Naunton Park Primary School

Persistent and Vexatious Complaints Policy

Last review date: July 2025

Next review date: July 2026

Approved by Governors 15.7.25

1. Persistent complaints

1.1 Unreasonably persistent complaints

Most complaints raised will be valid, and therefore we will treat them seriously and as per our complaints policy. However, a complaint may become unreasonable if the complainant

- Has made the same complaint before, and it's already been resolved by following the school's complaints procedure.
- Makes a complaint that is obsessive, persistent, harassing, prolific, defamatory or repetitive.
- Insists on pursuing a complaint that is unfounded, or out of scope of the complaints procedure, beyond all reason.
- Pursues a valid complaint, but in an unreasonable manner, e.g. refuses to articulate the complaint, refuses to co-operate with the complaints procedure, or insists that the complaint is dealt with in ways that are incompatible with this procedure and the timeframes it sets out.
- Makes a complaint designed to cause disruption, annoyance or excessive demands on school time.
- Seeks unrealistic outcomes, or a solution that lacks any serious purpose or value.

Steps we will take

We will take every reasonable step to address the complainant's concerns and give them a clear statement of our position and their options. We will maintain our role as an objective arbiter throughout the process, including when we meet with individuals. We will follow our complaints procedure as normal (as outlined above) wherever possible.

If the complainant continues to contact the school in a disruptive way, we may put communications strategies in place. We may:

- Give the complainant a single point of contact via an email address.
- Limit the number of times the complainant can make contact, such as a fixed number per term.
- Ask the complainant to engage a third party to act on their behalf, such as Citizens Advice.
- Put any other strategy in place as necessary, which may involve including the GCC legal team and police.

Stopping responding

We may stop responding to the complainant about their complaint when all of these factors are met:

- We believe we have taken all reasonable steps to help address their concerns.
- We have provided a clear statement of our position and their options.
- The complainant contacts us repeatedly, and we believe their intention is to cause disruption or inconvenience.

When we stop responding to the specific complaint in question, we will inform the individual that we intend to do so. We will also explain that we will still consider any new complaints they make.

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 our school site.

1.2 Duplicate complaints

If we have resolved a complaint under this procedure and receive a duplicate complaint on the same subject from the original complainant's partner, family member or from another individual, we will assess whether there are aspects that we hadn't previously considered, or any new information we need to take into account.

If we are satisfied that there are no new aspects, we will:

- Inform the new complainant that we have already investigated and responded to this issue, and that the local process is complete.
- Direct them to the DfE if they are dissatisfied with our original handling of the complaint.

If there are new aspects, we will follow this procedure again.

1.3 Complaint campaigns

Where the school receives a large volume of complaints about the same topic or subject, especially if these come from complainants unconnected with the school, the school may respond to these complaints by:

- Publishing a single response by email to the parents in the class or to the whole school as necessary.
- Publishing a single response on the school website.
- Sending a template response to all of the complainants.

If complainants are not satisfied with the school's response, or wish to pursue the complaint further, the normal procedures, outlined in the Complaints Policy, will apply.

Please read this policy in conjunction with:

Complaints Policy

KCSIE