

Complaints Policy

About this policy

This policy has been developed after consulting the DfE “Best practice advice for school complaints procedures 2020”

After defining the key principles, this policy sets out the 5 separate stages of the complaints procedure itself. Appendix 1 summarises the key roles and responsibilities of the complaints committee. Appendix 2 summarises the process in the form of a flowchart.

1 The key principles of the policy

1.1 Legal context

All Independent Schools must have a complaints procedure. This must meet the standards set out in the [Education \(Independent School Standards \(England\) Regulations 2014](#) Schedule 1, Part 7.

The Regulations set out how complaints procedures should be drawn up and used effectively to handle complaints from parents of pupils.

Whilst this policy has been prepared to meet the requirements of the Independent School Standards, it applies equally to the provision of Adult Education and Independent Specialist College.

1.2 Summary

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

It is in everyone’s interest that complaints are resolved at the earliest possible stage. Many issues can be resolved informally, without the need to invoke formal procedures. SWRAC will take informal concerns seriously and make every effort to resolve the matter as quickly as possible.

There are occasions when complainants would like to raise their concerns formally. In those cases, the school’s formal procedure should be invoked through the stages outlined within this procedure.

SWRAC10

COMPLAINTS POLICY/PROCEDURE



This policy sets out the procedures which SWRAC will follow whenever it receives a complaint for which there are not alternative statutory procedures (see section 1.4).

Each of these stages will usually occur in order and there will usually be no return to previous stages (exceptions to this are noted within the procedure).

It is stressed that the majority of complaints are resolved on an informal basis (stage 1).

1.3 Recording Complaints

SWRAC must ensure that they comply with their obligations under the Equality Act 2010. It is common practice to ask for complaints to be made by using a complaint form or in writing, however the complainant may have communication preferences due to disability or learning difficulties and schools must allow alternative methods of contact:

- A complaint may be made in person, by telephone, in writing or through electronic means (email, message etc)
- In order to prevent any later challenge or disagreement over what was said, brief notes of meetings and telephone calls should be kept and a copy of any written response added to the record. Where there are communication difficulties, we may use recording devices to ensure the complainant is able to access and review the discussions at a later point;
- We will record the progress of the complaint and the final outcome. These records will be held centrally.
- We are aware that complainants have a right to copies of these records under the Freedom of Information and Data Protection Acts.

1.4 Circumstances under which this procedure should not be used

A complaints procedure should cover all complaints about any provision of facilities or services that a school provides with the exceptions listed below, for which there are separate (statutory) procedures:

- Admissions
- Statutory assessments of Special Educational Needs (SEN)
- re-organisation proposals
- Matters likely to require a Child Protection Investigation
- Exclusions
- Whistleblowing
- Staff grievances and disciplinary procedures

This complaints policy is distinct from formal staff disciplinary proceedings and this should be made clear to all concerned. There may be occasions where a complaint gives rise to disciplinary procedures which put the complaints process on hold. If and when this occurs, the complainant should be informed. Any non-disciplinary aspects of the complaint should continue to be dealt with through the usual complaints procedures.

If another policy is more appropriate than this complaints policy for any given situation then it should be used in preference to it.

1.5 Circumstances under which stages of the procedure should be missed out

This policy sets out the most suitable and effective process for dealing with the majority of complaints which are not covered by alternative statutory procedures (see above). In most cases any concern or complaint, regardless of whose attention it is initially brought to, should be discussed informally (stage 1) before being submitted at any of the following consecutive formal stages.

However, occasionally there will be circumstances under which it is unsuitable for complaints to be dealt with in this way.

In all cases where the complaint concerns the Principal directly, stage 2 will be missed out and the formal complaints procedure will begin at stage 3.

In some cases, it may be deemed inappropriate for individuals to discuss their concerns informally. In such cases, complainants may be directed to contact the Principal directly (i.e. begin at stage 2).

Complainants may choose to contact the Principal directly of their own accord. In these cases it will be at the discretion of the Principal as to whether or not it is appropriate for the complainant to discuss the matter informally (i.e. return to stage 1).

If and when complaints about the school are brought to the attention of SWRAC, the majority of complainants will be advised to contact the school and to follow the procedures set out within this document from stage 1 onwards. In certain exceptional cases, however, it may be decided, at the discretion of the Principal of SWRAC, that it is appropriate to deal with the complaint at a different stage.

