


Foreland Fields School

Model Policy for Managing Serial and Unreasonable Complaints



Governing Body Approval and Categories

Date of Last Review / Scrutiny	27 th January 2020
Date (Month / Year) of Next Review /Scrutiny	January 2021
Date Policy was Ratified	6 th May 2020
Category of the Policy	General
Named Lead for Writing the Policy	Headteacher
Named Governor for Scrutiny	Chair of Governors
Approval Body	Full Governing Body
Display on Main Web Site	Yes
NOTE: IF THIS POLICY HAS BEEN SCRUTINISED BY A DIFFERENT LEAD GOVERNOR OR BEEN RATIFIED BY A DIFFERENT GOVERNING TEAM PLEASE STATE WHICH TEAM	
Signed – Chair of Governors 	Date 18/5/20

United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child

Foreland Fields School is a Rights Respecting School thereby this policy ensures that the following rights are acknowledged:



Article 19 (protection from violence, abuse and neglect). Governments must do all they can to ensure that children are protected from all forms of violence, abuse, neglect and bad treatment by their parents or anyone else who looks after them.

Article 23 (children with a disability). A child with a disability has the right to live a full and decent life with dignity and, as far as possible, independence and to play an active part in the community.

Signed (Chair of Governors):


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Date:

18/5/20

Model policy for Managing Serial and Unreasonable Complaints

(Kent Local Authority Model Complaints Policy)



Foreland Fields School

January 2020

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Signed (Chair of Governors):



Date:

18-5-20

Foreland Fields School 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 our 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.

Foreland Fields School defines unreasonable complaints as *'those who, because of the frequency or nature of their contact with the school, hinder our consideration of their or other people's complaints'*.

Examples: 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 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 which 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 a 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

Signed (Chair of Governors):

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- knowingly provides falsified information
- publishes unacceptable information on social media or other public forums.

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 try to limit their communication with the school that relates to their complaint, 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.

Whenever possible, the Headteacher or Chair of Governors will discuss any concerns with the complainant informally before applying an '*unreasonable*' marking including suggesting that the complainant asks a third party to act on their behalf such as the local Citizen' Advice.

If the behaviour continues, the Headteacher will write to the complainant explaining that their behaviour is unreasonable and ask them to change it. For complainants who excessively contact Foreland Fields 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 be reviewed after six months.

In response to any serious incident of harassment, aggression or violence, we will immediately inform the police and communicate our actions in writing. This may include barring an individual from Foreland Fields School.

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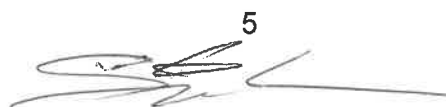
Barring from the School Premises

Although fulfilling a public function, schools are private places. The public has no automatic right of entry. Schools will therefore act to ensure they remain a safe place for pupils, staff and other members of their community.

If an individual's behaviour is a cause for concern, a school can ask him/her to leave school premises. In serious cases, the Headteacher or the local authority can notify them in writing that their implied licence to be on school premises has been temporarily revoked, subject to any representations that the parent may wish to make. Schools should always give the parent the opportunity to formally express their views on the decision to bar in writing. Anyone wishing to complain about being barred can do so, by letter or email, to the Chair of Governors. The decision to bar should then be reviewed, taking into account any representations made by the parent, and either confirmed or lifted. If the decision is confirmed the person should be notified in writing, explaining how long the bar will be in place and when the decision will be reviewed, usually after 6 months.

Anyone wishing to complain about being barred can do so, by letter or email, to the Headteacher or Chair of Governors. However, complaints about barring cannot be escalated to the Department for Education. Once the school's own complaints procedure has been completed, the only remaining avenue of appeal is through the courts; independent legal advice must then be sought.

Signed (Chair of Governors):

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