

This policy is informed by the Department for Education guidance on complaints handling, the Education Act 2002, the Equality Act 2010, the Protection from Harassment Act 1997, the Data Protection Act 2018 and UK GDPR. It should be read alongside the school's Complaints Policy and Behaviour Policy.



Be . Build . Become

Bloxham CE Primary

Policy for managing serial, persistent or unreasonable complaints and contact

2025-26

Bloxham CE Primary is committed to dealing with all complaints and communications fairly and impartially, and to providing a high quality service to all our stakeholders including 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.

Bloxham CE Primary defines unreasonable behaviour as that which hinders our consideration of complaints because of the frequency or nature of the complainant's contact with the school, such as, if the complainant:

- 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 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 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.

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.

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 Bloxham CE Primary 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 aggression or violence, we will immediately inform the police and communicate our actions in writing. This may include barring an individual from Bloxham CE Primary

Any action taken under this policy will be proportionate, evidence-based and time-limited. The school has a duty to protect staff from abusive, threatening or persistent unreasonable behaviour, while ensuring that complainants retain access to an appropriate complaints process.

Appendix A: Legislative and Compliance Cross-Check

Requirement	Legislation / Guidance	How This Policy Complies
Access to complaints	DfE Complaints Guidance	Policy distinguishes behaviour from complaint content
Staff protection	Health and Safety at Work Act 1974	Clear steps to protect staff from abuse
Equality and proportionality	Equality Act 2010	Actions are proportionate and reviewed
Harassment and threats	Protection from Harassment Act 1997	Escalation to police outlined
Data handling	DPA 2018 / UK GDPR	Records and communication plans handled appropriately

Appendix B: Summary of Changes (January 2026)

Area	Original Position	Updated Position	Reason
Legislative references	No explicit statutory framework	Added DfE and key legislation references	Strengthens legal clarity and compliance
Staff protection wording	Implicit protection of staff	Explicit proportionality and wellbeing statement added	Reinforces duty of care to staff
Policy linkage	Standalone wording	Links to Complaints and Behaviour policies clarified	Improves governance coherence