

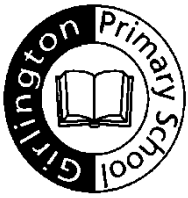
GIRLINGTON PRIMARY SCHOOL

Complaints Procedure Statement Policy & Procedure - Parents/Carers

Date Policy Written: Spring 2026

Date Policy Ratified: Spring 2026

Date Policy to be Reviewed: Spring 2027



GIRLINGTON PRIMARY SCHOOL	Reviewed By
(Statutory) S7 Complaints procedure statement – policy & procedure Parents/Carers <i>Appendix 1 – Parents guide to school complaints</i>	Headteacher _____ DHT _____

1. Definitions and aims

1.1 Definitions

The DfE guidance explains the difference between a concern and a complaint:

- A **concern** is defined as “an expression of worry or doubt over an issue considered to be important for which reassurances are sought”
- A **complaint** is defined as “an expression or statement of dissatisfaction however made, about actions taken or a lack of action”

In most cases, a concern can be resolved through informal means. A complaint will follow formal procedures.

1.2 Aims

Our school aims to meet its statutory obligations when responding to complaints from parents/carers of pupils at the school, and others.

When responding to complaints, we aim to:

- Be impartial and non-adversarial
- Facilitate a full and fair investigation by an independent person or panel, where necessary
- Address all the points at issue and provide an effective and prompt response
- Respect complainants’ desire for confidentiality
- Treat complainants with respect and courtesy
- Make sure that any decisions we make are lawful, rational, reasonable, fair and proportionate, in line with the principles of administrative law
- Keep complainants informed of the progress of the complaints process
- Consider how the complaint can feed into school improvement evaluation processes

We try to resolve concerns by informal means wherever possible. Where this is not possible, the formal complaints procedures will be followed.

The school will aim to give the complainant the opportunity to complete the complaints procedure in full.

To support this, we will make sure we publicise the existence of this policy and make it available on the school website.

Throughout the process, we will be sensitive to the needs of all parties involved, and make any reasonable adjustments needed to accommodate individuals.

2. Legislation and guidance

This document meets the requirements of section 29 of the Education Act 2002, which states that schools must have and make available a procedure to deal with all complaints relating to their school and to any community facilities or services that the school provides.

It is also based on guidance for schools on complaints procedures from the Department for Education (DfE).

In addition, it addresses duties set out in the Early Years Foundation Stage statutory framework with regards to dealing with complaints about the school's fulfilment of Early Years Foundation Stage requirements.

3. Scope

This policy does **not** cover complaints procedures relating to:

- Admissions
- Statutory assessments of special educational needs (SEN)
- Safeguarding matters
- Suspension and permanent exclusion
- Whistle-blowing
- Staff grievances
- Staff discipline
- School re-organisation proposals
- Curriculum
- Collective worship

Please see our separate policies for procedures relating to these types of complaint.

Complaints about services provided by other providers who use school premises or facilities should be directed to the provider concerned.

4. Roles and responsibilities

4.1 The complainant

The complainant will get a more effective and timely response to their complaint if they:

- Follow these procedures
- Co-operate with the school throughout the process, and respond to deadlines and communication promptly
- Ask for assistance as needed

- Treat all those involved with respect
- Do not approach individual governors about the complaint
- Do not publish details about the complaint on social media

4.2 The investigator

An individual will be appointed to look into the complaint and establish the facts. They will:

- Interview all relevant parties, keeping notes
- Consider records and any written evidence and keep these securely
- Prepare a comprehensive report to the headteacher or complaints committee, which includes the facts and potential solutions

4.3 The complaints co-ordinator

The complaints co-ordinator can be:

- The headteacher
- The designated complaints governor
- Any other staff member providing administrative support
- The complaints co-ordinator will:
 - Keep the complainant up to date at each stage in the procedure
 - Make sure the process runs smoothly by liaising with staff members, the headteacher, chair of governors, clerk and local authority (LA)
 - Be aware of issues relating to:
 - Sharing third-party information
 - Additional support needed by complainants; for example, interpretation support or where the complainant is a child or young person
- Keep records

4.4 Clerk to the governing board

The clerk will:

- Be the contact point for the complainant and the complaints committee, including circulating the relevant papers and evidence before complaints committee meetings
- Arrange the complaints hearing
- Record and circulate the minutes and outcome of the hearing

4.5 Committee chair

The committee chair will:

- Chair the meeting, ensuring that everyone is treated with respect throughout
- Make sure all parties see the relevant information, understand the purpose of the committee, and are allowed to present their case

5. Principles for investigation

When investigating a complaint, we will try to clarify:

- What has happened

- Who was involved
- What the complainant feels would put things right

5.1 Timescales

The complainant must raise the complaint within 3 months of the incident. If the complaint is about a series of related incidents, they must raise the complaint within 3 months of the last incident.