1.6 Who is allowed to complain?

This policy may be used by anyone who has a concern or complaint about any aspect of SWRAC. In the main this will mean the parents and carers of the school's pupils, but may include neighbours of the school, any other members of the local community and commissioners of services.

1.7 Aims and objectives of the policy

This complaints policy aims to:

- Encourage the resolution of problems by informal means wherever possible;
- Ensure that concerns are dealt with quickly, fully and fairly and within clearly defined time limits;
- Provide effective responses and appropriate redress;
- Maintain good working relationships between all people involved with the school.

1.8 Monitoring complaints

At all formal stages of the complaints procedure, the following information should be recorded:

- The name of the complainant;
- The date and time at which complaint was made;
- The details of the complaint;
- The desired outcome of the complainant;
- How the complaint is investigated (including written records of interviews held);
- Results and conclusions of investigations;
- Any action taken;
- The complainant's response (satisfaction or further pursuit of complaint).

SWRAC may choose to appoint a member of staff as a 'complaints co-ordinator'. When this is the case, this individual will have the responsibility for the operation and management of the school complaints policy and will be responsible for monitoring complaints. Records should be retained for the periods specified in guidance on records retention (available separately).

1.9 Upholding or not upholding complaints

At each stage of the complaints procedure, the conclusion will be either:

- 1 That the complaint is upheld (in part or in full) and, where appropriate, some

form of action is taken.

or

2 That the complaint is not upheld and reasons for this are clearly given.

In the first instance, it may be appropriate to offer one or more of the following:

- an apology;
- an explanation;
- an admission that the situation could have been handled differently or better;
- an assurance that the event complained of will not recur;
- an explanation of the steps that have been taken to ensure that it will not happen again;
- an undertaking to review school policies in light of the complaint.

In the second instance, the complainant may either choose to take no further action or to take their complaint to the next relevant stage.

1.10 Publicity and communication

There is a legal requirement for schools to publicise their complaints procedures.

All staff and members of the Governing Body should be made aware of the complaints procedure and the various stages involved.

At all stages of the complaints procedure, everybody involved needs to be clear about what is happening and what their responsibilities are. In addition, the complainant should be told how to proceed to the next stage of the procedure if and when their complaint is not upheld.

1.11 Confidentiality

Confidentiality is vital. All conversations and correspondence will be treated with discretion. Complainants have the right to know what use will be made of personal information and, accordingly, personal information will only be shared between staff on a 'need to know' basis.

1.12 Equal access, accompaniment and representation

Appropriate steps should be taken to ensure that any individual has the opportunity to raise their concerns or submit a formal complaint. This includes the right to be accompanied or represented by a friend or relative at discussions and hearings and/or to submit formal complaints which have been written by another individual on their behalf.

Should any meeting need to be held where any parties would have difficulties in terms of access, SWRAC can assist with providing an appropriate venue.

It is an expectation that equal respect will be granted to each person involved within the process and that differences between people will be respected and understood.

1.13 Support offered by SWRAC

SWRAC offers advice and guidance to Principals and governing bodies who feel they need extra support when dealing with a complaint.

If a complaint concerns the Principal, the LGB will be required to work with the SWRAC Executive Principal from the outset.

In exceptional circumstances, SWRAC is able to investigate on behalf of either the Principal or school governors. Where possible, the intention will always be for SWRAC to support SWRAC in its own investigations rather than take complete responsibility for them itself.

1.14 Time between stages

Although each of the stages within the procedure should occur consecutively, it is not necessary for each stage to immediately follow the last. Complainants may need some time to decide whether or not they wish to pursue the matter any further. After each stage, the complainant and the individual who is dealing with their complaint at that time should agree an appropriate time limit within which the next stage should be accessed, if at all. If the complaint is not submitted to the next stage within this agreed time limit it should be considered as closed.

1.15 Changes to time limits and deadlines

In general, the time limits and deadlines contained within this policy should be adhered to. However, in certain circumstances it may be deemed inappropriate or impossible to guarantee that this is possible.

Where a complaint leads to criminal proceedings this will always be the case.

