

TRINITY SCHOOL



Vexatious Complaints Policy

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Policy amendments may occur at any time. Please consult the Policies page on the website for the latest update.

Policy for Managing Unreasonably Persistent, Vexatious, or Abusive Complaints

The Headteacher and Governing Body are committed to the continuous improvement of our school and value constructive feedback from parents and carers. We aim to resolve concerns promptly and fairly through our established complaints procedure.

However, there are occasions when the behaviour of individuals pursuing complaints becomes unreasonable. While we understand that some complaints may involve distressing issues, we expect all members of our school community to treat each other with respect and courtesy. This policy outlines how we will respond to behaviour that is considered unreasonable, persistent, or abusive.

Definition of an Unreasonable Complainant

An unreasonable complainant is someone who, when raising a concern or complaint, behaves in a way that is disproportionate, persistent, or inappropriate. This includes, but is not limited to:

- Pursuing complaints in a manner that is excessive or out of proportion to the issue raised.
- Continuing to pursue a complaint after the school's complaints procedure has been fully exhausted.
- Engaging in behaviour that is harassing, obsessive, or personally targeted.
- Making repeated complaints without a clear objective or willingness to resolve the issue.
- Refusing to cooperate with the complaints process or to accept its outcomes.
- Demanding unrealistic outcomes or insisting on procedures that are not aligned with school policy.
- Using threatening, abusive, or discriminatory language or behaviour.
- Repeatedly changing the nature of the complaint or introducing irrelevant information.
- Making excessive contact with staff, including frequent emails, calls, or visits.
- Publishing inappropriate or defamatory content about the school or its staff on social media or other public platforms.

Definition of Harassment

Harassment refers to the unreasonable and persistent pursuit of issues or complaints in a manner that causes distress or disruption. This may include:

- Targeting specific staff members over a prolonged period.
- Pursuing complaints in a way that causes undue stress or anxiety.
- Acting in a way that significantly disrupts the school's operations or community.
- Using aggressive or inappropriate methods to seek resolution.

What You Can Expect from the School

We are committed to treating all concerns seriously and fairly. Anyone raising a concern or complaint can expect the school to:

- Follow the school's complaints procedure consistently.
- Respond within reasonable timeframes.
- Be available for discussion within practical limits, considering the needs of pupils and staff.
- Communicate respectfully and professionally.
- Work towards a resolution using fair and transparent processes.
- Keep all parties informed of progress throughout the process.

What the School Expects from You

To help us maintain a safe, respectful, and productive environment for all, we kindly ask that anyone wishing to raise a concern or complaint:

- Treat all members of staff with courtesy and respect.
- Consider the needs and wellbeing of pupils and staff within the school.
- Refrain from any form of violence or threats, whether directed at individuals or property.
- Acknowledge the time constraints under which school staff operate and allow reasonable time for a response.
- Understand that some issues may take time to resolve.
- Follow the school's established complaints procedure.
- Communicate politely and respectfully, avoiding aggressive language, verbal abuse, or name-calling.
- Raise concerns in an appropriate setting and at a suitable time (e.g., not in front of pupils, other parents, or in public areas).
- Be open to working collaboratively with the school to find a resolution.

How Trinity School Responds to Unreasonable or Harassing Complaints

This policy works alongside our complaints procedure to ensure that all concerns are addressed fairly and respectfully. While we are committed to resolving legitimate complaints, we must also protect staff and the wider school community from unreasonable or harassing behaviour.

In cases where complaints become unreasonably persistent or harassing, the school may take one or more of the following actions:

- **Informally** advise the complainant that their behaviour is becoming unreasonable and request a change in approach.
- **Formally notify** the complainant in writing that their behaviour falls under this policy.

- Require that all future meetings with staff include a third party and may be documented.
- Limit communication to written correspondence, except in emergencies.
- Suspend further investigation of a complaint until it is presented in a reasonable manner.
- Restrict the individual's access to school premises or staff.
- Cease all non-essential communication with the individual.
- Involve the local authority where appropriate.

The school has a duty of care to its staff and pupils and will take immediate action, including emergency measures, if necessary.

Physical or Verbal Aggression

Trinity School, its Governing Body, and the London Borough of Barking and Dagenham (LBBD) will not tolerate any form of aggression or harassment towards staff. If such behaviour occurs, the school may:

- Immediately prohibit the individual from entering the school premises.
- Limit communication to emergency matters only.
- Pursue legal action under anti-harassment legislation.

Review and Time Frame

If a complainant's behaviour improves but later reverts within a reasonable period, the school may reinstate the measures outlined in this policy.

If the complaint remains within the time limits of the school's complaints procedure and is pursued reasonably, the school may choose to resume the investigation.

The school will review any restrictions or sanctions at least annually. Legitimate new complaints will still be considered, provided they are raised in a respectful and reasonable manner. However, the school reserves the right not to respond to communications from individuals currently subject to this policy.