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Identify Your Concern

Identify what it is that is worrying you or causing concern.

If your worry is about:

- How your child is learning
- How your child is being taught
- Your child's ability to access learning
- Your child's wellbeing
- Your child's relationship with a teacher or other members of the school team
- Your child's relationship with another child or children within the school
- Your relationship with a teacher or other member of the school team

These concerns should be discussed directly with the school in the first instance.

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Talk to your child, listen to your child

If your child comes home and tells you that something has upset them or caused them worries, listen to them and acknowledge their worry.

- Ask your child what they feel you can do to help.
- Let them know that you will talk to the school on their behalf.
- Let them know that you and the school will work together to make things better.

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Who do I speak to at the school?

The school is there to help, and they want to do this for you and with you.

If you have a safeguarding concern, ask to speak to the Designated Safeguarding Lead.

Otherwise, your first point of contact is your child's class teacher or pastoral lead. Be clear in explaining what your worry is, what resolution looks like to you and your child and discuss how you and the school can work together to resolve the issue.

If you don't get the resolution you hoped for, step up your worry to the head teacher or senior leadership team.

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Remain open minded

Remember that you have only heard your child's part of the story, they have told you their truth but might not have a clear understanding of everybody else's views, feelings or perspective.

Discuss timescales for when you can expect to see the changes you need to have happened, be realistic with your expectations. Keep notes of your discussions.

Your child, and all of the children at the school, matter to the school team.

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If your worry remains unresolved

The Local Authority doesn't have a role in the school complaints process but they might be able to work with both you and the school.

If your child has an EHCP, contact your SENA Case Manager to discuss your concern and request support.

If your child does not have an EHCP you can log your worries on the Local Authority online complaints system, found [here](#). Whilst the Local Authority cannot address your worry and compel the school to make changes, they might be able to support both you and the school to reach resolution.

You can escalate your complaint to the Department for Education directly, details found [here](#).

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Escalating your concern

If you cannot reach a resolution with school staff, you can take your concern to the school's Board of Governors (or equivalent).

This should be done in writing, explain your concern, what has happened so far, why you feel further action is needed and what you would like to see happen.

Every school has a published copy of their Complaints Policy available on their website.

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If things don't improve

If, within reasonable timescales, the changes you need to see haven't taken place, go back to the head teacher or senior leadership team to explain your continued worries.

Discuss what else can be reasonably done to help your child experience a safe and happy time at school and ask how you can support them in making this happen.