If and when it becomes necessary to alter the time limits and deadlines set out within this policy, the complainant should be told and given an explanation as to why this has been the case.

1.16 Appeals

If at any stage, as the result of a complaint, a decision or course of action is taken with regards to an individual (apart from the complainant) which they feel is ungrounded, unjustified or incorrect they have the right to appeal.

1.17 Vexatious Complaints

The Chair of Governors can write to a complainant and refuse to consider their complaint at stage 3 if he or she feels that there are insufficient grounds to do so, if the complaint has already been considered at this stage or if it has been closed.

In both cases, the complainant has the right to take their complaint to SWRAC (stage 4) who will, if appropriate, investigate SWRAC adherence to the complaints policy.

1.18 Serial and persistent complainants

We will do our best to be helpful to people who contact them with a complaint or concern or a request for information. However, in cases where a school is contacted repeatedly by an individual making the same points, or who asks them to reconsider their position, schools will need to act appropriately.

There will be occasions when, despite all stages of the complaint procedure having been followed, the complainant remains dissatisfied. If a complainant tries to re-open the same issue, the Chair of Governors can inform them that the procedure has been completed and that the matter is now closed.

If the complainant contacts the school again on the same issue, then the correspondence may be viewed as 'serial' or 'persistent' and the school may choose not to respond. However, we must be careful that they do not mark a complaint as 'serial' before the complainant has completed the procedure.

However, where an individual's behaviour is causing a significant level of disruption schools may wish to implement a tailored communications strategy such as restricting them to a single point of contact via an email address or by limiting the number of

times they make contact; e.g. a fixed number of contacts per term.

Complainants have a right to have any new complaint heard and failure to respond at all to a complainant could mean that the school is failing to comply with its legal obligations. We will act reasonably and that any genuine complaint can still be heard.

STAGE 1: Informal discussion

2.1 Introduction

The vast majority of concerns and complaints can be dealt with informally. There are many occasions where concerns are resolved straight away without the need to submit a formal complaint. Indeed, many concerns raised at this level might not be classified as complaints.

When a complaint is made directly against the school's Principal, stage 2 is not required and the formal procedure begins at stage 3.

2.2 Who to speak to informally

Individuals may decide to raise their concerns with a member of school administrative staff, class teacher, senior teacher, governor or Principal depending on their wishes and the type of issues they want to discuss.

2.3 Monitoring

It is not necessary to record or monitor complaints at this level.

2.4 Time scales

There are no specific time scales for dealing with concerns at this stage. However, as at all stages, issues should be considered and dealt with as quickly and effectively as possible.

2.5 Response

The individual who raised the issue should be informed of any action to be taken to resolve the issue. If appropriate, this might be confirmed in writing.

2.6 Options for complainant

If the individual is dissatisfied with the response they have been given and would like to take their complaint further, they should be referred to the school's complaints procedure and accompanying public guidance leaflet and told how to move on to the

next stage.

3 STAGE 2: Referral to the Principal

3.1 Introduction

This is the first stage of the formal complaints process and, as a result, all communications between parties need to be carefully recorded and monitored as set out in the ‘monitoring complaints’ section of this document.

3.2 Informal discussion with Principal

Before proceeding with a formal investigation, the Principal will meet with the individual and discuss their concerns and wishes. It may still be appropriate and satisfactory to reach an informal resolution at this point. If not, the Principal will decide whether the individual’s complaint will be dealt with by this policy or another statutory procedure and advise them on what they will need to do.

3.3 Submitting a formal complaint

By this stage it must be clear that the concern is a definite complaint which will be dealt with according to this policy and should be formally submitted in writing to the Principal.

As indicated within the ‘equal access, accompaniment and representation’ section of this policy, all complainants have the right to submit formal complaints, at this or any stage, which have been written by another individual on their behalf.

3.4 Acknowledgement and time scales

The Principal should formally acknowledge the complaint within 3 working days of receiving it and begin an investigation.

3.5 The investigation

The Principal will need to investigate the complaint and review any relevant documentation and information. If necessary, the Principal will interview witnesses and take statements from those involved. If the complaint centres on a pupil, the pupil will also usually be interviewed.

As indicated within the ‘equal access, accompaniment and representation’ section of this document, all individuals have the right, at this or any other stages, to be

accompanied or represented by a friend or relative at discussions and hearings. This includes the right of teachers to be accompanied by a representative from their Trade Union.

