Complaints Policy



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| **Approved by:** |  | **Date:** April 2020 |
| **Last reviewed on:** | April 2020 |
| **Next review due by:** | April 2021 |

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# General principles: The right approach

## Who can make a complaint?

This complaints procedure is not limited to parents or carers of children that are registered at the school. Any person, including members of the public, may make a complaint to St Giles and St Georges C of E Academy about any provision of facilities or services that we provide. Unless complaints are dealt with under separate statutory procedures (such as appeals relating to exclusions or admissions), we will use this complaints procedure.

## The difference between a concern and a complaint

A concern may be defined as ‘*an expression of worry or doubt over an issue considered to be important for which reassurances are sought’*.

A complaint may be defined as ‘*an expression of dissatisfaction however made, about actions taken or a lack of action*’.

It is in everyone’s interest that concerns and complaints are resolved at the earliest possible stage. Many issues can be resolved informally, without the need to use the formal stages of the complaints procedure St Giles and St Georges C of E Academy concerns seriously and will make every effort to resolve the matter as quickly as possible.

If you have difficulty discussing a concern with a particular member of staff, we will respect your views. In these cases, Mrs Pointon will refer you to another staff member. Similarly, if the member of staff directly involved feels unable to deal with a concern, Mrs Pointon will refer you to another staff member. The member of staff may be more senior but does not have to be. The ability to consider the concern objectively and impartially is more important.

We understand however, that there are occasions when people would like to raise their concerns formally. In this case, St Giles and St Georges C of E Academy will attempt to resolve the issue internally, through the stages outlined within this complaints procedure.

## How to raise a concern or make a complaint

A concern or complaint can be made in person, in writing or by telephone. They may also be made by a third party acting on behalf on a complainant, as long as they have appropriate consent to do so.

Concerns should be raised with either the class teacher or headteacher. If the issue remains unresolved, the next step is to make a formal complaint.

Complainants should not approach individual governors to raise concerns or complaints. They have no power to act on an individual basis and it may also prevent them from considering complaints at Stage 2 of the procedure.

Complaints against school staff (except the headteacher) should be made in the first instance, to Mrs Pointon via the school office***.*** Please mark them as Private and Confidential.

Complaints that involve or are about the headteacher should be addressed to Mr Martin Alcock (the Chair of Governors), via the school office. Please mark them as Private and Confidential.

Complaints about the Chair of Governors, any individual governor or the whole governing body should be addressed to Mrs Carole Stone (the Clerk to the Governing Body) via the school office. Please mark them as Private and Confidential.

For ease of use, a template complaint form is included at the end of this procedure. If you require help in completing the form, please contact the school office. You can also ask third party organisations like the Citizens Advice to help you.

In accordance with equality law, we will consider making reasonable adjustments if required, to enable complainants to access and complete this complaints procedure. For instance, providing information in alternative formats, assisting complainants in raising a formal complaint or holding meetings in accessible locations.

## Anonymous complaints

We will not normally investigate anonymous complaints. However, the headteacher or Chair of Governors, if appropriate, will determine whether the complaint warrants an investigation.

## Time scales

You must raise the complaint within three months of the incident or, where a series of associated incidents have occurred, within three months of the last of these incidents. We will consider complaints made outside of this time frame if exceptional circumstances apply.

## Complaints received outside of term time

We will consider complaints made outside of term time to have been received on the first school day after the holiday period.

## Scope of this Complaints Procedure

This procedure covers all complaints about any provision of community facilities or services by St Giles and St Georges C of E Academy other than complaints that are dealt with under other statutory procedures, including those listed below.

