



POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

SCHOOL COMPLAINTS POLICY

DATE AGREED BY GOV'S;	SUMMER 2017 PREMISES COMMITTEE
DATE AGREED BY FULL GOV BODY:	SUMMER 2017
NEXT REVISION DATE;	SUMMER 2020

STATEMENT FOR EQUALITY;

Manor Park Primary School is committed to gender, racial, religious and disability equality in every part of school life.

The full list of documents forming part of this policy is as follows:

- Section 1** Procedure to deal with comments and complaints about schools
- Section 2** Formal complaint to a school's governing body: model agenda
- Section 3** Advice to school governing body
- Appendix A** "I have something to say to the school" : advice to parents
- Appendix B** Complaint Form
- Appendix C** Summary of external bodies dealing with complaints beyond the local authority

Procedure to deal with comments and complaints about schools

Section 1

- 1. Purpose** – Schools value the generally good relations they enjoy with parents and the community. These good relations are based on mutual respect and a willingness to listen to other points of view. The purpose of the procedure is to provide a structured opportunity to express and resolve concerns and thus to improve the provision for students.
- 2. Introduction** – This procedure builds on the legal requirements of Section 409 of the Education Act 1996 and the guidance issued in the Department of Education and Science Circular 1/89: local arrangements for the consideration of complaints. It is in the best interests of all parties that any concern is expressed and resolved quickly and at the earliest possible stage.

3. **Stages** – The procedure has three possible stages, which must begin with the informal stage:

- **Informal:** Most concerns are easily resolved informally by discussion with staff at the school; more difficult or complex concerns may take more than one discussion. A meeting with the Head teacher must be taken up before going to mediation.
- **Mediation:** The Chair of Governors(CoG) can be written to who will investigate the matter and act as a mediator and offer a conciliatory meeting before a formal complaint is made. This means the CoG may not be on the panel to hear the formal complaint but may provide factual information from the investigation or meeting or may not be any part of the procedure.
- **Formal complaint to the governing body:** A formal complaint can be made to the governing body, usually after careful attempts have been made to resolve the matter informally.
- **Formal complaint to the local authority:** From 1 August 2012 complaints about maintained schools not resolved by the school should be sent to the Secretary of State for Education.

4. **Informal Stage**

- 4.1 All schools are happy to receive suggestions and compliments and talk about concerns that help them identify areas of success and areas in which they could improve. Where a concern is brought to the school's attention it can almost always be resolved with a single conversation. Sometimes an issue is more complex and will take more than one discussion to resolve.
- 4.2 Occasionally, despite the best efforts of all parties, these discussions do not resolve the concern, which then may become a complaint. The complainant will be asked to confirm in writing to the headteacher (see Appendix B: Complaint Form) and it will be formally acknowledged in writing. The headteacher will copy relevant papers to any member(s) of staff named in the complaint.

- 4.3 The headteacher has the right of written reply to the written complaint.
- 4.4 The School has a procedure for mediation at this point (See above)
- 4.5 Any concerns should be raised as soon as possible after the event.

5. Formal complaint to the governing body

This would usually be made only if the complainant has:

- sought to resolve the concern through an informal approach to the school,
- allowed reasonable time (normally up to six school weeks) for investigation of the concern,
- accepted any reasonable offer by the school to discuss the result of that investigation,
- put the complaint clearly in writing (normally within six months of the event),
- taken part in any process of mediation offered by the school.

5.1 Each governing body has a complaints committee whose responsibility it is to hear and decide about formal complaints about the curriculum that have not been resolved at the informal stage. This procedure can also be used to deal with complaints where no other procedure exists. Governing bodies are encouraged to adopt it for this purpose.

5.2 The complainant should write to the Bursar at the school requesting a meeting of the complaints committee. Enclosed with the letter should be a copy of the written complaint form (Appendix B) submitted at the informal stage, indicating which matters remain unresolved. No new complaints may be included.

