaint is made orally or in writing and recorded

(Form Tutor)

Matter Resolved and Recorded

**Appointment of
Advocate. If
needed LEA
informed**

**Stage 3
Formal**

Child (or another party) not satisfied –complaint is made in writing

(Assistant /Deputy Headteacher)

Matter Resolved if not Headteacher involved

Matters Resolved

**Stage 4
Formal**

Child (or another party) not satisfied –Complaint is made in writing

The Group Complaints Manager investigates
Written response made

Matter Resolved

**Stage 5
Formal**

Child (or another party) not satisfied –Complaint is made in writing

Appointment of Review Panel investigates

Matter Resolved if not

Recommendation made to Head and/or
Operations Director for resolution

b) **Stage 1 (Informal)**

A child (or another party) may make an informal representation to a staff member who will be able to deal amicably with the issue so the matter is resolved informally.

c) **Stage 2 (Informal)**

A child (or another party) may not be satisfied with what is proposed as a resolution of the issue identified in stage 1. The child (or another party) may now express orally, or in writing, their concerns, once the matter will be recorded. It would be anticipated that the Form Tutor would seek to resolve the issue informally.

At this point the local authority should be informed of the representation or complaint, and what steps have been taken to resolve the issue.

An advocate for the child may be appointed to listen and advise the child of his/her rights. The advocate could be involved throughout all the stages. The outcome is noted in the complaints file.

d) **Stage 3 (Formal)**

At this point the formal stage of the procedure has been reached.

A child (or another party) may not be satisfied with what is proposed as a resolution of the issue identified in stage 2. The child or another party will express in writing their concerns. It is important to ensure that, where a child or another party might have difficulties in presenting the complaint in written form, every assistance should be afforded to the child or the other party to complete the same.

A record of complaint will be made, and a written acknowledgement sent to the complainant and/or to the appropriate party, within 5 working days.

It would be anticipated that the Assistant/Deputy Headteacher would within 10 working days:-

- (i) have completed the investigation.
- (ii) kept the person informed of the progress of the complaint throughout the investigation.
- (iii) arranged a meeting to report the findings and recommendations. Parents/carers may be accompanied to this meeting.
- (iv) followed the meeting up with a written response to the complaint.

If the issue is not resolved the Headteacher's involvement will be sought.

e) **Stage 4 (Formal)**

If the child (or another party) remains dissatisfied, a written complaint should be made. It is important to ensure that, where a child or another party might have difficulties in presenting the complaint in written form, every assistance should be afforded to the child or another party to complete the same.

A record of the complaint will be made, and a written acknowledgement sent to the complainant, within 5 working days.

The complaint will be submitted to the Group Complaints Manager at 80 Hammersmith Road, London W14 8UD. A formal resolution to the complaint will be sought wherever possible.

(f) **Stage 5 (Formal)**

In the event of the child or another party not being satisfied with the proposed resolution at Stage 4, a further written complaint would be made requesting that a Review Panel be appointed to investigate the matter. The Review Panel will consist of at least 3 people who have not been involved in the issue and at least 1 person who is independent of the School structure.

The Review Panel would recommend to the Headteacher and/or Operations Director how the matter might be resolved.

The responsibility for resolution of the matter would ultimately be that of Rossendale's owners.

At all stages of the procedure, should a meeting be convened to discuss the complaint, a representative may accompany parents/carers. Written records will be kept which will indicate at what stage the complaint was resolved. All matters regarding complaints will be kept confidential.