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| **Exceptions** | **Who to contact** |
| * Admissions to schools
* Statutory assessments of Special Educational Needs
* School re-organisation proposals
 | Concerns about admissions, statutory assessments of Special Educational Needs, or school re-organisation proposals should be raised with <insert local authority details>  |
| * Matters likely to require a Child Protection Investigation
 | Complaints about child protection matters are handled under our child protection and safeguarding policy and in accordance with relevant statutory guidance.If you have serious concerns, you may wish to contact the local authority designated officer (LADO) who has local responsibility for safeguarding or the Multi-Agency Safeguarding Hub (MASH). <insert LADO/MASH details>. |
| * Exclusion of children from school\*

 | Further information about raising concerns about exclusion can be found at: [www.gov.uk/school-discipline-exclusions/exclusions](http://www.gov.uk/school-discipline-exclusions/exclusions). *\*complaints about the application of the behaviour policy can be made through the school’s complaints procedure.* *<link to school behaviour policy>.* |
| * Whistleblowing
 | We have an internal whistleblowing procedure for all our employees, including temporary staff and contractors.The Secretary of State for Education is the prescribed person for matters relating to education for whistleblowers in education who do not want to raise matters direct with their employer. Referrals can be made at: [www.education.gov.uk/contactus](http://www.education.gov.uk/contactus).Volunteer staff who have concerns about our school should complain through the school’s complaints procedure. You may also be able to complain direct to the LA or the Department for Education (see link above), depending on the substance of your complaint. |
| * Staff grievances
 | Complaints from staff will be dealt with under the school’s internal grievance procedures.  |
| * Staff conduct
 | Complaints about staff will be dealt with under the school’s internal disciplinary procedures, if appropriate.Complainants will not be informed of any disciplinary action taken against a staff member as a result of a complaint. However, the complainant will be notified that the matter is being addressed. |
| * Complaints about services provided by other providers who may use school premises or facilities
 | Providers should have their own complaints procedure to deal with complaints about service. Please contact them direct. |
| * National Curriculum - content
 | Please contact the Department for Education at: [www.education.gov.uk/contactus](http://www.education.gov.uk/contactus)  |

If other bodies are investigating aspects of the complaint, for example the police, local authority (LA) safeguarding teams or Tribunals, this may impact on our ability to adhere to the timescales within this procedure or result in the procedure being suspended until those public bodies have completed their investigations.

If a complainant commences legal action against St Giles and St Georges C of E Academy in relation to their complaint, we will consider whether to suspend the complaints procedure in relation to their complaint until those legal proceedings have concluded.

## Resolving complaints

At each stage in the procedure, St Giles and St Georges C of E Academy wants to resolve the complaint. If appropriate, we will acknowledge that the complaint is upheld in whole or in part. In addition, we may offer one or more of the following:

* an explanation
* an admission that the situation could have been handled differently or better
* an assurance that we will try to ensure the event complained of will not recur
* an explanation of the steps that have been or will be taken to help ensure that it will not happen again and an indication of the timescales within which any changes will be made
* an undertaking to review school policies in light of the complaint
* an apology.

## Withdrawal of a Complaint

If a complainant wants to withdraw their complaint, we will ask them to confirm this in writing.

# Stage 1: The first contact - guidelines for dealing with concerns and complaints informally

* 1. The vast majority of concerns and complaints can be resolved informally. There are many occasions where concerns are resolved straight away through the class teacher or school administrative staff or Headteacher, depending on whom the parent first approached.
	2. Complainants must feel able to raise concerns with members of staff either in person, by telephone, email or in writing. On occasion it may be appropriate for someone to act on behalf of a parent or guardian making a complaint. Schools should have a policy for staff about dealing with parents.
	3. At first it may be unclear whether a complainant is asking a question or expressing an opinion rather than making a complaint. A complainant may want a preliminary discussion about an issue to help decide whether he or she wishes to take it further.