We will consider exceptions to this timeframe in circumstances where there were valid reasons for not making a complaint at that time and the complaint can still be investigated in a fair manner for all involved.

When complaints are made out of term time, we will consider them to have been received on the first school day after the holiday period.

If at any point we cannot meet the timescales we have set out in this policy, we will:

- Set new time limits with the complainant
- Send the complainant details of the new deadline and explain the delay

5.2 Complaints about our fulfilment of early years requirements

We will investigate all written complaints relating to our school's fulfilment of the Early Years Foundation Stage requirements, (EYFS) and notify the complainant of the outcome within 28 days of receiving the complaint. The school will keep a record of the complaint (see section 10) and make this available to Ofsted on request.

Parents and carers can notify Ofsted if they believe that our school is not meeting the Early Years Foundation Stage requirements, by:

- Calling 0300 123 4666
- Emailing enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk
- Using the online contact form available at <https://www.gov.uk/government/organisations/ofsted#org-contacts>

We will notify parents and carers if we become aware that our school is to be inspected by Ofsted. We will also supply a copy of the inspection report to parents and carers of children attending the setting on a regular basis.

Stages of complaint (not complaints against the headteacher or governors)

6. Informal concerns

Our school will take informal concerns seriously and make every effort to resolve the matter quickly. It may be the case that the provision or clarification of information will resolve the issue.

The complainant should raise the concern as soon as possible within the timescales set out in section 5.1 with the relevant member of school staff or the, either in person or by letter, telephone or email. If the complainant is unclear who to contact or how to contact them, they should contact the school office on 01274 493543.

The school will acknowledge informal concerns within 3 school days, which will confirm how school intends to proceed including an indication of the anticipated timescale.

The informal stage will involve a meeting between the complainant and an appropriate member of the Senior Leadership Team.

If the concern is not resolved informally, it will be escalated to a formal complaint.

7. Stages of complaint (not complaints against the headteacher or governors)

We have adopted a 2-stage process for dealing with complaints:

- Stage 1 – formal investigation
- Stage 2 – review panel

Before making a formal complaint, please refer to Appendix 1 – Parent guide to school complaints.

7.1 Stage 1: formal

Formal complaints can be raised:

- By letter or email (this is preferred)
- Over the phone
- In person
- By a third party acting on behalf of the complainant

The complainant should provide details such as relevant dates, times, and the names of witnesses of events, alongside copies of any relevant documents, and what they feel would resolve the complaint.

If complainants need assistance raising a formal complaint, they can contact the school office.

The headteacher will record the date the complaint is received and will acknowledge receipt of the complaint in writing (either by letter or email) within 3 school days.

The headteacher (or designated member of the senior leadership team) will call a meeting to clarify the complaint, and seek a resolution. The complainant may be accompanied to this meeting, and should inform the school of the identity of their companion in advance.

In certain circumstances, the school may need to refuse a request for a particular individual to attend any such meeting – for example, if there is a conflict of interest. If this is the case, the school will notify the complainant as soon as they are aware, so that the complainant has the opportunity to arrange alternative accompaniment.

The headteacher (or other person appointed by the headteacher for this purpose) will then conduct their own investigation. The written conclusion of this investigation will be sent to the complainant within 15 school days.

How to escalate a complaint

If the complainant wishes to proceed to the next stage of the procedure, they should inform the chair of governors within 15 school days. Requests received outside of this timeframe will be considered in exceptional circumstance.

Complaints can be escalated by contacting the chair of governors:

- By letter or email
- Over the phone
- In person
- Through a third party acting on behalf of the complainant

The clerk will need the details of the complaint as set out above, as well as details from the complainant on how they feel the previous stage of the procedure has not addressed their complaint sufficiently, and what they feel would resolve the complaint.

