

## **Responsibilities**

Under Section 29 of the Education Act 2002, the governing body of all maintained schools and nursery schools in England are required to have in place a procedure to deal with complaints relating to the school and to any community facilities or services the school provides. The law also requires the complaint procedure to be publicised.

The governing body should note the following recommendation

### **General parental complaints**

The day-to-day running of the school is the responsibility of the headteacher, the governing body and the LA. Initially, it is recommended parents put their concerns in writing to the headteacher of the school and if this fails to resolve the issue, concerns should then be raised with the chair of governors. A complaint may be made to the Secretary of State for Education if a person believes a governing body or LA is acting unreasonably or is failing to carry out its statutory duties properly. The complaint should set out fully the concerns and reasons why the complaint is being submitted, enclosing all previous correspondence relevant to the complaint. The complaint should be mailed to the Department.

### **The law**

Consult the Education Act 2002 for further details.

- Procedures relating to general complaints do not replace the LA's procedures relating to curriculum and collective worship complaints.
- Certain forms of complaint, e.g. staff grievance or disciplinary procedures, also fall outside the scope of these general complaints procedures.
- Third parties that use school premises for any purpose should be encouraged to adopt their own complaints procedures.
- Schools and governors are encouraged to involve their LA and teachers' associations in drawing up these procedures:
  - establish a member of staff who will act as complaints coordinator and who will take the initial responsibility for handling complaints
  - take a two-stage (small schools) or three-stage (larger schools) formal procedure to reviewing and resolving complaints
  - have formal, published procedures with time limits
  - form a governors committee to deal with complaints that can not be resolved by the complaints coordinator or the headteacher
  - record complaints so the overall level, nature and outcome of complaints can be reviewed and any necessary steps taken to improve policies and procedures.