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## Procedure for schools to use at Stage 1

* 1. Complainants have an opportunity to discuss their concern with the appropriate member of staff who clarifies with the complainant the nature of the concern, and reassures them that the school wants to hear about it. The “appropriate member of staff” is the person who has been designated to handle the complaint and not the teacher being complained about. The member of staff may explain to the complainant how the situation happened. It can be helpful to identify at this point what sort of outcome the complainant is looking for.
	2. If the member of staff first contacted cannot immediately deal with the matter, s/he makes a clear note of the date, name and contact details of the complainant.
	3. All members of staff will know how to refer, if necessary, to the person with responsibility for the particular issue raised by the complainant. S/he will check later to make sure the referral has been successful.
	4. In some schools or for certain issues, the headteacher may decide to deal with concerns directly at this stage.
	5. If the concern relates to the headteacher, the complainant is advised to contact the chair of the Directors board.
	6. The staff member dealing with the concern makes sure that the complainant is clear what action (if any) or monitoring of the situation has been agreed, putting this in writing only if this seems the best way of making things clear.
	7. Where no satisfactory solution has been found within ten working days, complainants will be asked if they wish their concern to be considered further. If they do, they should be given clear information, both orally and in writing, about how to proceed and about any independent advice available to them (see Appendix B).
	8. In some cases, it may be necessary for a complaint to progress straight to stage 2.

# Stage 2: Referral to the Headteacher for investigation

* 1. At this stage it has become clear that the concern is a definite complaint. In some cases the associate Headteacher has already been involved in looking at the matter; in others it is his/her first involvement. In either case, it is helpful for the Headteacher (or the person delegated to investigate) to use guidelines to ensure consistency among cases, and to make sure that nothing happens at this stage which could make it difficult for later stages to proceed smoothly.
	2. As Headteachers have responsibility for the day-to-day running of their schools, they have responsibility for the implementation of a complaints system, including the decisions about their own involvement at various stages. One of the reasons for having various "stages" in a complaints procedure is to reassure complainants that their grievance is being heard by more than one person. Headteachers should make arrangements to ensure that their involvement will not predominate at every stage of a particular complaint. For example arrangements may be made for other staff to deal with complainants' concerns at Stage 1, while the Headteacher deals with contact with complainants at Stage 2. Even at that stage the headteacher may designate another member of staff to collect some of the information from the various parties involved, though the decision on action to be taken may not be delegated. In some cases a complaint will have been taken straight to Stage 2 and will have been investigated by the Headteacher as the most appropriate person.

## Procedure for schools to use at Stage 2

* 1. The Headteacher (or designate) acknowledges the complaint orally or in writing within three working days of receiving the written complaint. The acknowledgement gives a brief explanation of the school's complaints procedure and a target date for providing a response to the complaint. This should normally be within ten working days; if this proves impossible, the complainant should be contacted with a reason for the delay and a revised target date.
	2. The Headteacher (or designate) an opportunity for the complainant to meet him/her to supplement any information provided previously. It is made clear to the complainant that if s/he wishes, s/he may be accompanied to any meeting by a friend, relative, representative, or advocate who can speak on his or her behalf, and that interpreting facilities are available if needed.
	3. If necessary, the Headteacher (or designate) should interview witnesses and take statements from those involved. If the complaint centres on a pupil, the pupil may also need to be interviewed. Pupils would normally be interviewed with their parent/carer present. In some situations, circumstances may prevent this, eg where this would seriously delay the investigation of a serious/urgent complaint or where particular circumstances mean that a pupil has specifically said s/he would prefer that parents or carers were not involved. In such circumstances another member of staff with whom the pupil feels comfortable should be asked to attend. If a member of staff is complained against, the needs of that person should be borne in mind (see paragraph 4 under ‘General Principles’).
	4. The Headteacher (or designate) keeps written records of meetings, telephone conversations, and other documentation.
	5. Once all the relevant facts have been established, the headteacher (or designate) should then produce a written response to the complainant, or may wish to meet the complainant to discuss/resolve the matter directly.
	6. A written response includes a full explanation of the decision and the reasons for it. Where appropriate, this includes what action the school will take to resolve the complaint. The complainant is advised that should s/he wish to take the complaint further s/he should notify the Chair of the Local Advisory Board within 20 working days of receiving the outcome letter.
	7. If a complaint is against the action of an Headteacher or if they have been very closely involved at Stage 1, the complaint may be moved to directly to Stage 3.

