

Taking matters further**Useful contacts**How to complain or comment

In most cases it is expected that parental complaints will be satisfactorily resolved following formal complaint to the Governing Body.

As academies operate independently of the Local Authority it should be noted that the Local Authority is unable to investigate complaints regarding The Crabtree Academy Trust even if the complaint relates to Special Educational Needs provision. Accordingly, any complaint relating to Crabtree Junior School, which has not been satisfactorily resolved through the Trust's complaints procedure, should be addressed to:

Department of Education,
Education Funding Agency (EFA),
Castle View House,
East Lane,
Runcorn,
Cheshire. WA7 2GJ

or posted via the DfE website on the 'Complaints about Academies' page.

It should be noted that if parents wish to take their complaint to the EFA, they must do so within 28 days of receiving the written outcome of the Stage 3 hearing. After 28 days, neither the Trust nor EFA is under any obligation to investigate or progress the complaint any further.

Advisory Centre for Education (ACE)

1C Aberdeen Studios, 22 Highbury Grove,
London, N5 2EA
Free Advice Line 2-5pm, Monday to Friday
Web: www.ace-ed.org.uk
Email: enquiries@ace-ed.org.uk
Phone: 0808 800 5793

Children's Legal Centre

University of Essex, Wivenhoe Park,
Colchester, Essex, CO4 3SQ
Free Advice Service, 2-5pm
Web: www.childrenslegalcentre.com
Email: clc@essex.ac.uk
Phone: 01206 873820

The **Parent Partnership** service provides impartial information and offers guidance on Special Educational Needs to Parents, Carers and Professionals. There are four Parent Partnership Supporters in the county and you can contact your local Supporter directly and confidentially. Her contact details are as follows:

Helena Marks - 01442 217143

ParentlinePlus

520 Highgate Studios
53-79 Highgate Road
Kentish Town
London, NW5 1TL
Web: www.parentlineplus.org.uk
Phone: 0808 800 2222

We care about what you think

**Crabtree Junior School**

Crabtree Lane
Harpenden
AL5 5PU

Phone: 01582 623501

Fax: 01582 623455

Email: admin@crabtreejm.herts.sch.uk
governors@crabtreejm.herts.sch.uk

We care about what you think

Each day this school makes many decisions and tries hard to do the best for all the children. Your comments – either positive or negative – are helpful for future planning.

You may want to talk to us about a particular aspect of this school, though not actually make a complaint – you just want to get something ‘off your chest’.

If you are dissatisfied about the way your child is being treated, or any actions or lack of action by us, please feel able to contact us using the details listed on the front page.

Our aims

- Your complaint will be dealt with honestly, politely and in confidence
- Your complaint will be looked into thoroughly and fairly
- If your complaint is urgent we will deal with it more quickly
- We will keep you up to date with progress at each stage
- You will get an apology if we have made a mistake
- You will be told what we are going to do to put things right
- You will get a full and clear written reply to formal complaints within 28 school days

How to make a complaint

First

If you have a concern about anything we do, or if you wish to make a complaint, you can do this by telephone, in person or in writing (by letter or email). We hope that most complaints can be settled quickly and informally, either by putting matters right or by giving you an explanation. If there is something you are not happy about, or you don't understand why we are doing something in a particular way, please come in and discuss it with the class teacher or another appropriate member of Staff, e.g. the Inclusion Manager (Mrs Baillie-Lane) if it is about Special Educational Needs.

We know that it can feel uncomfortable to question or challenge, but if you don't tell us what is worrying you we cannot explain what we are doing or try to put it right. If the first person you talk to cannot help you, then make an appointment with the school office to speak with the Headteacher.

You should be able to sort out your worries informally but sometimes this is not possible. In this case there is a next step.

Second

You can make a formal complaint to the Headteacher, which will be acknowledged within five school days of receipt. The Headteacher then aims to resolve your complaint within 10 school days; this might involve discussion with the Chair of Governors working together to investigate

the complaint. Although the task of collating information may be delegated to another staff member, it is the Headteacher who will make the decision on the action to be taken.

Third

If you are not satisfied with the response of the Headteacher (or if the complaint is about the Headteacher), please request a copy of the Crabtree Academy Trust Complaints Procedure (available on the school's website) and use the form shown in *Appendix 1* to make a formal complaint to the governors.

The Chair of Governors will arrange for the complaint to be investigated and considered by a Complaints Panel consisting of at least three people who were not directly involved in the matters detailed in the complaint. The hearing will take place within 28 days of receipt of the written complaint.

The panel will offer the parent an opportunity to talk about the complaint in the course of the investigation, prior to the complaint hearing. This might clarify the outstanding matters of complaint which remain unresolved and what outcome is sought by the complainant. The Complaints Panel hearing is the last school-based stage of the complaints process. The aim of the hearing will always be to resolve the complaint and achieve reconciliation between the school and the complainant.
