



**The Buckinghamshire Primary PRU**  
**Complaints and Resolution Policy and Procedure**

**This policy was agreed by the Management Committee: Spring 2026**

**This policy will be reviewed by: Spring 2027**

## **Aims and Objectives**

We aim to be open and honest when dealing with any concern or complaint and to resolve it through open dialogue and mutual understanding. Careful consideration will be given to all concerns and complaints, and we will deal with them as swiftly as possible. We will provide sufficient opportunity for any complaint to be fully discussed.

In all cases, we will put interests of the child above all other issues. Our procedure is underpinned by the following **framework of principles**: -

- encourage resolution of problems by informal means wherever possible
- be easily accessible and publicised
- be simple to use and understand
- be impartial
- be non-adversarial
- allow swift handling with established time-limits for action and keeping people informed of the progress
- ensure a full and fair investigation by an independent person where necessary
- respect people's desire for confidentiality, wherever possible (some information sharing may be necessary to carry out a thorough investigation)
- address all points of issue, providing an effective response and appropriate redress, where necessary
- provide information to the school's senior management team so that services can be improved.

## **Areas not covered by this procedure**

This procedure does not apply to issues concerning admissions, exclusion appeals, statutory assessments of special educational needs or grievances by PRU staff. These are the subject of separate complaints procedures; more information can be obtained from the PRU.

In addition, Ofsted has the power to investigate certain (qualifying) complaints about maintained schools, including those from parents. A qualifying complaint is one that affects the whole school, not an individual. More information can be obtained from the PRU or Ofsted.

All other complaints are handled by the PRU according to the arrangements set out below. We highly value the relationship that we have with our parents as they play a pivotal role in the education of their children. We have an 'open door' policy and aim to deal with all issues or concerns as soon as possible in order to achieve an acceptable solution. We are always ready to listen to our parents.

## **The difference between a concern and a complaint**

A concern may be defined as '*an expression of worry or doubt over an issue considered to be important for which reassurances are sought*'.

A complaint may be defined as '*an expression of dissatisfaction however made, about actions taken or a lack of action*'.

It is in everyone's interest that concerns and complaints are resolved at the earliest possible stage. Many issues can be resolved informally, without the need to use the formal stages of the complaints

procedure. The PRU takes concerns seriously and will make every effort to resolve the matter as quickly as possible.

If you have difficulty discussing a concern with a particular member of staff, we will respect your views. In these cases, a member of the senior leadership team (SLT) will refer you to another staff member. Similarly, if the member of staff directly involved feels unable to deal with a concern, SLT will refer you to another staff member. The member of staff may be more senior but does not have to be. The ability to consider the concern objectively and impartially is more important.

We understand however, that there are occasions when people would like to raise their concerns formally. In this case, the PRU will attempt to resolve the issue internally, through the stages outlined within this complaint procedure.

### **Who can make a complaint?**

This complaints procedure is not limited to parents or carers of children that attend the PRU or who receive outreach from the PRU. Any person, including members of the public, may make a complaint to the PRU about any provision of facilities or services that we provide. Unless complaints are dealt with under separate statutory procedures (such as appeals relating to exclusions or admissions), we will use this complaints procedure.

### **How to raise a concern or make a complaint**

A concern or complaint can be made in person, in writing or by telephone. They may also be made by a third party acting on behalf on a complainant, if they have appropriate consent to do so. Concerns should be raised with either the class teacher or a member of SLT. We hope that the majority of concerns can be resolved by talking through the issues and agreeing on a resolution. If the issue remains unresolved or you are unhappy with the outcome of informal discussions, the next step is to make a formal complaint.

It is **not** appropriate to publicise any concerns you may have on social networking sites. Please speak, or write, to someone at the PRU at your earliest convenience so that we can work together to resolve your concern.

Complainants should not approach individual members of the PRU Management Committee to raise concerns or complaints. They have no power to act on an individual basis, and it may also prevent them from considering complaints at later stages in this policy.

Complaints against school staff (except the Headteacher) should be made in the first instance, to the Headteacher via the PRU site offices. Please mark them as 'Private and Confidential'.

Complaints that involve or are about the Headteacher should be addressed to the Chair of the Management Committee via a PRU office. Please mark them as 'Private and Confidential'.

Complaints about the Chair of the Management Committee, any individual member of the Management Committee or the whole committee should be addressed to the Clerk to the Management Committee via a PRU office. Please mark them as 'Private and Confidential'.