# Stage 3: Review by the Directors Board

* 1. ***Complaints only rarely reach this formal level, but it is important that governing boards are prepared to deal with them when necessary.*** At this stage, schools should seek advice from the Legal team. This can provide a useful "outside view" on the issues and ensure that the correct procedure is followed.
	2. ***It is important that this review not only be independent and impartial but that it is seen to be so.*** Therefore, individual complaints should not be considered by the full local Directors as serious conflicts of interest can arise. For example, in exceptional circumstances a complaint may result in disciplinary action against a member of staff, and Directors might be required to give an unprejudiced hearing to an appeal by the member of staff concerned. Similarly some Directors might have previous knowledge of the problem which led to the complaint and would be unable to give fair unbiased consideration to the issue. The DfE requires schools to ensure that at least one member of an appeal panel is independent of the management and running of the school. At least one panel member will therefore be identified from the MAT members board.
	3. Many complaints are inevitably seen by parents as being "against" a particular member of staff and their actions. However, all complaints which reach this stage will have done so because the complainant has not been satisfied by Headteacher response at the earlier stage of the procedure, and it may be appropriate for the Directors to consider that the complaint is against the school rather than against the member of staff whose actions led to the original complaint.

## Procedure for review by the Directors board at Stage 3

* 1. Upon receipt of a written request by the complainant for the complaint to proceed to Stage 3, the procedures outlined below should be followed.
	2. The clerk to the Directors board should write to the complainant to acknowledge receipt of the written request. The acknowledgement should inform the complainant that the complaint is to be heard by three Directors, at least one of which will be a member of the St Giles’ and St George’s Multi Academy Trust, and that this hearing will take place within 20 working days of receiving the complaint. The letter should also explain that the complainant has the right to submit any further documents relevant to the complaint. These must be received in time for the documents to be sent to the panel.
	3. The clerk to the Directors should arrange to convene a Directors Board Complaints Panel, ensuring that at least one member is present. It may be necessary for reserves to be identified to ensure that Directors are available to carry out their task within the set time.
	4. All panel members should be Directors who have had no prior involvement with the complaint, including at least one member who is independent of the management and running of the school. If s/he has not previously been involved, the chair of the Directors should chair the panel; otherwise the vice-chair should take this role. Generally it is not appropriate for the headteacher to have a place on the panel. Directors will want to bear in mind the advantages of having a parent (who is also a Director) on the panel. They will also want to be sensitive to issues of race, gender and religious affiliation.
	5. The chair/vice-chair will ensure that the complaint is heard by the panel within 20 working days of receiving the letter in 3.5. All relevant correspondence regarding the complaint should be given to each panel member as soon as the composition of the panel is confirmed. If the correspondence is extensive, the chair of the panel should prepare a thorough summary for sending to panel members.
	6. The chair/vice-chair will write to all parties (the complainant, headteacher, members of the panel and any relevant witnesses) at least five working days before the meeting, informing them of the date, time and place. The notification to the complainant should also inform him/her of their right to be accompanied to the meeting by a friend/advocate/interpreter. The letter will also explain how the meeting will be conducted and the complainant's right to submit further written evidence to the panel.
	7. The chair/vice-chair of the Directors should invite the headteacher to attend the panel meeting and prepare a written report for the panel in response to the complaint. The Headteacher may also invite members of staff directly involved in matters raised by the complainant to respond in writing or in person to the complaint. Any relevant documents including the headteacher's report should be received by all concerned - including the complainant - at least five working days prior to the meeting.
	8. The involvement of staff other than the Headteacher is subject to the discretion of the chair of the panel.
	9. It is the responsibility of the chair of the panel to ensure that the meeting is properly minuted.
	10. The aim of the meeting should be to resolve the complaint and achieve reconciliation between the school and the complainant. However, it has to be recognised that sometimes it may only be possible to establish facts and make recommendations which will satisfy the complainant that his or her complaint has at least been taken seriously.
	11. The panel should remember that the complainant might not be used to dealing with groups of people in formal situations and may feel inhibited when speaking to the panel. It is therefore recommended that the chair of the panel ensures that the proceedings are as informal as possible.
	12. If either party wishes to introduce previously undisclosed evidence or witnesses, it is in the interests of natural justice to adjourn the meeting so that the other side has time to consider and respond to the new evidence.
	13. The meeting should allow for:
		+ the complainant to explain their complaint
		+ the headteacher to explain the school's response
		+ the headteacher to question the complainant about the complaint
		+ the complainant to question the Headteacher and/or other members of staff about the school's response
		+ panel members to have an opportunity to question both the complainant and the headteacher
		+ any party to have the right to call witnesses (subject to the approval of the chair)
		+ all parties having the right to question all the witnesses
		+ final statements by both the complainant and the Headteacher.
	14. The chair of the panel will explain to the complainant and the headteacher that the panel will now consider its decision, and a written decision will be sent to both parties within 15 working days. The complainant, Headteacher, other members of staff and witnesses will then leave.
	15. The panel will then consider the complaint and all the evidence presented and (a) reach a unanimous, or at least a majority, decision on the complaint and (b) decide upon the appropriate action to be taken to resolve the complaint and (c) where appropriate, suggest recommended changes to the school's systems or procedures to ensure that problems of a similar nature do not happen again.
	16. A written statement outlining the decision of the panel must be sent to the complainant and Headteacher. The letter to the complainant should explain that if they are not satisfied with the response whether a further appeal can be made, and if so, to whom.
	17. The school should ensure that a copy of all correspondence and notes are kept on file in the school's records. These records should be kept separately from any involved pupil's personal records.

