Cannon Lane Primary School

Managing Serial and Unreasonable Complaints Policy

Date approved by the Governing Board: December 2024

Date for review: December 2027

Cannon Lane Primary School welcomes comments and suggestions from parents and takes seriously complaints and concerns they may raise. The school is committed to dealing with all complaints fairly, impartially and in a timely manner as set out in our complaints policy. We will not normally limit the contact complainants have with our school. However, there may be occasions when the behaviour of a complainant inhibits the capacity of the school to effectively deal with their concerns, or whereby addressing items of correspondence causes significant and disproportionate resourcing issues for the school which are not justified by the nature of the concern. We also will not tolerate unacceptable behaviour towards our staff and will take action to protect staff from that behaviour, including that which is abusive, offensive or threatening.

Cannon Lane Primary School defines unreasonable behaviour as that which hinders our consideration of complaints because of the frequency and/or nature of the complainant's contact with the school, including where the complainant:

- does not articulate their complaint or specify the grounds of a complaint or the outcomes sought by raising the complaint, despite offers of assistance
- does not co-operate with the complaints investigation process
- does not accept the scope of the complaints procedure and its timeframes
- does not accept a reasonable approach to managing the complaint which is in accordance with the complaints procedure and recognised good practice
- introduces trivial or irrelevant information, including raising large numbers of detailed questions which they expect to be considered and commented on
- makes unjustified complaints about staff managing/investigating the complaint seeking to have them replaced
- changes the basis of the complaint as the investigation proceeds
- refuses to accept the findings/outcome of a complaint investigation and/or repeatedly makes the same complaint despite having exhausted the complaints process, including referral to the Department of Education.
- seeks an unrealistic outcome
- makes excessive demands on school time by frequent and lengthy contact with staff regarding the complaint whilst the investigation is ongoing. This can be in person, by phone, email or in writing.
- 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.

Complainants should set out their complaint clearly at the outset to enable the school to conduct a comprehensive, impartial and timely investigation. Communication whilst the investigation is underway

should be limited to new information that was not reasonably available at the time and is relevant to the matters under investigation. Updates will be provided by the school to the complaint in accordance with the complaints policy. Repeated correspondence that is irrelevant or repetitious may delay the investigation and an outcome being reached.

Whenever possible, the Headteacher or Chair of Governors will discuss any concerns with the complainant informally before applying an '*unreasonable'* marking.

If the behaviour continues, the Headteacher will write to the complainant explaining that their behaviour is unreasonable and must change. For complainants who excessively contact Cannon Lane Primary School causing a significant level of disruption, we may specify methods of communication and limit the number of contacts in a communication plan. This will be reviewed after six months.

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 Cannon Lane Primary School.