For ease of use, a template complaint form is included at the end of this procedure. If you require help in completing the form, please contact the PRU. You can also ask third party organisations like the Citizens Advice to help you.

In accordance with equality law, we will consider making reasonable adjustments, if required, to enable complainants to access and complete this complaints procedure. For instance, providing

information in alternative formats, assisting complainants in raising a formal complaint or holding meetings in accessible locations.

### Anonymous complaints

We will not normally investigate anonymous complaints. However, the Headteacher or Chair of the Management Committee, if appropriate, will determine whether the complaint warrants an investigation.

### Time scales

You must raise the complaint within three months of the incident or, where a series of associated incidents have occurred, within three months of the last of these incidents. We will consider complaints made outside of this time frame if exceptional circumstances apply.

### Complaints received outside of term time

We will consider complaints made outside of term time to have been received on the first school day after the holiday period.

### Scope of this complaints procedure

This procedure covers all complaints about any provision of services by the PRU other than complaints that are dealt with under other statutory procedures, including those listed below.

Exceptions	Who to contact
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Admissions to schools</li> <li>• Statutory assessments of Special Educational Needs</li> <li>• School re-organisation proposals</li> </ul>	<p>Concerns about admissions, statutory assessments of Special Educational Needs, or school re-organisation proposals should be raised Buckinghamshire Council</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Matters likely to require a Child Protection Investigation</li> </ul>	<p>Complaints about child protection matters are handled under our child protection and safeguarding policy and in accordance with relevant statutory guidance.</p> <p>If you have serious concerns, you may wish to contact the Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO) who has local responsibility for safeguarding, or the Multi-Agency Safeguarding Hub (MASH). You can report a concern through the Buckinghamshire Safeguarding Children Partnerships which has information for parents and carers:</p> <p><a href="https://www.buckssafeguarding.org.uk/childrenpartnership/parent-and-carers/">https://www.buckssafeguarding.org.uk/childrenpartnership/parent-and-carers/</a></p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Exclusion of children from school*</li> </ul>	<p>Further information about raising concerns about exclusion can be found at: <a href="http://www.gov.uk/school-discipline-exclusions/exclusions">www.gov.uk/school-discipline-exclusions/exclusions</a>.</p> <p><i>*complaints about the application of the behaviour policy can be made through the school's complaints procedure. The PRU's behaviour policy can be found on our website <a href="http://www.bucksprimarypru.co.uk">www.bucksprimarypru.co.uk</a>.</i></p>

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Whistleblowing</li> </ul>	<p>We have an internal whistleblowing procedure for all our employees, including temporary staff and contractors.</p> <p>The Secretary of State for Education is the prescribed person for matters relating to education for whistleblowers in education who do not want to raise matters direct with their employer. Referrals can be made at: <a href="http://www.education.gov.uk/contactus">www.education.gov.uk/contactus</a>.</p> <p>Volunteer staff who have concerns about the PRU should complain through the PRU's complaints procedure. You may also be able to complain direct to the LA or the Department for Education (see link above), depending on the substance of your complaint.</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Staff grievances</li> </ul>	<p>Complaints from staff will be dealt with under the PRU's internal grievance procedures.</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Staff conduct</li> </ul>	<p>Complaints about staff will be dealt with under the PRU's internal disciplinary procedures, if appropriate.</p> <p>Complainants will not be informed of any disciplinary action taken against a staff member as a result of a complaint. However, the complainant will be notified that the matter is being addressed.</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>National Curriculum - content</li> </ul>	<p>Please contact the Department for Education at: <a href="http://www.education.gov.uk/contactus">www.education.gov.uk/contactus</a></p>

If other bodies are investigating aspects of the complaint, for example the police, local authority (LA) safeguarding teams or tribunals, this may impact on our ability to adhere to the timescales within this procedure or result in the procedure being suspended until those public bodies have completed their investigations.

If a complainant commences legal action against the PRU in relation to their complaint, we will consider whether to suspend the complaints procedure in relation to their complaint until those legal proceedings have concluded.

### Resolving complaints

At each stage in the procedure, the PRU wants to resolve the complaint. If appropriate, we will acknowledge that the complaint is upheld in whole or in part. In addition, we may offer one or more of the following:

- an explanation
- an admission that the situation could have been handled differently or better
- an assurance that we will try to ensure the event complained of will not recur
- an explanation of the steps that have been or will be taken to help ensure that it will not happen again and an indication of the timescales within which any changes will be made
- an undertaking to review school policies in light of the complaint
- an apology.