# Stage 4: Beyond local resolution

* 1. **The Education and Skills Funding Agency:** Complaints can be taken to the Education and Skills Funding Agency (ESFA) for review on behalf of the Secretary of State for Education and Skills. The ESFA considers complaints about academies that fall into the following areas:
		+ undue delay or non-compliance with an academy’s own complaints procedure
		+ an academy’s failure to comply with a duty imposed on it under its funding agreement with the Secretary of State
		+ an academy’s failure to comply with any other legal obligation, unless there is another organisation better placed to consider the matter as set out in the next section

Further information can be found at:

[**www.gov.uk/government/publications/complain-about-an-academy**](http://www.gov.uk/government/publications/complain-about-an-academy)

# Dealing with unreasonably persistent or vexatious complaints

* + - We define unreasonably persistent and vexatious complaints as those which, because of the frequency or nature of the complainants’ contacts, hinder our consideration of

their or other people’s complaints. The description ‘unreasonably persistent’ and ‘vexatious’ may apply separately or jointly to a particular complaint.

* + - Features of an unreasonably persistent and/or vexatious complaint include those detailed within Appendix D. Please note that this list is not exhaustive, nor does one single feature on its own necessarily imply that the complaint will be so defined.
		- The school will ensure that the complaint is being, or has been, investigated in accordance with this Complaints Policy. If there are concerns that a complaint may fall within the category of being unreasonably persistent and/or vexatious the Headteacher

will seek guidance and advice from the Legal Department and Chair of Directors.

* + - If a complainant is found to be unreasonably persistent and/or vexatious the Chair of Directors will write to the complainant advising them of the decision and the reasons for this. The letter should state that all future correspondence from them with regards to complaints should directed to them who will consider whether it raises any substantive new issue(s).
		- The complainant will be advised that if no substantive new issue is raised, any future complaints will not receive a response. They will also be advised of their right to complain about the decision to the Education and Skills Funding Agency (ESFA).
		- There is no internal route of appeal against the decision that a complaint is persistent and/or vexatious.
		- If future complaints do raise substantive new issues, it will be investigated in accordance with the Complaints Policy

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# Accountability

* + - The Headteacher holds delegated responsibility for discharging the sound application of all establishment policies.
		- The Headteacher should inform the Chair of Director of all matters relating to serious breaches of this policy including any major incident to be addressed under this policy promptly, preferably prior to action being taken insofar as is reasonably practicable.

