

Kenmont Primary School



Policy for managing serial and unreasonable complaints

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Policy for managing serial and unreasonable complaints

Kenmont Primary School

Kenmont Primary School is committed to dealing with all complaints fairly and impartially, and to providing a high-quality service to those who complain. We will not normally limit the contact complainants have with our school. However, we do not expect our staff to tolerate unacceptable behaviour and will take action to protect staff from that behaviour, including that which is abusive, offensive or threatening.

Kenmont Primary School defines unreasonable behaviour as *'that which hinders our consideration of complaints because of the frequency or nature of the complainant's contact with the school, such as, if the complainant:*

- refuses to articulate their complaint or specify the grounds of a complaint or the outcomes sought by raising the complaint, despite offers of assistance;
- refuses to co-operate with the complaints' investigation process
- refuses to accept that certain issues are not within the scope of the complaint's procedure;
- insists on the complaint being dealt with in ways which are incompatible with the complaint's procedure or with good practice;
- introduces trivial or irrelevant information which they expect to be taken into account and commented on.
- raises large numbers of detailed but unimportant questions, and insists they are fully answered, often immediately and to their own timescales;
- makes unjustified complaints about staff who are trying to deal with the issues, and seeks to have them replaced;
- changes the basis of the complaint as the investigation proceeds;
- repeatedly makes the same complaint (despite previous investigations or responses concluding that the complaint is groundless or has been addressed);
- refuses to accept the findings of the investigation into that complaint where the school's complaint procedure has been fully and properly implemented and completed including referral to the Department for Education;
- seeks an unrealistic outcome;
- makes excessive demands on school time by frequent, lengthy and complicated contact with staff regarding the complaint in person, in writing, by email and by telephone while the complaint is being dealt with.
- 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 try to limit their communication with the school that relates to their complaint, while the complaint is being progressed. It is not helpful if repeated correspondence is sent (either by letter, phone, email or text) as it could delay the 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 asking them to change it. For complainants who excessively contact Kenmont 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 concerns in writing. This may include barring an individual from Kenmont Primary School.

Barring from school premises

Although fulfilling a public function, schools are private places. The public has no automatic right of entry. Headteachers and governing bodies need to ensure they remain a safe place for pupils, staff and other members of their community.

If an individual's behaviour is a cause for concern, they can be asked to leave school premises. In some cases, individuals can be barred from entering school premises. We will always give individuals the opportunity to express formally their views on a decision to bar them from the premises.

The headteacher's decision to bar will be reviewed by the chair of governors or Committee of governors Kenmont Primary School. The Chair, or Committee, will take into account any representations made by the individual and will decide whether to confirm or lift the bar. If the decision is confirmed, the individual will be notified in writing, explaining:

- how long the bar will be in place
- when the decision will be reviewed

Individuals who remain barred may be able to apply to the Courts for a review of the school's decision. Individuals wishing to exercise this option should seek independent legal advice.