## **Withdrawal of a complaint**

If a complainant wants to withdraw their complaint, we will ask them to confirm this in writing.

## **Raising initial concerns (informal resolution of concerns)**

If you have any concerns about the PRU, or the education we are providing at any time, please discuss the matter with your child's lead teacher at the earliest opportunity.

We take any concerns very seriously and most problems can be resolved following discussion and a shared understanding of the issues. All members of staff work very hard to ensure that each child is happy and safe at the PRU and is making good progress. Where there are concerns, both classroom colleagues and SLT want to know at the earliest opportunity so that we can work with parents/carers and other professionals to resolve matters promptly.

Most concerns can be resolved at this level and a written response will be provided to reflect the discussions about any concerns and to set out any agreed actions or steps taken to resolve concerns.

However, if after speaking to your child's lead teacher you are still concerned, or you feel that this has not resolved your concern or complaint, then please discuss the matter with the member of SLT based at your child's placement site. If the concern is still not resolved, then the formal complaint procedure is outlined below.

We also understand that there are occasions when people would like to raise their concerns formally without an informal stage to resolve concerns, and the following process should be followed in those circumstances.

### **Stage 1 - Formal**

Formal complaints must be made to the Headteacher (unless they are about the Headteacher), via a PRU office. This may be done in person, in writing/email (preferably using the Complaint Form), or by telephone. A written explanation of the complaint may be requested following a verbal discussion, to ensure all relevant details are captured at this time.

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 five school days. Within this response, the Headteacher will seek to clarify the nature of the complaint, ask what remains unresolved and what outcome the complainant would like to see. The Headteacher can consider whether a face-to-face meeting is the most appropriate way of doing this.

*Note: The Headteacher may delegate the investigation to another member of the school's senior leadership team but not the decision to be taken.*

During the investigation, the Headteacher (or investigator) will:

- if necessary, interview those involved in the matter and/or those complained of, allowing them to be accompanied if they wish
- keep a written record of any meetings/interviews in relation to their investigation.

At the conclusion of their investigation, the Headteacher will provide a formal written response within ten school days of the date of receipt of the complaint.

If the Headteacher is unable to meet this deadline, they will provide the complainant with an update

and revised response date.

The response will detail any actions taken to investigate the complaint and provide a full explanation of the decision made and the reason(s) for it. Where appropriate, it will include details of actions the PRU will take to resolve the complaint.

The Headteacher will advise the complainant of how to escalate their complaint should they remain dissatisfied with the outcome of Stage 1.

If the complaint is about the Headteacher, or a member of the Management Committee (including the Chair or Vice-Chair), a suitably skilled member will be appointed to complete all the actions at Stage 1. Complaints about the Headteacher or member of the Management Committee must be made to the Clerk, via a PRU office.

If the complaint is:

- jointly about the Chair and Vice Chair or
- the entire Management Committee or
- the majority of the Management Committee

Stage 1 will be considered by an independent investigator appointed by the Management Committee. At the conclusion of their investigation, the independent investigator will provide a formal written response.

## **Stage 2**

If the complainant is dissatisfied with the outcome at Stage 1 and wishes to take the matter further, they can escalate the complaint to Stage 2 – a meeting with members of the Management Committee's complaints committee, which will be formed of the first three, impartial, governors available. This is the final stage of the complaints procedure.

A request to escalate to Stage 2 must be made to the Clerk, via a PRU office, within 15 school days of receipt of the Stage 1 response.

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

Requests received outside of this time frame will only be considered if exceptional circumstances apply.

The Clerk will write to the complainant to inform them of the date of the meeting. They will aim to convene a meeting within 15 school days of receipt of the Stage 2 request. If this is not possible, the Clerk will provide an anticipated date and keep the complainant informed.

If the complainant rejects the offer of three proposed dates, without good reason, the Clerk will decide when to hold the meeting. It will then proceed in the complainant's absence on the basis of written submissions from both parties.

The complaints committee will consist of at least three members of the Management Committee with no prior involvement or knowledge of the complaint. Prior to the meeting, they will decide amongst themselves who will act as the Chair of the Complaints Committee. If there are fewer than three governors from the PRU available, the Clerk will source any additional, independent governors

through another local school or through their LA's Governor Services team, in order to make up the committee. Alternatively, an entirely independent committee may be convened to hear the complaint at Stage 2.