5.3 The Bursar is responsible for making all arrangements for the meeting, including time and place. The Bursar will immediately send the text of the formal complaint to the headteacher and chairperson of governors. The school may have up to 10 schools days from receipt of this notification to

submit its response to the Bursar. The meeting will be arranged as soon as possible for a date within 15-30 school days of receipt of the complainant's request for a formal meeting. If there is difficulty agreeing a date the chairperson of governors makes the final decision.

- 5.4 Any documents from either the complainant or the headteacher to be considered by the committee, and the names of any witnesses who might be called must be received by the Bursar at least seven school days before the meeting. Copies of all papers submitted plus the agenda will be sent to the complaints committee members, complainant, headteacher and chairperson of governors at least five school days before the meeting date. The headteacher will copy relevant papers to any member(s) of staff named in the complaint.
- 5.5 The complainant may bring a friend, who is not another parent, supporter or interpreter to the meeting.
- 5.6 The headteacher may bring a friend or a professional representative.
- 5.7 If teachers or other members of staff are asked by the headteacher to be present at a complaints committee meeting, they have a right to bring a friend or professional representative.
- 5.8 It is not appropriate for a child/pupil to attend.
- 5.9 The committee will be made up of governors who have not previously had significant involvement with the complaint.
- 5.10 They will consider the complaint on the basis of the papers they receive and what is said at the meeting.
- 5.11 In the event of either party not attending the meeting, the chairperson has discretion to proceed or to adjourn at any stage.
- 5.12 The complaints committee chair controls the meeting and will aim to complete all the business at a reasonable hour without the need to adjourn to another day. It is important that all participants help by being clear about

the points they wish to make, by keeping to the point, and by being courteous throughout.

5.13 The committee can:

- uphold the complaint in full,
- uphold it in part, or
- dismiss it

In complex cases they may wish to give a complex response. The Bursar will send the complainant, headteacher and chairperson of governors a letter with the outcome of the meeting within seven days of the meeting. The headteacher will copy relevant papers to any member(s) of staff named in the complaint.

5.14 Having come to a decision about the complaint, the committee may refer issues of principle or general practice to another forum, such as the governing body, or to an individual such as the headteacher.

6. Formal complaint to the Secretary of State for Education

6.1 From 1 August 2012 complaints about maintained schools not resolved by the school should be sent to the Secretary of State for Education.

1. Apologies
2. To consider members' declaration of interests, entitlement to vote and any requirements to withdraw from the meeting.
3. To confirm the order of the procedure
4. To agree whether the decision will be conveyed orally to all parties at the end of the meeting (as well as in writing afterwards)
5. Invitation to complainant and headteacher to join meeting and introduction to governors (enclosure --)
6. Introduction and explanation of the procedure
7. To note the role of the clerk at the meeting
8. Complainant's presentation and witnesses and questions to both by headteacher and/or governors (enclosure --)
9. Headteacher's response and witnesses and questions to both by complainants(s) and/or governors (enclosure --)
10. Any further questions or points from any of the parties
11. Opportunity for summing up by the headteacher
12. Opportunity for summing up by the complainant
13. Summing up by the chairperson
14. Complainant and headteacher leave the meeting
15. To decide on the complaint. The committee can:
 - uphold the complaint in full,
 - uphold it in part, or
 - dismiss it
16. To consider whether and how to refer issues of principle of general practice to another forum, such as the governing body, or to an individual such as the headteacher.
17. To inform the complainant and the headteacher of the governing body's decision and further rights of representation (if agreed at 5 above).
18. Confidentiality: to consider whether any items are confidential and should therefore not be available to persons wishing to inspect governing bodies papers.

Advice to school governing bodies on the handling of complaints

Section 3

1. The Role of the Governing Body

A key role of the governing body is to influence the ethos of the school, its general atmosphere and philosophy. This influence carries with it an equivalent responsibility to support the headteacher and the staff and to ensure fairness to them as well as to pupils

2. School Procedures

In order to fulfil its role, as outlined above, the governing body should establish that there are clear procedures and structures for dealing with concerns and complaints within the school, and that these are widely understood and accepted for use by all school staff, including support staff and governors. It should be clear to all concerned as to who will deal with complaints, and what will happen at each stage. For example, a later stage in the informal arrangements might involve a school governor or other person nominated by the governing body.

