



Vexatious Behaviour Policy

Amendment History

Issue	Reason for Change	Ratified by	Date
1.0	New policy.	FGB	November 2023
2.0	Re-written to align with updated complaints policy.	FGB	13.10.2026

1 Introduction

Teachers and governors are well intentioned people who want to educate children in a safe and happy environment. They need and deserve to be respected and supported in performing this important role. We welcome constructive comments regarding the way we operate, and will always try to respond sympathetically to anyone with a concern or issue regarding the school, but there will be times when nothing further can be reasonably done to resolve matters.

We recognise that the overwhelming majority of external parties are completely reasonable in this respect. The ability of one or two unreasonable but determined individuals to consume disproportionate amounts of a school's time and resource by pursuing vexatious requests or persistent complaints can cause very real harm to the effective functioning of the wider school. There is a far greater risk of an unreasonable individual doing very real harm to schools than there is of schools making serious errors

For this reason, the school has the power to class someone (the 'complainant') as vexatious and limit contact, including the potential to ban them from school premises. This does not prevent the school from having to respond to further enquiries from third-party agencies.

2 What is Vexatious Behaviour?

Although the term 'complainant' is used in this policy, it is recognised that vexatious communication does not necessarily involve a specific complaint as such; for example, it could be simply an unreasonable request or excessive contact. Please see the school's Complaints Policy for specific examples of a vexatious complaint.

Examples of behaviour considered vexatious include (but is not limited to):

- excessive number of telephone calls, e-mails or letters
- writing complex and lengthy emails/letters
- demands for excessive amounts of staff time, e.g. multiple, lengthy meetings
- demands for excessive amounts of information or detail, or expecting a response in an unrealistic timescale
- demands that appear to be trivial or made without a serious purpose
- continually telephoning, sending letters, sending emails and/or making subtle changes to the nature of the requests previously made
- threatening behaviour, conduct and language*
- abusive, offensive or discriminatory language*
- inflammatory statements or unsubstantiated allegations*
- inappropriate commentary or personal attacks on staff or governors*
- demonstrating non-acceptance of a final decision by continuing to demand further responses to the same or similar issues
- demanding that the matter be considered by the chair of governors and subsequently by a full panel (including an independent member)

* including posts on social media

This policy includes requests made under the Freedom of Information Act 2000 and the Data Protection Act 2018.

3 What we do about it

3.1 Serious Incidents

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 barring an individual from the school.

3.2 Threatening, abusive, offensive or discriminatory language

When a member of staff is receiving threatening, abusive, offensive or discriminatory language, whether face-to-face or via telephone, they have an automatic right to politely terminate the conversation with immediate effect. They should explain that such language is unacceptable and, if possible, offer to resume the conversation at some future (unspecified) time when the complainant is prepared to communicate in an acceptable manner.

3.3 Deeming behaviour vexatious

Whenever possible, before applying a 'vexatious' marking, the Headteacher or Chair of Governors will:

- a) discuss any concerns with the complainant informally
- b) if the behaviour continues, write to the complainant explaining that their behaviour is unreasonable and ask them to change it

Where a complainant is deemed vexatious, the decision to restrict communication will be made by the Headteacher and/or Chair of Governors, with advice (if necessary) from external parties such as the Local Authority or police.

The complainant will be notified in writing (see Appendix 0) and the letter will clearly identify:

- a) the reason why the decision to apply this policy has been taken
- b) what impact this will have on their contact with the school
- c) the duration of the restriction
- d) how and to whom the complainant can appeal the decision (to be submitted within 7 days of receiving the notification letter)

Restrictions will be reviewed after six months if not lifted before this time.

Restrictions will never apply to emergency contact regarding the complainant's child(ren) or information which would be essential to their child/children's learning and achievement.

Restrictions can include all or some of the following (not an exhaustive list):

- placing time limits on telephone calls, meetings or personal contact
- limiting the number of telephone calls or meetings
- blocking emails from the complainant
- restricting the complainant to only one form of communication
- restricting the complainant to communication with one named member of staff
- refusing all communication regarding an identified subject
- prohibiting the complainant from entering school premises

A Template Response Letter

This template is optional. It can be used as is, or used as a guide to write a letter more suited to the specific situation.

[Insert Date]

RE: *[subject matter of complaint]*

Dear *[insert complainant's title & name]*

While we welcome constructive comments and have tried to respond sympathetically to your requests, we believe there is nothing further that can be reasonably done to resolve this matter. We are of the opinion that a disproportionate amount of time and resource has now been consumed to the point where further pursuit has the potential to cause real harm to the effective running of the school.

For this reason, after careful deliberation we have decided that any further communication on this matter will be restricted as follows:

[insert restriction(s), e.g. blocking emails, prohibition from school premises]

These restrictions will take effect immediately and will be applied until *[insert end date here]*.

Be assured these restrictions do not apply to emergency contact regarding your child(ren) or information which is essential to their learning and achievement.

You may appeal this decision within seven days of the date of this letter, by contacting the Department for Education online at: www.education.gov.uk/contactus, by telephone on: 0370 000 2288 or by writing to:

Department for Education
Piccadilly Gate
Store Street
Manchester
M1 2WD

Yours sincerely,

[Headteacher and/or Chair of Governors]