The committee will decide whether to deal with the complaint by inviting parties to a meeting or through written representations, but in making their decision they will be sensitive to the complainant's needs.

If the complainant is invited to attend the meeting, they may bring someone along to provide support. This can be a relative or friend. Generally, we do not encourage either party to bring legal representatives to the committee meeting. However, there may be occasions when legal representation is appropriate.

For instance, if a PRU employee is called as a witness in a complaint meeting, they may wish to be supported by union and/or legal representation.

*Note: Complaints about staff conduct will not generally be handled under this complaints procedure. Complainants will be advised that any staff conduct complaints will be considered under staff disciplinary procedures, if appropriate, but outcomes will not be shared with them.*

Representatives from the media are not permitted to attend.

At least ten school days before the meeting, the Clerk will:

- confirm and notify the complainant of the date, time and venue of the meeting, ensuring that, if the complainant is invited, the dates are convenient to all parties and that the venue and proceedings are accessible
- request copies of any further written material to be submitted to the committee at least seven school days before the meeting.

Any written material will be circulated to all parties at least five school days before the date of the meeting. The committee will not normally accept, as evidence, recordings of conversations that were obtained covertly and without the informed consent of all parties being recorded.

The committee will also not review any new complaints at this stage or consider evidence unrelated to the initial complaint to be included. New complaints must be dealt with from Stage 1 of the procedure.

The meeting will be held in private. Electronic recordings of meetings or conversations are not normally permitted unless a complainant's own disability or special needs require it. Prior knowledge and consent of all parties attending must be sought before meetings or conversations take place. Consent will be recorded in any minutes taken.

The committee will consider the complaint and all the evidence presented. The committee can:

- uphold the complaint in whole or in part
- dismiss the complaint in whole or in part.

If the complaint is upheld in whole or in part, the committee will:

- decide on the appropriate action to be taken to resolve the complaint
- where appropriate, recommend changes to the school's systems or procedures to prevent similar issues in the future.

The Chair of the Committee will provide the complainant and the PRU with a full explanation of their decision and the reason(s) for it, in writing, within five school days.

The letter to the complainant will include details of how to contact the Department for Education if they are dissatisfied with the way their complaint has been handled by the PRU.

If the complaint is:

- jointly about the Chair and Vice Chair or
- the entire Management Committee or
- the majority of the Management Committee

Stage 2 will be heard by a committee of independent governors.

The response will detail any actions taken to investigate the complaint and provide a full explanation of the decision made and the reason(s) for it. Where appropriate, it will include details of actions the PRU will take to resolve the complaint.

The response will also advise the complainant of how to escalate their complaint should they remain dissatisfied.

### **Next steps**

If the complainant believes the PRU did not handle their complaint in accordance with the published complaints procedure or they acted unlawfully or unreasonably in the exercise of their duties under education law, they can contact the Department for Education after they have completed Stage 2.

The Department for Education will not normally reinvestigate the substance of complaints or overturn any decisions made by the PRU. They will consider whether the PRU has adhered to education legislation and any statutory policies connected with the complaint.

The complainant can refer their complaint to the Department for Education online at: [www.education.gov.uk/contactus](http://www.education.gov.uk/contactus), by telephone on: 0370 000 2288 or by writing to:

Department for Education  
Piccadilly Gate  
Store Street  
Manchester  
M1 2WD.

The PRU is committed to giving careful consideration to all concerns raised and complaints received. If the PRU receives a large volume of complaints all based on the same subject or from complainants unconnected to the PRU it may have become the focus of a complaints campaign. If the Headteacher and Chair of the Management Committee consider that this is the case, a template response to the complaints will be sent.

Signed by:  
Chair, Management Committee

Date:

Signed by:  
Headteacher

Date:

## Complaints Flowchart Summary – Annex A

### **Informal**

If you have a concern or a worry about the PRU – In the first instance, please try and resolve your concerns with a member of staff, normally the lead teacher for your child



**Resolved?**



**Yes** – no further action.



**No** – You should discuss your concerns with a member of the PRU Senior Leadership Team



**Resolved?**



**Yes** – no further action.



### **No – Formal Process**

You can let us know in person, by telephone or in writing if your concerns have not been resolved and you would like to move to the formal stage of the complaints procedure (stage 1)



**Receipt of complaint acknowledged within 5 school days**



Complaint is investigated by the HT (or her nominated deputy) or Chair of the Management Committee/or nominated member of the Committee if it is about the HT or a member of the Management committee



**You will be informed of the outcome of the investigation within 15 school days of receiving the complaint**



**Resolved?**



**Yes – no further action.**



**No – if you wish to take your complaint to the next stage in the procedure you will be asked to confirm this in 15 school days of the completion of Stage 1**



The Management Committee Complaints Panel meets to consider your complaint within 15 school days. If you wish to submit evidence to the panel you will be invited to do so in advance of the meeting. You will also be invited to attend the panel meeting to explain the nature of your complaint.