When pupils are interviewed, an additional member of staff should always attend.

3.6 Response

The Principal will provide the complainant with a full written response within 10 working days of acknowledging it. This response will determine whether or not the complaint has been upheld, the reasons why, and what action (if any) will be taken.

3.7 Options for complainant

If the individual is dissatisfied with the response they have been given and would like to take their complaint further, they should be referred to the school's complaints procedure and told how to move on to the next stage.

4 Stage 3: Review by Governing Board complaints committee

4.1 Introduction

Complaints only rarely reach this formal level, but it is important that governing bodies are prepared to deal with them.

Upon receiving a formally submitted complaint at this stage the Chair of Governors will usually choose to deal with it by holding a complaints committee hearing. However, in some cases, it may be possible and appropriate for the Chair of Governors to resolve the issue with the complainant by other means without the need for a complaints committee review.

The complaints committee must be clerked. The clerk may be a member of the school staff, another governor or even bought administrative assistance. If required, SWRAC will offer support and guidance to the clerk, the Chair of Governors and/or the members of the complaints committee on procedural issues but will not normally play any part in reviewing the details of the complaint itself.

When stage 2 has been missed out (see section 1.4), this is the first stage under which a formal complaint about the Principal will be dealt with.

The first Annex summarises the key roles and responsibilities of the complaints committee.

4.2 The committee

It is recommended that Governing Board annually agree 2 governors who will be able to form part of a complaints committee if and when this becomes necessary at any point.

The committee will generally consist of two governors who have not previously been involved with dealing with the complaint. The committee should elect its own chair. The Chair should also appoint at least one individual who is independent of the running and the management of the school.

4.3 Submitting a formal complaint

The complainant must submit a written request to the Chair of Governors for their complaint to be considered by a complaints committee.

4.4 Acknowledgement and time scales

The Chair of Governors should acknowledge receipt of this letter within 5 working days if possible but no more than ten at most by writing to the complainant. This letter will inform them that their complaint will be heard by a complaints committee within 15 working days.

4.5 Preparation

The Chair of Governors will then contact the clerk and ask him or her to begin making preparatory arrangements.

The clerk will convene a meeting of the complaints committee. The membership of the complaints committee will be confirmed, a date and time will be arranged for a hearing and all existing relevant documentation will be given to the two appointed governors.

The clerk should then formally write to the complainant, the Principal and any other relevant staff or witnesses and inform them:

- Of the date, time and venue of the hearing;
- Of the aims and objectives of the hearing and how it will be conducted;
- That any documentation they wish the committee to consider must be returned to the Clerk no later than 5 working days before the hearing takes place;
- Of the rights of equal access, accompaniment and representation as set out

within this document;

- How and when the committee will reach their decision.

It is the responsibility of the clerk to ensure that all parties receive all relevant documents at least 3 working days before the date of the hearing so as to allow individuals to familiarise themselves with them.

4.6 The hearing

The hearing should allow each party involved to explain their understanding or interpretation of events and for other parties to question them. The hearing will, therefore, usually operate according to the following format:

- The chair will introduce all parties to one another and explain the principles, objectives and format of the hearing
- The complainant will be given the opportunity to explain their complaint, and may be accompanied to the hearing if they wish. Following this the Principal and the complaints committee will be allowed to ask the complainant questions.
- The Principal will then be given an opportunity to explain the school's official response, interpretation or view about the complaint. Following this the complainant and committee will be allowed to question the Principal.
- Every party will be given the opportunity to call witnesses and question witnesses called by other parties.
- The Principa and the complainant will both be given the chance to give final statements.
- The hearing will be concluded by the chair who should explain that the committee will consider its decision and write to both parties within 5 working days informing them of the outcome.

This format will need to be altered under certain circumstances, including instances where SWRAC, rather than the Principal, has played an investigating role. Ultimately, the chair of the meeting has control over its proceedings.

4.7 After the hearing

The committee will then consider the complaint and all the evidence presented and:

- Reach a unanimous, or at least a majority decision, on the complaint;

- Decide upon the appropriate action (if any) to be taken;
- Where appropriate, suggest changes to, or request a review of, the school's systems or procedures to ensure that problems of a similar nature do not happen again.

