



Linlithgow Primary School

Child Friendly Complaints Handling Procedure

Created: January 2026

Reviewed: August 2026

UNCRC Article 3: All adults should always do what is best for you

UNCRC Article 12: I have the right to an opinion and for it to be listened to and taken seriously.

At Linlithgow Primary School, we are committed to upholding the rights of all of children, in everything that we do, and to always ensuring that, the adults who support children, act in their best interests. This includes the times, where a child may raise a concern and/or make a complaint, about the service that we are providing to them.

Many of the concerns that children raise to staff, will be dealt with through our normal, day-to-day procedures, covered by our Positive Relationships guidance.

In an instance where a child raises a formal complaint against our school, and/or where an adult raises a complaint about school, on a child's behalf, one of the 3 procedures, listed below, will be followed depending on the nature of the complaint and who raises it.

In order to maintain the trust of the child, children should be asked to provide consent around who information is shared and they should be allowed to make decisions about how the complaint is dealt with, so that they feel comfortable and confident with the process. Staff should clearly explain to children at the outset that their views will not be shared with anyone without their permission, unless this is necessary to raise a child protection concern or to meet another legal duty.

1. Child Making the Complaint by Themselves

Child can choose which staff member they would like to talk to about their complaint. The chosen staff member should speak to the child to better understand their complaint and to confirm next steps, including:

- Does the child want someone to support them or to be signposted for advocacy?
- If yes, ascertain who would that child like to support them?
- If the nominated person is not a staff member, ask the child to nominate a staff member as a point of contact.
- Ask for the child's informed consent to speak to the adults
- Does the child's responsible adult need to be informed?
- Make notes of any key points discussed.

Investigation

Consider the complaint through the normal processes, give due weight to the views of the child and their best interests.

Make notes of the investigation carried out, refer to or provide copies of relevant policies, correspondence etc.

Outcome Discussion

Conduct and outcome discussion with the child and if they want, their supporting adult. Make a note of the discussion and share it with the child.

- Explain what has been done to investigate the complaint.
- Explain the findings, and any parts that were upheld/not upheld.
- What actions or changes are being made to address concerns?
- Explain next steps available if the child is still not happy e.g. escalate to Stage 2, escalate to the Ombudsman.

Close Complaint and Retain Notes

Provide a decision letter, if the child would like one.

2. Child has asked an adult to make the complaint on their behalf:

First conduct a discussion with the adult and the child to understand their complaints and confirm next steps.

- Ask the child to nominate a member of staff as a point of contact. Staff member name _____
- Ask for the child's informed consent to speak to the adults.
- Does the child's responsible adult need to be informed?
- Note the key points discussed – share this note with the child and their supporting adult.

Investigation

- Consider the complaint through the normal processes, give due weight to the views of the child and their best interests.
- Make notes of the investigation carried out, refer to or provide copies of relevant policies, correspondence etc.

Outcome discussion with the child and their supporting adult. Make a note of this discussion and share it with the child and the adult.

- Explain what has been done to investigate the complaint.
- Explain the findings, was any part of the complaint upheld/not upheld?
- What actions or changes are being made to address the concerns?
- Explain next steps available to the supporting adult e.g. escalate to Stage 2, escalate to the Ombudsman.

Close complaint and retain notes.

- Provide a decision letter if the child wants one.

3. Adult making a complaint about issues affecting the child

Is the adult raising the complaint the child's responsible adult – e.g. parent/carer?

If no – consider whether it is necessary to contact the responsible adult before proceeding.

Ask the adult raising the complaint, if the child is aware they are doing so.

Establish ownership of the complaint

If the subject matter is about issues affecting the child, but also the parent or whole family, then the adult owns the complaint.

Adult owned Y/N

If the complaint is adult owned, let them know we will still give their child the opportunity to give their views.

If the subject matter is only about issues affecting the child, the child owns the complaint.

Child owned Y/N

If complaint is child owned, explain to the adult that if they have capacity, the child should be asked for their informed consent on how and whether to proceed with the complaint. In any case, the child should still have the opportunity to give their views.

Does child have capacity to give consent? Y/N

First discussion with child

- Explain complaints raised. Does child give consent Y/N/Child does not have capacity.
- Does the child want someone to support them or be signposted to advocacy?
- If yes, who would the child like to support them? (Can be the adult raising the complaint)
- If that person is not a staff member, ask the child to nominate a member of staff as a point of contact.
- Ask for the child's informed consent to speak to the adults. Consent given Y/N

- What are the child's views on the complaints being raised? Child does not have to give views and it is ok if they just want the adult to deal with it.
- Note the key points discussed – share this note with the child.

Investigation

- Consider the complaint through the normal processes, give due weight to the views of the child and their best interests.
- Make notes of the investigation carried out, refer to or provide copies of relevant policies, correspondence etc.

Outcome Discussion

If child wants one, conduct an outcome discussion with the child, and if they want, their supporting adult. Make a note of this discussion and share it with the child

- Explain what has been done to investigate the complaint.
- Explain the findings, was any part of the complaint upheld/not upheld?
- What actions or changes are being made to address the concerns?
- Explain next steps available if child still not happy e.g. escalate to stage 2, escalate to the Ombudsman.

Close complaint and retain notes.

Provide decision letter to adult in the usual way.

Provide a decision letter if the child wants one.