Every effort should be made to deal with any complaint quickly. Experience has shown that this is beneficial for all concerned and it lessens the likelihood of the complainant adding further complaints about the way in which his/her complaint has been handled. A complaint well handled can result in a complainant having more confidence in a school than he/she had before making the complaint.

3. Main Role of the Local Authority

Officers in Children, Young People and Learning Services will advise parents, governors and school staff of the details of the complaints procedure and good practice, but will remain impartial where any individual complaints are concerned.

4. Governing Body Complaints Committee

5.1 Role

The Committee has the power to make decisions on behalf of the governing body and may:

- uphold the complaint,
- uphold it in part, or
- dismiss it

Where the issue under consideration does not fall within this remit of the Committee, the members may still wish to make recommendations.

A complaints committee should be appointed at the governing body meeting in the Autumn Term. The composition of this committee should be considered carefully. Dealing with any complaints that reach this stage is likely to be challenging but careful planning early on can avoid unnecessary complications. Consider the following:

5.2 Membership

The most important point to remember is that any complaints committee member should not have had previous significant involvement with a complaint. For example, it would be better not to appoint

- a governor who is likely to be involved in dealing with a complaint;
- a parent- or teacher-governor who is likely to have significant involvement with a complaint at the informal stage;
- a governor who is likely to be involved in mediating at the informal stage.

Whoever is appointed should be prepared to attend a meeting at short notice.

It is suggested that a minimum of three governors (excluding the headteacher) form the complaints committee. Substitutes should be appointed to take the place of any committee member who might be unavailable. The minutes of the Autumn Term governors meeting should show exactly who should be called for a meeting and in what order. The complaints committee clerk will then be clear about whom to call from a list.

5.3 Chairperson

The governing body should appoint a chairperson for the complaints committee at the same time as they decide on the membership of the committee. This avoids uncertainty all round and allows the chairperson to take control of the situation before the meeting as well as during and after it.

Previous experience of chairing a meeting is preferable. Governors should be aware that these meetings can be difficult and that the unexpected frequently occurs.

5.4 Clerk

Children, Young People and Learning Services' Governor Support Team can ensure that an officer is available to clerk the complaints committee meeting, if governors request this. A decision about this should be made at the same time as the appointment of the committee.

The Bursar will draw up the agenda and make all the necessary arrangements for the meeting. If the clerk is a local authority officer the meeting will be set up by Children, Young People and Learning Services Governor Support services.

5. Complaints Committee Meeting

6.1 Before a meeting

A copy of the agenda, the complaint, and any written response from the headteacher will be sent to complaints committee members and (if not a complaints committee member) the chairperson of governors at least five school days before the meeting. Each member must immediately read the

papers to check that they have no significant involvement with the case under consideration, but should not discuss it with anyone else. If they need to withdraw from the committee the Bursar will organise a substitute. It is essential to withdraw at this stage so that a substitute can be arranged.

6.2 Practical arrangements

The tone of an evening is often set by what happens when the complainant first arrives for the meeting. Therefore it is worth the chairperson considering the following:

- What time will participants be asked to arrive?
- Who will greet participants when they arrive?
- Will anyone wait with them?
- Where will other people wait? (Separate places for complainants and school representatives may be advisable).
- Will there be any refreshments provided?
- Where will the meeting take place?
- How will the meeting room be arranged? (Small informal arrangements are usually best).
- What route will the complainant and school representatives take to the meeting room?
- Does the complainant need an interpreter?

6.3 The meeting

The agenda is based on advice given by the Council of Tribunals and sets out the procedure to be used at the meeting.

The same rules apply as for other committee meetings of governors. For example, governors are not bound to accept tabled papers and may adjourn if they feel that they need time to consider an unexpected issue, including procedure issues.