This information will be included in both the letters to the Principal and the complainant.

4.8 Options for complainant

If the individual is dissatisfied with the response they have been given and would like to take their complaint further, they should be referred to the school's complaints procedure and accompanying public guidance leaflet and told how to move on to the next stage.

5 STAGE 4: Complaint to SWRAC

5.1 Introduction

Complainants are entitled to complain to SWRAC if they believe that their complaint was not handled fairly and in accordance to the school's complaints policy. Complaints can only be considered once the school's procedures have been completed in full.

Complaints very rarely reach this level. However, it is important that SWRAC is ready to deal with them if necessary and that the complainant is fully informed of how and when they can complain at this level.

5.2 Submitting a formal complaint

Complaints must be submitted, in writing, to the following address:

The Complaints Officer
SWRAC
Merley House
Merley House Lane
Wimborne
Dorset BH21 3AA

This written complaint must include the following information:

- Details of the original complaint;
- The judgement and action taken by the governing body;
- Reasons for believing that the original complaint was not dealt with fairly and in accordance with the school's complaint's procedure;
- The expected or desired outcome.

5.3 Acknowledgement and time scales

SWRAC will write to the complainant and formally acknowledge their complaint within 3 working days of receipt.

SWRAC will also write to the school's Principal and Chair of governors to inform them that a complaint has been made against the actions they have taken with regards to the original complaint.

5.4 The investigation

SWRAC will examine all relevant documentation considered by the school in their original investigation as well as the records and correspondence produced at each stage.

5.5 The response

SWRAC will write to the complainant and inform them of their findings within 20 working days of acknowledging their original complaint. Copies of this letter will be sent to the Principal and Chair of governors.

5.6 Possible outcomes

If SWRAC decides that SWRAC has failed to handle the original complaint fairly and according to its complaints policy the matter will be referred back to the governing body.

The Management Committee will then be requested to reinvestigate the complaint at stage 3 (review by Management Committee complaints committee). The Management Committee will need to re-appoint a new complaints committee.

5.7 Options for complainant

If the individual is dissatisfied with the response they have been given and would like to take their complaint further, they should be referred to the school's complaints



procedure and accompanying public guidance leaflet and told how to move on to the next stage.

STAGE 5: Education Funding Agency (EFA)/Department for Education

6.1 Introduction

Individuals have the right to contact the Education Funding Agency/Department for Education with regards to their complaint.

Usually, they will not take any action until other have been exhausted.

If a complaint comes to the EFA/DfE it will check whether the complaint has been dealt with properly by SWRAC. It will consider complaints about Independent Schools that fall into any of the following three areas:

1. where there is undue delay or SWRAC did not comply with its own complaints procedure when considering a complaint
2. where SWRAC is in breach of its funding agreement with the Secretary of State
3. where an academy has failed to comply with any other legal obligation

The EFA/DfE will not overturn SWRAC's decision about a complaint. However, if it finds SWRAC did not deal with a complaint properly we will request the complaint is looked at again and procedures meet the requirements set out in the Regulations. If SWRAC complaints procedure does not meet the Regulations, the EFA/DfE will ask SWRAC to put this right. It may seek to enforce the decision under the terms of the funding agreement on behalf of the Secretary of State, if appropriate. Complaints need to be made to the EFA/DfE via its "schools complaints form" which can be found by searching on the www.gov.uk website.

Review by Complaints Committee – Key Roles and Responsibilities The Role of the Clerk

The clerk organises the complaints committee review. He or she will need to:

- Set the date, time and venue of the review, ensuring that the dates are convenient to all parties and that the venue and proceedings are accessible;
- Collate any written material and send it to parties in advance of the review;
- Meet and welcome the parties as they arrive at the review;
- Record the proceedings;
- Notify all parties of the committee's decision.

The Role of the Chair of Local Governors

The Chair of Governors should:

- Check that the correct procedure has been followed;
- If a review is appropriate, notify the clerk to arrange the committee.