The clerk will acknowledge receipt of the request within 15 school days.

7.2 Stage 2: submit the complaint to the review panel

Convening the panel

The review panel consists of the first 3 members of the governing board available who don't have direct knowledge of the complaint. These individuals will have access to the existing record of the complaint's progress (see section 10).

The governors will select a panel chair from among themselves.

If not enough impartial governors are available, we will seek panel members from other schools or the local authority. We will make sure the governors we source are suitably skilled and can demonstrate that they are independent and impartial.

The complainant will be given reasonable notice of the date of the review panel; The clerk will aim to find a date within (number) school days of the request where possible.

If the complainant rejects the offer of 3 proposed dates without good reason, the clerk will set a date. The hearing will go ahead using written submissions from both parties.

Any written material will be circulated to all parties at least 5 school days before the date of the meeting.

The board will ensure that the hearing is properly minuted.

At the meeting

The meeting will be held in private. Electronic recordings of meetings or conversations are not normally permitted unless required as part of reasonable adjustments. Prior knowledge and consent of all parties attending will be sought before meetings or conversations take place. Consent will be recorded in any minutes taken.

At the review panel meeting, the complainant and representatives from the school, as appropriate, will be present. Each will have an opportunity to set out written or oral submissions prior to the meeting.

The complainant must be allowed to attend the panel hearing and be accompanied by a suitable companion if they wish. We don't encourage either party to bring legal representation, but will consider it on a case-by-case basis. For instance, if a school employee is called as a witness in a complaint meeting, they may wish to be supported by their union.

Representatives from the media are not permitted to attend.

At the meeting, each individual will have the opportunity to give statements and present their evidence, and witnesses will be called as appropriate to present their evidence.

The panel, the complainant and the school representative will be given the chance to ask and reply to questions. Once the complainant and school representatives have completed presenting their cases, they will be asked to leave and evidence will then be considered.

The panel will then put together its findings and recommendations from the case. The panel will also provide copies of the minutes of the hearing and the findings and recommendations to the complainant and, where relevant, the subject of the complaint, and make a copy of the findings and recommendations available for inspection by the headteacher.

The outcome

The committee can:

- Uphold the complaint, in whole or in part
- Dismiss the complaint, in whole or in part

If the complaint is upheld, the committee will:

- Decide the appropriate action to resolve the complaint
- Where appropriate, recommend changes to the school's systems or procedures to prevent similar issues in the future

The school will inform those involved of the decision in writing within 20 (number) school days.

8. Complaints against the headteacher, a governor or the governing board

The information below is taken from the DfE model complaints procedure for maintained schools.

You may still need to work with your local authority, and the clerk to governors, to develop appropriate procedures for providing fair and impartial hearings where a complaint concerns the governing board.

8.1 Stage 1: formal

Complaints that involve or are about the headteacher should be directed addressed to the chair of governors, via the school office and marked as private and confidential

Complaints about the chair of governors, any individual governor or the whole governing board should be addressed to the clerk to the governing board via the school office, marked as private and confidential.

If the complaint is about the headteacher or 1 member of the governing board (including the chair or vice-chair), a suitably skilled and impartial governor will carry out the steps at stage 1 (set out in section 7 above).

If the complaint is:

- Jointly about the chair and vice-chair
- The entire governing board
- The majority of the governing board

An independent investigator will carry out the steps in stage 1 (set out in section 7 above). They will be appointed by the governing board and will write a formal response at the end of their investigation.

How to escalate a complaint

If the complainant wishes to proceed to the next stage of the procedure, they should inform the clerk to the governing board in writing within [number] school days. Requests received outside of this timeframe will be considered in exceptional circumstances.

Complaints can be escalated by contacting the clerk to the governing board:

- By letter or email
- Over the phone
- In person
- Through a third party acting on behalf of the complainant

The clerk will need the details of the complaint as set out above, as well as details from the complainant on how they feel the previous stage of the procedure has not addressed their complaint sufficiently, and what they feel would resolve the complaint.

The clerk will acknowledge receipt of the request within [number] school days.