6.4 Chairperson's role

6.4.1 During the meeting

- Take control of the meeting with confidence; use your judgement to move the meeting on when necessary and aim towards a resolution by coming to a conclusion on the written and oral evidence presented at the meeting.
- Convey to all concerned that you are acting impartially by treating all participants even-handedly.
- The committee and the Bursar will be present throughout the meeting.
- The complainant and the headteacher (with their friends/advocates) will be invited in and asked to leave together.
- At the discretion of the chairperson witnesses will be invited to join the meeting when their input is required and to leave immediately afterwards.
- It is not appropriate for a child/pupil to attend.
- Having ascertained the names of all those waiting outside the meeting room, start the meeting by agreeing with the committee who should be invited to speak to the committee and in what order; at no time should the complainant, headteacher or a witness be able to talk to committee members without both the complainant and headteacher being present; these arrangements may have to be modified if one or more of the parties have absented themselves from the meeting.

- If witnesses are waiting, the chairperson should try to ensure that they are called in due course if required or sent home early if it becomes apparent that they will not be seen.
- Once the main participants have joined you, explain the evening's proceedings (see below).
- Begin to hear the complaint being firm about keeping to the agenda and reminding participants as necessary about the procedure; e.g. if interruptions occur.
- Bear in mind that all participants will be under stress; be even-handed in your treatment of all participants.

6.4.2. Explaining the evening's proceedings

- Introduce the people round the table.
- Explain that the agenda will be followed.
- Run down the items briefly and let the participants know if they will be able to hear the decision at the end of the meeting.
- If the complaint is complex and there are some aspects of it that fall outside the committee's remit, clarify this and explain exactly which aspects of the complaint can be addressed by the committee; later, you may wish to advise the complainant as to how best to follow up any complaint that could not be dealt with by the committee. Alternatively, the committee may wish to consider making representations to the responsible authority for those areas that fall outside its remit.
- Make it clear that although you want to be as informal as possible, you will keep to the agenda as this will allow everyone to have a fair hearing.
- Explain, for example, that you will hear the complainant speak

without interruption and then ask the headteacher and complaints committee members to ask any questions to clarify any issues raised; then the headteacher's response will be heard, again without interruption, and there will be an opportunity for the committee and the complainant to ask any questions about what has been said and so on.

- Indicate any time limits that you would like to adhere to.

6.4.3 Concluding the discussion

- It is important that all the participants feel that they have had every opportunity to be heard but if they are beginning to repeat themselves at the "further questions or points" stage, (Section 2, item 10) you can move the meeting on by proceeding to the summing up. The complainant and the headteacher are then invited to sum up if they wish but if the issues are clear, formal summing up may not seem to be appropriate, in which case items 11-13 (Section 2) can be referred to but not used.
- Confirm the arrangements for the participants to receive the decision of the meeting.
- After the complainant and headteacher have left, write down the decision of the committee so this can be accurately recorded in the minutes
- If the participants are invited back to hear the decision, make it clear to all parties that no further discussion is possible

6.4.4 The decision letter and minutes

- The Bursar sends a copy of the decision letter to the complainant, headteacher and chairperson of governors.
- The Bursar writes the minutes and sends them to the complainant and the governing body clerk for distribution to the rest of the governing body; the minutes record the procedure followed, the

decision reached and any recommendations made.

- It is usual for all documents relating to a complaint to be kept confidential.

6.5. After the meeting

The chairperson of the committee will receive a copy of the minutes for confirmation.

7. Formal Complaint to the Secretary of State for Education

A complainant or headteacher who believes that the governing body has not dealt with the complaint properly or that the outcome is unreasonable may refer the matter to the Secretary of State for Education.

“I have something to say to the school”

Introduction

Often parents and other members of the public would like schools to know their views. Sometimes there are meetings when this is possible. On other occasions a personal comment is more appropriate. Communication, written or spoken, is valued as part of the partnership between home and school. Cooperation between parents, staff and governors leads to a shared sense of purpose and a good atmosphere in school. Here are some of the questions we frequently receive.

Should I pay a compliment?

Certainly. Those at the school are always pleased to learn that things have gone well and compliments are appreciated.

Should I tell them my concerns?

