



“You are the light of the world, let your light shine.”

## **UNREASONABLE COMPLAINTS POLICY**

**2025-2026**

Whaddon CofE School is committed to dealing with all complaints, fairly and impartially, and to providing a high-quality service to those who make a complaint. 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 act to protect staff from that behaviour, including that which is abusive, libelous, slanderous, offensive or threatening. This may mean a third party is employed to mediate between the person raising a complaint and the school.

Whaddon C of E School 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 and the effective day-to day running of the school.*

**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 follow the correct process for raising complaints- \*any failure to follow the correct complaint process for Whaddon C of E School, will likely result in the complaint being rejected and the complainant be referred to the most appropriate stage of the process.
- refuses to accept that certain issues are not within the scope of the complaint 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 considered 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 comments about staff/governors 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 or unreasonable 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.

**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:**

- persistently
- maliciously
- aggressively
- using threats, intimidation or violence – through body language, proximity to staff/governors on or off site, verbal comments, or those in writing defaming the pupils, staff, governors or other parents in the school community.
- using abusive, offensive or discriminatory language
- making complaints they know to be false
- using falsified information or using information recorded in meetings, without express permission of all parties attending
- publishing unacceptable information in a variety of ways such as in person, on the playground, in social media, websites, or in 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 and could be considered harassment.

Whenever possible, the Headteacher or Chair of Governors will communicate any concerns with the complainant informally before applying an 'unreasonable' marking, this can be done either face to face or via letter or email.

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 Whaddon 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 usually be reviewed after 6 months.

In response to any breach of the content of our parent behaviour towards staff document, incidents of harassment, verbal or physical aggression or violence, will result in school immediately informing the police and or employing a range of measures up to and including, but not limited to:

- Limiting access to the school site for the individual
- Limiting access to communication with staff- including governors- via email, face to face or by phone, for that individual.

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 Whaddon CofE School site.

**Written by Sarah Prior Headteacher**

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