



## Complaints and Concerns Policy

Policy Responsibility: Headteacher

Policy Status: Draft

Date Agreed: September 2025

Agreed ✓

Date for Review: September 2028



## Vision and Values

### **Vauvert's Vision**

A thriving, forward-thinking school with high aspirations for all. A happy school built upon care and kindness with the child at the centre; where everyone is valued, included and respected. A place where staff and children are challenged and supported to be the best that they can be.

### **Vauvert's Aims**

As a school that has adopted the UNCRC - Rights Respecting Schools Award; the rights of the child are at the heart of everything that we do. As such, at Vauvert Primary School we aim to:

- Keep children at the heart of all that we do. *(Article 3)*
- Create a school community where all children, all staff and all parents feel that they are welcome and that they belong; where they feel safe and cared for, and where they are included, no matter what their circumstance or need.
- Foster a love of learning and an understanding of the need for a positive, growth mindset; where children are motivated, resilient, and inspired, and where their creativity and imagination are able to shine.
- Provide a high-quality education through a rich and exciting curriculum, where every child can develop fully as an individual and achieve their personal best, ensuring that when they leave our school they are equipped with the skills and knowledge required to successfully access the next stage in their education. *(Article 6)*
- Equip children with the attitudes and attributes necessary to be effective members of society, understanding that we all matter, and that we should treat people with kindness and respect. *(Article 2)*
- Provide opportunities for all children to feel part of, and be able to contribute to school life; as well as to the local, and global communities through the teaching of rights and responsibilities and through hearing the children's voice in all aspects of the life of the school. *(Article 12)*

**Vauvert Primary School**

*Working together for a better tomorrow*

## **Aims**

Our school aims to meet its statutory obligations when responding to complaints from parents and carers of pupils at the school, and others.

When responding to complaints, we aim to:

- Be impartial and non-adversarial;
- Facilitate a full and fair investigation by an independent person or panel, where necessary;
- Address all the points at issue and provide an effective and prompt response;
- Respect complainants' desire for confidentiality;
- Treat complainants with respect;
- Keep complainants informed of the progress of the complaints process;
- Consider how the complaint can feed into school improvement evaluation processes;

We try to resolve concerns or complaints by informal means wherever possible. Where this is not possible, formal procedures will be followed. The school will always aim to give the complainant the opportunity to complete the complaints procedure in full. To support this, we will ensure we publicise the existence of this policy and make it available on the school website.

## **Legislation and Guidance**

The school follows the guidelines set by the States of Guernsey Education Services.

<https://www.gov.gg/ComplimentsCommentsandComplaintsEducation>

## **Definitions and Scope**

The DfE guidance explains the difference between a concern and a complaint.

### Concerns

A concern is defined as “an expression of worry or doubt over an issue considered to be important for which reassurances are sought”.

### Dealing with concerns

The school will resolve concerns through day-to-day communication as far as possible and as expediently as possible. All concerns should be recorded on the communications log in the child's profile in CPOMs.

- Raise the concern with the class teacher either via email or with a face to face at the end of the day.
- If the concern needs a more formal meeting, arrange to meet with the teacher by making an appointment with the school office.
- If the concern continues or needs further intervention, the Phase Leader should be contacted.
- If the matter is not successfully resolved, this should be escalated to the Deputy Headteacher or to the Headteacher.

## Complaints

A complaint is defined as “an expression of dissatisfaction however made, about actions taken or a lack of action”.

The school intends to resolve complaints informally where possible, at the earliest possible stage. There may be occasions when complainants would like to raise their concerns formally. This policy outlines the procedure relating to handling such complaints.

This policy does not cover complaints procedures relating to:

- *Admissions*
- *Statutory assessments of special educational needs (SEN)*
- *Safeguarding matters*
- *Exclusion*
- *Whistle-blowing*

Please see our separate policies for procedures relating to these types of complaints.

## Dealing with complaints

The school will resolve complaints through day-to-day communication as far as possible. All complaints are logged with the headteacher in the CPOMs.

- Raise the complaint with the Headteacher via email, letter or telephone call
- A more formal meeting will be arranged if necessary
- If the complaint needs investigating, the Headteacher may delegate this to the Phase Leader, Deputy Headteacher or Inclusion Lead

When investigating a complaint, we will try to clarify:

- What has happened
- Who was involved
- What, if any, consequences need to be in place

We will always endeavour to address complaints as quickly as possible.

All complaints will be recorded on the Complaints Log - held by HT.

If the complaint is not dealt with satisfactorily by the school, the complaint can be escalated by writing to Education Services.

This letter should provide details such as relevant dates, times, and the names of witnesses of events, alongside copies of any relevant documents. The complainant should also state what they feel would resolve the complaint.

The Director of Education will assign an Education Officer to deal with the complaint. This is likely to involve a meeting or telephone call to clarify concerns and seek a resolution.

### **Complaints against the Headteacher**

Complaints made against the headteacher should be directed to the Director of Education.

### **Persistent Complaints**

Where a complainant tries to re-open the issue with the school after the complaints procedure has been fully exhausted and the school has done everything it reasonably can in response to the complaint, the Director of Education will inform the complainant that the matter is closed. If the complainant subsequently contacts the school again about the same issue, the school can choose not to respond.

The normal circumstance in which we will not respond is if:

- The school has taken every reasonable step to address the complainant's needs, *and*
- The complainant has been given a clear statement of the school's position and their options (if any), *and*
- The complainant is contacting the school repeatedly but making substantially the same points each time

However, this list is not intended to be exhaustive.

The school will be most likely to choose not to respond if:

- We have reason to believe the individual is contacting the school with the intention of causing disruption or inconvenience, *and/or*
- The individual's letters/emails/telephone calls are often or always abusive or aggressive, *and/or*
- The individual makes insulting personal comments about, or threats towards, school staff.
- Unreasonable behaviour which is abusive, offensive or threatening may constitute an unreasonably persistent complaint.
- Once the school has decided that it is appropriate to stop responding, the complainant will be informed in writing, either by letter or email.
- The school will ensure when making this decision that complainants making any new complaint are heard, and that the school acts reasonably.

If the complainant breaches the school's Managing Abusive and Aggressive Visitors to School policy, the consequences of such a breach will be evoked.

### **Record Keeping**

#### Concerns

If a concern requires a more formal meeting, it will be recorded on the Complaints Log as detailed below.

## Complaints

The school will record the progress of all complaints on the Complaints Log, including information about actions taken at all stages, the stage at which the complaint was resolved, and the final outcome. The records will include copies of letters, emails, etc, and notes relating to meetings and phone calls.

This material will be treated as confidential and held centrally, and will be viewed only by those involved in investigating the complaint.

Records of complaints will be kept securely, only for as long as necessary and in line with data protection law, our privacy notices and [records management policy/record retention schedule].

## **Learning Lessons**

The senior leadership team will review any underlying issues raised by complaints with the staff where appropriate, and respecting confidentiality, to determine whether there are any improvements that the school can make to its procedures or practice to help prevent similar events in the future.

## **Monitoring Arrangements**

The complaints records are logged and managed by the Headteacher.

This policy will be reviewed by Headteacher every two years.

## **Links with other policies**

Policies dealing with other forms of complaints include:

- States of Guernsey - Compliments, Comments, Complaints 2021
- States of Guernsey - Admissions policy\_
- States of Guernsey - Exclusions procedures\_
- Vauvert - Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy
- Vauvert - SEN policy