Definitely. All members of staff want to know as soon as possible if something concerns you or your child. They can then investigate and give you a response. If need be, they can also take steps to remedy a situation. Misunderstandings can be cleared up. An apology can be given if something is found to be wrong. Everyone benefits from the speedy resolution of difficulties and from suggestions for improvement.

Should I complain?

Yes, if you believe that something is seriously wrong. Your view can then be considered and an investigation can establish whether there is something wrong which needs to be corrected. The school's response will be based on the governors' agreed policy and will seek to be fair to all concerned. Writing down your complaint helps to clarify exactly what you are complaining about.

Who do I contact?

That depends on the particular situation. Often the teacher is able to deal with the matter. More serious problems will require the attention of a senior member of staff or the headteacher. Mutual courtesy is to be expected and ensures that things go smoothly. There should always be discussion in the hope of solving difficulties informally. Most problems are solved in this way. Certain specific complaints (e.g. about admissions to school) are dealt with separately.

For further advice about where to direct your complaint call

- School office 0208 642 0144 and ask for a complaints/concern sheet

What if the matter is still unresolved?

It will be necessary to write to the school to inform them about this. In response the school may invite you to a meeting to talk together about it. The school may arrange for a suitable mediator to be present. If the matter remains unresolved, you may decide to make a formal complaint to the governing body.

What is a complaint?

It is an expression of serious dissatisfaction. This could be about an event that has happened, failed to happen, or the way in which something was handled. You can obtain a copy of your school's full complaints procedure from the school.

Who will deal with my complaint?

At first, school staff will respond, and others may assist. If you proceed further with your complaint, a committee of governors (not previously involved with the case) will listen carefully to both sides before reaching an independent decision.

How do I make a formal complaint to the governing body?

You submit a copy of your complaint in writing to the clerk of governors, including a request for a formal hearing. You cannot introduce new or different complaints at this stage. We will endeavour to receive an acknowledgement within ten school days. A meeting will follow, with all the relevant paperwork having been circulated at least five school days in advance to everyone involved. You will be invited to speak to the committee and to ask and answer questions (You may bring a friend or professional representative if you wish). The committee normally allows witnesses to attend part of the meeting. A governing body will not consider a complaint about something which occurred more than six months previously.

What happens next?

You will be informed in writing of the committee's decision.

Remember

This whole process exists so that your views, and the views of others, can be heard. You have rights. Pupils have rights. Staff and governors have rights. The aim is that the complaint should be properly and fairly dealt with. Communications with school are frequent and are welcome. The later stages of the complaints procedure are used rarely but remain part of the response to compliments, concerns and complaints.

The procedure explained in this leaflet is followed by all Sutton community, primary and secondary schools. If your complaint is with an Academy, Foundation or Voluntary-Aided school, it is likely that their procedure is different. You will therefore need to contact the school directly for their procedure.

Appendix B

Appointment to See A Member of Staff

At Manor Park we are always pleased to discuss any matter with parents.

- **All concerns and issues should be discussed with the class teacher in the first instance.**
Please note that due to teaching commitments the class teacher will only be available before and after school
- If you feel the matter has not been dealt with please see: 2) Appropriate manager 3) Assistant Headteacher 4) Deputy Headteacher or Headteacher
- If you still have concerns make an appointment to see a School Governor usually the Chair.

Please note: An appointment will be made as soon as possible and is usually the next day but may not always be on the same day and could take a maximum of 2 weeks. Sometimes other staff may attend for example if the matter involves a behaviour or SEN issue.