The Role of the Chair of the Complaints Committee

The chair of the complaints committee has a key role. He or she will need to ensure that:

- The remit of the committee is explained to the parties and each party has the opportunity of putting their case without undue interruption;
- The issues are addressed;
- Key findings of fact are made;
- Parents and others who may not be used to speak at such a review are put at ease;
- The review is conducted in an informal manner with each party treating the other with respect and courtesy;

SWRAC10 COMPLAINTS POLICY/PROCEDURE



- The committee is open minded and acting independently;
- No member of the committee has a vested interest in the outcome of the proceedings or any involvement in an earlier stage of the procedure;
- Each side is given the opportunity to state their case and ask questions;
- Written material is seen by all parties. If a new issue arises it would be useful to give all parties the opportunity to consider and comment on it.

The chair of the complaints committee needs to ensure that the complainant is notified of the committee's decision, in writing, with the committee's response within 5 working days. This letter will explain if there are any further rights of appeal and, if so, to whom they need to be addressed.

SWRAC10 COMPLAINTS POLICY/PROCEDURE



Appendix 2

Concern or Complaint received	
Stage 1 (School)	Complaint discussed informally with class teacher or other relevant contact teacher. Complainant advised of any action to be taken where appropriate.
	Complainant not satisfied, proceed to next stage.
	Complainant satisfied. No further action.
Stage 2 (School)	Complaint discussed informally with Principal. If an informal resolution is not reached, complaint is submitted in writing to the Principal who formally acknowledges it within 3 working days. Investigation conducted and findings fully reported to complainant within a further 10 working days.
	Complainant not satisfied, proceed to next stage.
	Complainant satisfied. No further action.
Stage 3 (School)	Complaint submitted in written form to the Chair of Governors who acknowledges it within 5 – 10 working days. The Chair of Governors determines how the complaint is to be dealt with. If necessary, the Chair of Governors will select a panel of Governors to attend a complaints hearing. The committee must meet within 15 working days and the committee's findings will be reported to the complainant within 5 days of this hearing.
	Complainant not satisfied, proceed to next stage.
	Complainant satisfied. No further action.

SWRAC10

COMPLAINTS POLICY/PROCEDURE



Stage 4 (Catch2 2 MAT)	<p>Complaint submitted to SWRAC on the basis that original complaint was not properly dealt with by the school's complaint procedure. SWRAC acknowledges complaint within 3 working days and informs the Chair of Governors. SWRAC investigates complaint and reports its findings to the Chair of Governors and complainant within a further 20 working days.</p>	
	<p>Complainant not satisfied, proceed to next stage.</p>	<p>Complainant satisfied. No further action.</p>
Stage 5 (Other)	<p>Complaint submitted in to the Education Funding Agency/Department for Education (EFA/DfE) via its on line form</p>	

Appendix 3 – Sample policy for unreasonable complainants

SWRAC 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 the 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.

SWRAC defines unreasonable complainants as *'those who, because of the frequency or nature of their contacts with the school, hinder our consideration of their or other people's complaints'*.

A complaint may be regarded as unreasonable when the person making the complaint:-

- 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 while still wishing their complaint to be resolved;
- refuses to accept that certain issues are not within the scope of a complaints procedure;
- insists on the complaint being dealt with in ways which are incompatible with the adopted complaints procedure or with good practice;

introduces trivial or irrelevant information which the complainant expects to be taken into account and commented on, or 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, complicated and stressful contact with staff regarding the complaint in person, in writing, by email and by telephone while the complaint is being dealt with

SWRAC10

COMPLAINTS POLICY/PROCEDURE



A complaint may also be considered unreasonable if the person making the complaint does so either face-to-face, by telephone or in writing or electronically:-

- maliciously;
- aggressively;
- using threats, intimidation or violence;
- using abusive, offensive or discriminatory language;
- knowing it to be false;
- using falsified information;
- publishing unacceptable information in a variety of media such as in social media websites and newspapers

Complainants should limit the numbers of communications with a school while a 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 Principal or Chair of Governors will discuss any concerns with the complainant informally before applying an 'unreasonable' marking.

If the behaviour continues the Principal will write to the complainant explaining that their behaviour is unreasonable and asking them to change it. For complainants who excessively contact Brunel Academy causing a significant level of disruption, we may specify methods of communication and limit the number of contacts in a communication plan. This will usually be reviewed after 6 months.

In response to any serious incident of aggression or violence, the concerns and actions taken will be put in writing immediately and the police informed. This may include banning an individual from SWRAC.