8.2 Stage 2: review panel

If the complaint is about the headteacher or 1 member of the governing board (including the chair or vice-chair), a committee of members of the governing board will hear the complaint. They will carry out the steps at stage 2 (set out in section 7 above).

If the complaint is:

- Jointly about the chair and vice-chair
- The entire governing board
- The majority of the governing board

A committee of independent governors will hear the complaint. They will be sourced from local schools, the local authority and will carry out the steps at stage 2 (set out in section 7 above).

9. Referring complaints on completion of the school's procedure

The situation for **pupil referral units (PRUs)** may vary depending on your governance structure. You should check with your local authority or other relevant body whether there is a set procedure for complainants to follow if they are unsatisfied with the outcome of your school's complaints procedure, and insert relevant details here.

If the complainant is unsatisfied with the outcome of the school's complaints procedure, they can refer their complaint to the DFE. The DFE will not re-investigate the matter of the complaint. It will look at whether the school's complaints policy and any other relevant statutory policies that the school holds were adhered to. The DFE also looks at whether the school's statutory policies adhere to education legislation.

The DfE will intervene where a school has:

- Failed to act in line with its duties under education law
- Acted (or is proposing to act) unreasonably when exercising its functions

If the complaints procedure is found to not meet regulations, the school will be asked to correct its procedure accordingly.

For more information or to refer a complaint, see the following webpage:

www.gov.uk/complain-about-school

We will include this information in the outcome letter to complainants.

10. Unreasonable and persistent complaints

10.1 Unreasonable complaints

Most complaints raised will be valid, and therefore we will treat them seriously. However, a complaint may become unreasonable if the person:

- 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 complaints procedure
- Insists on the complaint being dealt with in ways which are incompatible with the complaints procedure or with good practice
- Introduces trivial or irrelevant information that 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

Please note: the above list is not intended to be exhaustive and is for guidance purposes only. It is at the discretion of the school what is deemed to be unreasonable.

Complainants should try to limit their communication with the school 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.

Steps we will take

We will take every reasonable step to address the complainant's comments 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.

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, refer them to this policy and remind them to act in accordance with it. For complainants who excessively contact the school causing a significant level of disruption, 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

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 school premises and ensuring appropriate measures of support are provided to staff where they are the subject of aggression and/or violence.

10.2 Serial/persistent complaints

If the complainant contacts the school again on the same issue, the correspondence may then be viewed as 'serial' or 'persistent'. We may stop responding to the complainant when the following conditions are met:

- We have taken every reasonable step to address the complainant's concerns
- The complainant has been given a clear statement of our position and their options
- The complainant contacts the school repeatedly, making substantially the same points each time

The case to stop responding is stronger if:

- The complainant's communications are often or always abusive or aggressive
- The complainant makes insulting personal comments about or threats towards staff
- We have reason to believe the individual is contacting the school with the intention of causing disruption or inconvenience

Where we decide to stop responding, we will inform the individual that we intend to do so. We will also explain that we will consider any new complaints they make provided the

concerns raised are materially different to those raised previously and/or are unconnected to the previous concern

10.3 Duplicate complaints

If we have resolved a complaint under this procedure and receive a duplicate complaint on the same subject from a partner, family member or other 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:

- Tell 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 a duplicate complaint is raised, which in the view of the school, warrants further consideration, the procedure outlined in section 6 or 7 (as appropriate) will be repeated.

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 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 will apply.

11. Record-keeping

Our school will record the progress of all complaints, including information about actions taken at all stages, the stage at which the complaint was resolved, and the final outcome. The records will also include copies of letters and emails, and notes relating to meetings and phone calls.

This material will be treated as confidential and stored securely, and will be viewed only by those involved in investigating the complaint or on the review panel.

This is except where the secretary of state (or someone acting on their behalf) or the complainant requests access to records of a complaint through a freedom of information (FOI) request or through a subject access request under the terms of the Data Protection Act, or where the material must be made available during a school inspection.

Records of complaints will be kept securely, only for as long as necessary and in line with data protection law, our privacy notices and record retention schedule.

The details of the complaint, including the names of individuals involved, will not be shared with the whole governing board in case a review panel needs to be organised at a later point.

Where the governing board is aware of the substance of the complaint before the review panel stage, the school will (where reasonably practicable) arrange for an independent panel to hear the complaint.