Your Name	Date	Tel Number
Child's Name		Class

I would like an appointment to see:

Foundation Stage (Nursery/Rec)		Tick ✓
1.	Class Teacher	
2	Foundation School Manager (Mrs Wheeler)	
3	Assistant Headteacher (Mrs Rodgers) or Deputy Headteacher (Ms Brant).	
4	Deputy Headteacher (Ms Brant) or Headteacher (Ms Scrase)	
5	I have seen all the staff above and I would like an appointment with a School Governor.	
Lower School (Years 1, 2 & 3)		Tick ✓
1	Class Teacher	
2	Lower School Manager (Miss Williamson)	
3	Assistant Headteacher (Mrs Rodgers) or Deputy Headteacher (Ms Brant).	
4	Deputy Headteacher (Ms Brant) or Headteacher (Ms Scrase)	
5	I have seen all the staff above and I would like an appointment with a School Governor.	
Upper School (Years 4, 5 & 6)		Tick ✓
1.	Class Teacher	
2	Upper School Manager (Miss Harding)	
3	Assistant Headteacher (Miss Groom) or Deputy Headteacher (Ms Brant).	
4	Deputy Head (Ms Brant) or Headteacher (Ms Scrase)	
5	I have seen all the staff above and I would like an appointment with a School Governor.	

Please indicate when you are available:

Before School on:	After School on:
Other:	

Office Use Only: Date of appointment: _____ Time: _____

Summary of external bodies dealing with complaints about schools beyond the local authority

THE SECRETARY OF STATE

Will investigate complaints about the operation of any general schools complaints procedure, but normally does not look at internal school management matters and expects that the local complaints procedure has been completed prior to any investigation.

The Secretary of State will generally only consider cases where;

- The governing body has acted unreasonably
- Or not fulfilled a specific duty
- Or not applied its complaints procedure fairly.

You can make a complaint by writing, fax, email, telephone, via the [contact us form](#) on the Department of Education Website or in person (by appointment please).

If you are writing or faxing your complaint, please provide your telephone number if a response by telephone would be convenient.

If you know the part of the Department which is relevant to your complaint, or the name or title of an appropriate member of staff, please make your complaint direct to them.

If you do not have this information please contact the Department's Public Communications Unit who will give you the contact details for the most appropriate person.

Contact details

Public Communications Unit
Sanctuary Buildings
Great Smith Street
London
SW1P 3PT
Telephone: 0370 000 2288
Fax: 01928 794248

Ofsted

Ofsted can consider general complaints about the education or care offered by a school as a whole, not about a child's individual circumstances.

Contact details are:

www.ofsted.gov.uk

email: enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk

Help desk: 08456 40 4045

Note

Separate arrangements apply in the case of school admissions appeals and Special Educational Needs or Disability complaints. Further details are available from the local authority.

Annex to Complaints Policy

Policy for dealing with Unreasonably Persistent Complaints, Harassment or Aggression

The Headteacher and staff deal with specific complaints as part of their day-to-day management of the school in accordance with the School's Complaints Procedure.

The majority of complaints are handled in an informal manner and are resolved quickly, sensitively and to the satisfaction of the complainant. The school is extremely committed to promoting positive relationships with all members of the school community, regardless of age, sex, religion, ability or culture and it welcomes the opportunity to address and resolve issues that may arise.

However, there are rare occasions when complainants behave in an unreasonable manner when raising and/or pursuing concerns. The consequences are that the actions of the complainants begin to impact negatively on the day-to-day running of the school and directly or indirectly the overall well-being of the children or staff in the school. In these exceptional circumstances the school may take action in accordance with this policy.

1. What does the school expect of any person wishing to raise a concern?

The school expects anyone who wishes to raise concerns with the school to:

- treat all members of the school community with courtesy and respect;
- respect the needs of pupils and staff within the school;
- avoid the use of violence, or threats of violence, towards people or property;
- avoid any aggression or verbal abuse;
- recognise the time constraints under which members of staff in schools work and allow the school a reasonable time to respond to a complaint;
- recognise that resolving a specific problem can sometimes take time;
- follow the school's complaints procedure (and for staff members to follow the appropriate internal staff procedure).

Emails which do not follow the above will be returned by the office with;

At Manor Park school we always want to listen and consider everyone's thoughts and opinions although we recognise that we can't always please everyone. Please ensure concerns are shared respectfully. To enable us to respond to your concern please can you remove any derogatory or personal remarks regarding members of staff and resend.