# Monitoring, evaluation and review

* + - The policy will be promoted and implemented throughout St. Giles’ and St. George’s C of E Academy
		- The Directors will review this policy every two years in consultation with the Headteacher.

# Appendix A Concerns and Complaints about Schools

## Guidance notes for Parents

### If you have a concern or complaint

We would like you to tell us about it. We welcome suggestions for improving our work in the school. Be assured that no matter what you want to tell us, our support and respect for you and your child in the school will not be affected in any way. Please tell us of your concern as soon as possible. It is difficult for us to investigate properly an incident or problem which has happened some time ago.

### What to do first

Most concerns and complaints can be sorted out quickly by speaking with your child's class teacher.

Any member of staff at the school can help you and direct you to the most appropriate person to deal with your complaint. If you have a complaint which you feel should be looked at by the headteacher in the first instance you can contact him/her straightaway if you prefer. It is usually best to discuss the problem face to face. You may need an appointment to do this, and can make one by ringing, calling or emailing the school. You can take a friend or relation to the appointment with you if you would like to do so.

All staff will make every effort to resolve your problem informally. They will make sure that they understand what you feel went wrong, and they will explain their own actions to you. They will ask what you would like the school to do to put things right. Of course, this does not mean that in every case they will come round to your point of view but it will help both you and the school to understand both sides of the question. It may also help to prevent a similar problem arising again.

### What to do next

If you are dissatisfied with the teacher's response (or with the headteacher's initial reaction if she has already been involved) you can make a complaint to the headteacher. This should be made in writing.

If your complaint is about an action of the headteacher personally, then you should refer your complaint to the Directors board. You can contact them through the Clerk to the Directors board.

You may also find it helpful at this stage to have a copy of the School’s Complaints Procedures as this explains in detail what procedures are followed. This is available from the school.

The Headteacher will ask to meet you for a discussion of the problem. Again you may take a friend or someone else with you if you wish. The Headteacher will conduct a full investigation of the complaint and may interview any members of staff or pupils involved. You will receive a written response to your complaint.

Most problems can be resolved by the end of this stage.

### If your complaint has not been resolved

If you are still not satisfied you may wish to contact the chair of the Directors board to ask for referral of your complaint to the Directors Board. It will then be heard by a group of Directors who have no previous knowledge of the problem, including a member of the ST Giles’ and St George’s Members board so will be able to give it a fresh assessment. You will be invited to attend and speak to the panel at a meeting which the headteacher will also attend.

### Further action

Complaints about school problems are almost always settled within schools but in exceptional cases it may be possible to refer the problem to an outside body such as the Secretary of State for Education. Again there is more information on this in the Complaints Procedure.

# Appendix B How to Listen to Complaints – Guidance for Schools

As soon as you realise that you are listening to a complaint, remember these points:

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| **Don't pass the buck** | Try not to keep transferring someone from one place to another. Make sure you know the contact personfor anything you cannot deal with yourself. |
| **Don't be flippant** | First impressions count. You and the school may be judged on your immediate reaction. |
| **Treat all complaints seriously** | However small or trivial it may seem to you, the complaint will be an important problem for anyone who takes the trouble to complain. |
| **Treat every complaint individually** | Even if you have already received several similar complaints the same day, it is probably the person's first chance to have their say. |
| **Be courteous and patient** | Be sympathetic and helpful, but do not blame other colleagues. |
| **Say who you are** |  |
|  | If you are unknown to the person, introduce yourself. |
| **Ask for their name and use it** | Anonymous complaints are acceptable where there are special circumstances. |
| **Take time to find out exactly what the problem is** | It is easy for someone to forget to tell you an important detail, particularly if they are upset or annoyed. |
| **Don't take the complaint personally** | To an angry or upset person, YOU are the school, and the only one they can put their feelings to right now. |
| **Stay cool and calm** | Do not argue with the person - be polite and try to find out exactly what the person thinks is going wrong, or has gone wrong. |
| **Check you are being understood** Make sure that the person understands what you aresaying. Don't use jargon - it can cause confusion and annoyance to someone "not in the know".**Don't rush** Take your time. Let people have their say, and let off steam if they need to.Listen carefully and sympathetically to their problems before replying and attempting to find a solution or offer a next step. |