Complainants also have the right to request an independent panel if they believe there is likely to be bias in the proceedings. The decision to approve this request is made by the governing board, who will not unreasonably withhold consent.

12. Learning lessons

The governing board will review any underlying issues raised by complaints with the headteacher/senior, where appropriate, and respecting confidentiality, to determine whether there are any improvements that the school can make to its procedures or practice to help prevent similar events in the future.

13. Monitoring arrangements

The governing body will monitor the effectiveness of the complaints procedure in ensuring making sure that complaints are handled properly. The governing body will track the number and nature of complaints, and review underlying issues as stated in section 11.

The complaints records are logged and managed by the Admin team.

This policy will be reviewed by the Full Governing Body every two years.

At each review, the policy will be approved by the full governing board.

Links with other policies

Policies dealing with other forms of complaints include:

- Child protection and safeguarding policy and procedures
- Admissions policy
- Schools Exclusions policy
- Staff grievance procedures
- Staff disciplinary procedures
- SEN policy and information report
- Privacy notices



Working together to resolve issues

Parents and schools share the same goal: supporting children's education. Sometimes questions or concerns arise. This guide gives you clear steps to share your views and resolve issues quickly and positively.

Why this matters

We know you value clear communication and want your feedback to make a difference.

When the process feels unclear or slow, it can be frustrating and leave you feeling unsure about what to do next. By giving you simple, transparent steps for raising issues, we aim to help you feel heard and supported.

How this guide helps

Most issues can be resolved quickly when you know who to speak to and what to expect.

This guide will support you to follow your school's complaint procedure. Our goal is to keep the focus on your child's education while building positive, supportive partnerships between you and the school.

Five steps to making a school complaint

When issues come up, you need to know how to raise these with the school to get an outcome that supports you and your child.

Relationships between parents and schools last for several years. Ensuring mutual trust and respect is essential to making them work in the best interests of your child.

Let's build parent and school partnerships based on our shared commitment to a great education for all. We know these matters are incredibly important to parents, but everything is founded on good intentions.

The best way to resolve concerns is through clear, respectful communication.





What kind of issue is it?

Complaints come in different shapes and sizes. The best first step is to identify what kind of issue it is, to make sure you can get the quickest action with your school.

Is it feedback?

You need to be heard

Sometimes you will want to share your voice with your school without needing them to respond, but you expect them to listen and take it on board. Feedback is often sought by schools who want to hear and adapt to parents' views.

Is it a concern?

You need an answer

Sometimes you have a worry or doubt over an important issue and you are looking for reassurance. Schools should take informal concerns seriously and make every effort to resolve the matter as quickly as possible.

Is it a complaint?

You need action

Sometimes you are dissatisfied with the school's actions or lack of action. Your school will have a formal complaints procedure that is available to you (likely published on their website) with the steps you need to take to complain.

2

Who in the school do I go to?

Often issues can be best resolved by the person closest to your child. Who is best to hear your view at your school?

Discuss with their teacher/form tutor

Go to them first for anything that directly involves your child's classroom experience. Teachers know your child best and can usually sort things quickly.

Examples: homework, friendships, behaviour, day-to-day concerns.

Raise to a middle or senior leader

Take it here if the issue is wider than just one lesson, or if it can't be resolved by the teacher. Leaders have oversight across classes and can coordinate support.

Examples: bullying, additional support, repeated behaviour issues.

Escalate it with the headteacher

Go here for whole-school issues, serious concerns, or if earlier steps haven't worked. The head is responsible for the school and final decisions before governors are involved.

Examples: safeguarding, school policies, staff conduct, health and safety.

Remember - always check your school's complaint policy.

3

How do I raise my complaint?

Concerns are best resolved in discussion with your school. Complaints are best resolved when documented with your school. Follow these tips as you raise your issue.

Follow one level at a time

Start with a query aimed at resolving things quickly with those closest to your child, and only escalate if you truly need to.

Keep a record

Note when you've spoken to a teacher or leader, so you can show you have followed the right steps.

Suggest a clear outcome

Be clear on what you are looking for from the school and ensure it is realistic, so they can see if it is possible.

Start with the facts

Write down what happened, when, and who was involved. Be clear, relevant and avoid long stories.