2. What do we mean by 'unreasonably persistent complainants'?

For the purpose of this policy, an unreasonably persistent complainant may be anyone who engages in unreasonable behaviour when making a complaint. This will include persons who pursue complaints in an unreasonable manner.

Unreasonable behaviour may include the following (not an exhaustive list):

- actions which are obsessive, persistent, harassing, prolific, repetitious, personal;
- prolific correspondence or excessive e-mail or telephone contact about a concern or complaint;

- uses Freedom of Information requests excessively and unreasonably (more than 1 a term);
- an insistence upon pursuing unsubstantial complaints and/or unrealistic or unreasonable outcomes;
- an insistence upon pursuing complaints in an unreasonable manner;
- an insistence on only dealing with the Headteacher on all occasions irrespective of the issue and the level of delegation in the school to deal with such matters;
- an insistence upon repeatedly pursuing a complaint when the outcome is not satisfactory to the complainant but cannot be changed, for example, if the desired outcome is beyond the remit of the school because it is unlawful.
- making what appears to be groundless complaints about staff dealing with the complaint and seeking to have them replaced.
- abusive or threatening behaviour or language towards school staff.
- failing to specify grounds of the complaint, despite offers of assistance from the school.

3. What is harassment?

We regard harassment as including the unreasonable pursuit of issues or complaints, particularly if the matter appears to be pursued in a way intended to cause personal distress, rather than to seek a resolution.

Behaviour may fall within the scope of this policy if:

- it appears to be deliberately targeted at one or more members of school staff or others, without good cause; such as targeting staff who have made referrals to social services
- the way in which a complaint or other issue is pursued (as opposed to the complaint itself) causes undue distress to school staff or others;
- it has an unjustifiably significant and disproportionate adverse effect on the school community.

4. School's responses to unreasonably persistent complaints or harassment

This policy is intended to be used in conjunction with the school's complaints procedure. Taken together, these documents set out how we will always seek to work with parents, carers and others with a legitimate complaint to resolve a difficulty.

However, in cases of unreasonably persistent complaints or harassment, the school may take some or all of the following steps, as appropriate:

- inform the complainant informally that his/her behaviour is now considered by the school to be unreasonable or unacceptable, and request a changed approach;
- inform the complainant in writing that the school considers his/her behaviour to fall under the terms of the Unreasonably Persistent Complaints/ Harassment Policy;
- require any future meetings with a member of staff to be conducted with a second person present. In the interests of all parties, notes of these meetings may be taken;
- inform the complainant that, except in emergencies, the school will respond only to written communication and that these may be required to be channelled through a third party chosen by the school, for example the Local Authority or County Solicitor;

- inform the complainant that, except in emergencies, the school will respond only to reasonable polite requests for a face to face meeting of communication and that these may be required to be channelled through a third party chosen by the school, for example the Local Authority or County Solicitor; (e.g. persistent or distressing emails)
- inform the complainant that, with the exception of urgent communication regarding their child in school, the school will respond to their correspondence on a termly basis only;
- take legal advice on pursuing a case under Anti-Harassment legislation.

Legitimate new complaints will always be considered in an appropriate time frame, even if the person making them is (or has been) subject to the Unreasonably Persistent Complaints/ Harassment Policy. The school nevertheless reserves the right not to respond to communications from individuals whose conduct falls within the scope of this policy.

5. Physical or verbal aggression

The governing body will not tolerate **any** form of physical or verbal aggression against members of the school community. If there is evidence of any such aggression the school may:

- ban the individual from entering the school site, with immediate effect;
- request an Anti-Social Behaviour Order (ASBO);
- take legal advice on pursuing a case under Anti-Harassment legislation;
- call the police to remove the individual from the premises, under powers provided by the Education Act 1996.

6. Right of appeal

All persons who are notified by the school that they are being dealt with under this procedure have the right of appeal. Appeals must be addressed to the Chair of Governors under confidential cover, care of the school. The Chair of Governors will consider each appeal on its merits, consulting with the Headteacher as appropriate. The outcome of the appeal should be notified to the appellant and copied to the Headteacher within 10 working days of receipt.