

Redhill Primary Academy

POLICY FOR HANDLING UNREASONABLY PERSISTENT, HARASSING, ABUSIVE COMPLAINANTS OR BEHAVIOUR



Signed

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Fiona".

Fiona Seddon

Chair of Governors

Autumn 2023

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The headteacher and the local governing body are committed to the improvement of the Academy. We welcome feedback from parents/carers and will always try to resolve any concerns as quickly as possible. There is a procedure for parents to use if they wish to make a formal complaint.

Sometimes, however, parents or carers pursuing complaints or other issues treat staff and others in a way that is unacceptable. Whilst we recognise that some complaints may relate to serious and distressing incidents, we will not accept threatening or harassing behaviour.

What do we mean by 'an unreasonably persistent complainant'?

An unreasonably persistent complainant may be anyone who engages in unreasonable behaviour when making a complaint. This will include parents and carers who pursue complaints in an unreasonable manner.

Abusive and Unreasonable behaviour may include:

➤ **actions which are**

- out of proportion to the nature of the complaint,
- persistent even when the complaints procedure has been exhausted,
- personally harassing the headteacher or other members of staff
- unjustifiably repetitious

➤ **an insistence on**

- pursuing unjustifiable complaints
- unrealistic outcomes to a justified complaint
- pursuing justifiable complaints in an unreasonable manner e.g.
 - using abusive or threatening language;
 - making complaints in public;
 - refusing to attend appointments to discuss the complaint.

What is harassment?

We regard harassment as 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 seek a resolution. Behaviour will fall within the scope of this policy if:

- it appears to be deliberately targeted over a significant period of time at one or more members of the Academy staff or others, without good cause;
- the way in which a complaint or other issues is pursued (as opposed to the complaint itself) causes ongoing distress to the Academy staff or others;
- it has a significant and disproportionate adverse effect on the Academy community.

What can you expect from the Academy?

Anyone who raises informal or formal concerns and complaints with the Academy can expect us to:

- communicate verbally how and when problems can be raised with the Academy
- share the Academy's complaints procedure
- share the Academy's Unreasonably Persistent Complaints/Harassment Policy
- respond within a reasonable time
- be available for consultation within a reasonable time limit, bearing in mind the needs of pupils
- respond with courtesy and respect
- attempt to resolve problems using reasonable means in line with the Academy's complaints procedure and advice from Telford & Wrekin authority
- keep those involved informed of progress

What the Academy expects of you?

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

- follow the Academy's complaints procedure (published on the Academy website)
- treat all staff with courtesy and respect
- respect the needs of pupils and staff within the Academy
- recognise the time constraints under which members of staff at the Academy work and allow the Academy a reasonable time to respond to a complaint
- recognise that some problems may not be resolved in a short time
- restrain from using aggressive, threatening or violent behaviour

If parents and visitors to the Academy resort to unacceptable behaviours the policy below will be implemented.

Policy for Dealing with Unacceptable Behaviour by Parents and Visitors on Academy Premises

At Redhill Academy we value the positive relationships forged with our parents and visitors to the Academy.

We strive to make the Academy a place where we model for children the behaviour we teach and expect. As an Academy we promote respect for all with whom we work, and celebrate differences in a positive manner. We place a high importance on good manners and positive communication, founded on mutual respect. The Academy's community is clear about actions which will be taken if instances of unacceptable behaviour occur, including verbal or physical threats or assaults to staff. Being on the receiving end of any unacceptable behaviour or act of aggression (verbal or physical) will never be regarded by the Academy staff as "a normal part of the job".

In cases of unacceptable behaviour, verbal abuse, or harassment, a judgement will be made as to the appropriate level of action required. In most instances, if a child or member of staff is upset by the unacceptable behaviours of another, the situation can be resolved satisfactorily through mediation without the need for any further action.

Implications for Serious Incidents

Section 547 of the Education Act 1996 makes it an offence for any person to be on the Academy premises to cause or permit a nuisance or disturbance and allows for the removal and prosecution of any person believed to have committed an offence.

A parent of a child attending the Academy normally has implied permission to be on the Academy premises at certain times and for certain purposes, but if the parent's behaviour is unreasonable, this permission may be withdrawn. They could have a ban imposed on them. Then they would then become a trespasser on the Academy site.

The Local Governing Board, in conjunction with the Headteacher, will take the lead in authorising the removal of a person believed to be causing a nuisance or disturbance, and, if necessary, will bring legal proceedings against them. If it is felt that if an individual is likely to cause further threats or harm to staff, an immediate temporary ban would be imposed for a specified period, with an opportunity given to explain, after which a decision would be taken whether to remove or extend the ban.

In other circumstances, the individual would be advised in writing that following the incident of unacceptable behaviour, a ban is being considered and they would be given an opportunity to explain their actions, after which a decision would be made about imposing the ban. If after a ban has been imposed, the individual comes on to the Academy premises again, the Police would be called immediately. The Local Governing Board would then decide whether to consider taking out a Court Injunction preventing this from happening again.