# Appendix C

**Complaint form**

Please complete and return to the Headteacher or Clerk to Directors Board via the email bursar@stgg.org.uk (if the Headteacher has already reviewed the issue) who will acknowledge receipt and explain what action will be taken.

|  |
| --- |
| **Your name:** |
| **Pupil’s name:** |
| **Your relationship to the pupil:** |
| **Address:****Postcode:****Day time telephone number: Evening telephone number:****Email address:** |
| **Please give details of your complaint, including dates and other relevant factual information.** |

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| **What action, if any, have you already taken to try and resolve your complaint. (Who did you speak to and what was the response)?** |
| **What actions do you feel might resolve the problem at this stage?** |
| **Are you attaching any paperwork? If so, please give details.** |
| **Signature: Date:** |
| **For school use:****Date acknowledgement sent: By who:****Complaint referred to: Date:** |

# Appendix D:

**Examples of unreasonably persistent and/or vexatious complaints**

*Please note that this list is not exhaustive, nor does one single feature on its own necessarily imply that the complaint will be so defined.*

* There are insufficient or no grounds for the complaint and it is made only to annoy (or for reasons that the complainant does not admit or make obvious).
* There are no specified grounds for the complaint despite offers of assistance.
* The complainant refuses to co-operate with the complaints investigation process while still wishing their complaint to be resolved.
* The complaint is about issues not within the power of the school to investigate, change or influence and where the complainant refuses to accept this.
* The complainant insists on the complaint being dealt with in ways which are incompatible with the Complaints Policy (insisting, for example, that there must not be any written record of the complaint or insisting the complaint is only dealt with by the Children First Learning Partnership Chief Executive).
* There appears to be groundless complaints about the staff dealing with the complaint investigation, and an attempt to have them replaced.
* There is an unreasonable number of contacts with us, by any means, in relation to a specific complaint or complaints.
* There are persistent and unreasonable demands or expectations of staff and/or the complaints process after the unreasonableness has been explained to the complainant (an example of this could be a complainant who insists on immediate responses to numerous, frequent and/or complex communication.
* Attempts to harass, verbally abuse or otherwise seek to intimidate staff dealing with their complaint by use of foul or inappropriate language or by the use of offensive or discriminatory language.
* Subsidiary or new issues are raised whilst a complaint is being addressed that were not part of the complaint at the start of the complaint process.
* Trivial or irrelevant new information is introduced whilst the complaint is being investigated and an expectation that this to be taken into account and commented on.
* There is a change to the substance or basis of the complaint without reasonable justification whilst the complaint is being addressed.
* The complainant denies statements he or she made at an earlier stage in the complaint process.
* The complainant electronically records meetings and conversations without the prior knowledge and consent of the other person involved.
* The complainant refuses to accept the outcome of the complaint process after its conclusion, repeatedly arguing the point, complaining about the outcome, and/or denying that an adequate response has been given.
* The same complaint is made repeatedly, perhaps with minor differences, after the complaints process has been concluded and where the complainant insists that the minor differences make these 'new' complaints which should be put through the full complaints process.
* Documented evidence is not accepted as factual by the complainant.
* The complaint relates to an issue based on a historic and irreversible decision or incident.