Stay objective

Avoid accusations against individuals, direct your issue toward the processes or decisions that led to the issue.

Be positive

Make your complaint constructive, focused on solutions, and trust your school to listen.

4

When to expect a response?

Different schools have different policies for handling complaints. You can trust that they are following their policy as they look into your complaint.

Check the school's policy for timescales

Your school's complaints policy will be published on their website. Schools will normally outline how long they expect an outcome to take in that policy. Your school's policy should always be the best guidance to follow.

Ask for a written acknowledgement

If you have written a formal complaint to your school, they will usually acknowledge it quickly. Normally they will detail the timescales for investigating and responding to you and may ask for more details.

Complaint resolution times will vary

Complex complaints may take weeks of investigation. You may not always get updates, but trust that the school is following their policy, investigating and deciding the best action. You should always get a response to your complaint.

5

Where to escalate a complaint?

Once you have fully followed your school's complaint procedure, you may still feel you need action from your school and there are a few ways that may apply to you. It's best to check who it should be escalated with to get it resolved quickly: contacting several people at once could slow things down.

Is it for your school's governing body or trustees?

To be considered if you are unhappy with the school's response. Schools will normally have an escalation process that allows parents to seek a further review of their complaint by a panel which may involve governors or trustees.

Is it for the Department for Education (DfE)?

To be considered if you are unhappy with the way your complaint has been handled or the school is preventing you from following the complaints process. In some circumstances, DfE can consider if the school has followed relevant statutory guidance and education law.

Is it for Ofsted?

Ofsted do not resolve disputes between parents and schools. They may keep your complaint on file for their next inspection but don't always provide a response to parents.

How complaints go wrong

Tensions can run high when you're concerned about your child, but some approaches make matters worse.

Using social media

Sharing your complaint on social media can be harmful to those involved and will not lead to a quicker resolution.

Building a crowd

Other parents may share your views, but your complaint should be specific to you and your child.

Targeting people

Making it personal to individual school staff members can take things too far, keep it to challenging school policy.

Behaving aggressively

Abusive and aggressive behaviour will never be tolerated by a school and can lead to consequences for you.

Only use AI with caution

AI doesn't always get it right when citing laws and can make a complaint more complex than necessary.

Lacking partnership

Having a good relationship with your school is important and it benefits all to move on after complaints are resolved.

The outcome of a formal complaint is often a resolution, where parents and the school have worked together to listen and take action to support the child's education.

Where parents act unreasonably

In extreme circumstances, there can be consequences for parents where there is bullying and harassing behaviour towards the school. If parents use abusive language, are threatening or use intimidation, the school could:

Pause complaints

Typically the first step is for the school to pause the complaints process until the unacceptable behaviour stops, and the school can resume the process.

Issue a verbal or written warning

This sets clear expectations for future conduct and the school may issue a communications plan to reduce risk of confrontation.

Ban parents from school grounds

In persistent or extreme cases of abusive behaviour, a school may take action by placing a ban on parents. The ban is usually issued in writing by the headteacher, though in some cases the local authority, academy trust or governing body may write one instead. Parents will have the right to appeal.

Powering positive partnerships between families and schools

This guide has been created to further support parents. Built with wisdom, research and care by expert partners and members of the Improving Education Together board (IET), led by the Secretary of State for Education.

- Association of School and College Leaders (ASCL)
- The Catholic Education Service
- The Confederation of School Trusts (CST)
- GMB Union
- The Local Government Association (LGA)
- The National Association of Head Teachers (NAHT)
- The National Education Union (NEU)
- National Governance Association (NGA)
- The Sixth Form Colleges Association (SFCA)
- Unison
- Community Trade Union
- NASUWT
- The Department for Education
- Ofsted

Get more insights, resources and support

Parentkind is on a mission to enrich the educational experience for every child - both at home and at school. We empower anyone with parental or educational responsibility with the knowledge, ideas and resources to give young people the very best start in life. As one of the largest federated charities in the UK, Parentkind has a network of 23,500 Parent Teacher Associations (PTAs), parent councils and schools, and mobilises more than 100,000 volunteers to raise vital funds for schools.

www.parentkind.org

This guide is not legal advice and is subject to future change.

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