



As a church school, our vision is for each child to love learning and to have hope, confidence, wisdom and respect for all.

'Life in all its fullness' (John 10:10)

Managing Serial and Unreasonable Complaints Policy

Introduction

St Peter's Brafferton CE (VA) Primary School is committed to dealing with all complaints fairly and impartially, and to providing a high quality service to those who complain. We will not normally limit the contact complainants have with our school. However, we do not expect our staff to tolerate unacceptable behaviour and will take action to protect staff from that behaviour, including that which is abusive, offensive or threatening.

Definition

St Peter's Brafferton CE (VA) Primary School defines unreasonable behaviour as that which hinders our consideration of complaints because of the frequency or nature of the complainant's contact with the school, such as, if the complainant:

- refuses to articulate their complaint or specify the grounds of a complaint or the outcomes sought by raising the complaint, despite offers of assistance
- refuses to co-operate with the complaints investigation process
- refuses to accept that certain issues are not within the scope of the complaints procedure
- insists on the complaint being dealt with in ways which are incompatible with the complaints procedure or with good practice
- introduces trivial or irrelevant information which they expect to be taken into account and commented on
- raises large numbers of detailed but unimportant questions, and insists they are fully answered, often immediately and to their own timescales
- makes unjustified complaints about staff who are trying to deal with the issues, and seeks to have them replaced
- changes the basis of the complaint as the investigation proceeds



- repeatedly makes the same complaint (despite previous investigations or responses concluding that the complaint is groundless or has been addressed)
- refuses to accept the findings of the investigation into that complaint where the school's complaint procedure has been fully and properly implemented and completed including referral to the Department for Education
- seeks an unrealistic outcome
- makes excessive demands on school time by frequent, lengthy and complicated contact with staff regarding the complaint in person, in writing, by email and by telephone while the complaint is being dealt with
- uses threats to intimidate
- uses abusive, offensive or discriminatory language or violence
- knowingly provides falsified information
- publishes unacceptable information on social media or other public forums.

Scope and Processes

Complainants should try to limit their communication with the school that relates to their complaint, while the complaint is being progressed. It is not helpful if repeated correspondence is sent (either by letter, phone, email or text), as it could delay the outcome being reached.

Whenever possible, the headteacher or Chair of Governors will discuss any concerns with the complainant informally before applying an 'unreasonable' marking and a meeting will be set up in order to both negotiate a safe and appropriate way forward first and foremost. A mutually agreed plan will be put in place.

If the behaviour continues, the headteacher will write to the complainant explaining that their behaviour is unreasonable, remind them of, and highlight, their agreed moving forward plan and ask them to change it. For complainants who excessively contact St Peter's Brafferton CE (VA) Primary School causing a significant level of disruption, which poses a safeguarding risk, we will formulate a mutually agreed communication plan. This will be reviewed after six months. The school may engage the use of legal services if it is felt that this is necessary.

In response to any serious incident of aggression or violence, we will immediately inform the police and communicate our actions in writing. This may include restricting access or barring an individual from St Peter's Brafferton CE (VA) Primary School, if there is a safeguarding risk to the school, staff or pupils.

Role of Headteacher

- The Headteacher will always try to resolve the situation in the first instance
- The Headteacher will communicate the processes and procedures clearly
- The Headteacher will support and protect the wellbeing of staff, parents and pupils

Role of staff

- Staff will help to resolve a situation in the first instance
- Staff will ensure the Headteacher is informed of any unreasonable behaviour

Role of Governors

- Governors will ensure the policies and procedures are followed and will always try to support the resolve of a situation
- Governors will protect the safety and wellbeing of staff, parents and children.

Role of Parents

- Parents will always speak to staff, the Headteacher and Governors with courtesy and respect.
- Parents will come to staff or the Headteacher in the first instance to try and resolve a situation.
- Parents may follow the Complaints Policy and Procedure

Please see also our school Complaints Procedure and our Policy on Abusive and Threatening Behaviour on School Site, both of which are available on the school website.

Review date: January 2025

Reviewed by FGB

Review cycle: 3 yearly

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