Panel will make a final decision on behalf of the Management Committee and will write to you within 5 school days.



**Resolved?**



**Yes – no further action.**



**No – Stage 3**

You can write to the Secretary of State of Education and Skills if you feel the school has acted unreasonably or not followed the correct procedures.

## Complaint Form –Annex B

Please complete and return to the Headteacher who will acknowledge receipt and explain what action will be taken.

<b>Your name:</b>
<b>Pupil's name (if relevant):</b>
<b>Your relationship to the pupil (if relevant):</b>
<b>Address:</b>
<b>Postcode:</b>
<b>Day time telephone number:</b>
<b>Evening telephone number:</b>
<b>Please give details of your complaint, including whether you have spoken to anybody at the school about it.</b>

**What actions do you feel might resolve the problem at this stage?**

**Are you attaching any paperwork? If so, please give details.**

**Signature:**

**Date:**

**Official use**

**Date acknowledgement sent:**

**By who:**

**Complaint referred to:**

**Date:**

**Roles and Responsibilities – Annex C (a general description of the roles that could be required in order to ensure that the complaint is investigated in an appropriate way in line with the policy).**

**Complainant**

The complainant will receive a more effective response to the complaint if they:

- explain the complaint in full as early as possible
- co-operate with the school in seeking a solution to the complaint
- respond promptly to requests for information or meetings or in agreeing the details of the complaint
- ask for assistance as needed
- treat all those involved in the complaint with respect
- refrain from publicising the details of their complaint on social media and respect confidentiality.

**Investigator**

The investigator's role is to establish the facts relevant to the complaint by:

- providing a comprehensive, open, transparent and fair consideration of the complaint through:
  - sensitive and thorough interviewing of the complainant to establish what has happened and who has been involved
  - interviewing staff and children/young people and other people relevant to the complaint
  - consideration of records and other relevant information
  - analysing information
- liaising with the complainant and the complaints co-ordinator (if appointed) as appropriate to clarify what the complainant feels would put things right.

The investigator should:

- conduct interviews with an open mind and be prepared to persist in the questioning
- keep notes of interviews or arrange for an independent note taker to record minutes of the meeting
- ensure that any papers produced during the investigation are kept securely pending any appeal
- be mindful of the timescales to respond
- prepare a comprehensive report for the Headteacher or complaints committee that sets out the facts, identifies solutions and recommends courses of action to resolve problems.

The Headteacher or complaints committee will then determine whether to uphold or dismiss the complaint and communicate that decision to the complainant, providing the appropriate escalation details.

**Complaints Co-ordinator** (If necessary - this could be the Headteacher / Operations Manager / designated complaints member of the Management Committee or other staff member providing administrative support)

The complaints co-ordinator should:

- ensure that the complainant is fully updated at each stage of the procedure
- liaise with staff members, Headteacher, Chair of the Management Committee, the Clerk and LA (if appropriate) to ensure the smooth running of the complaints procedure
- be aware of issues regarding:
  - sharing third party information
  - additional support. This may be needed by complainants when making a complaint including interpretation support or where the complainant is a child or young person
- keep records.

### **Clerk to the Management Committee**

The Clerk is the contact point for the complainant and the committee and should:

- ensure that all people involved in the complaint procedure are aware of their legal rights and duties, including any under legislation relating to school complaints, education law, the Equality Act 2010, the Freedom of Information Act 2000, the Data Protection Act (DPA) 2018 and the General Data Protection Regulations (GDPR)
- set the date, time and venue of the meeting, ensuring that the dates are convenient to all parties (if they are invited to attend) and that the venue and proceedings are accessible
- collate any written material relevant to the complaint (for example; stage 1 paperwork, school and complainant submissions) and send it to the parties in advance of the meeting within an agreed timescale
- record the proceedings
- circulate the minutes of the meeting
- notify all parties of the committee's decision.

### **Committee Chair**

The committee's chair, who is nominated in advance of the complaint meeting, should ensure that:

- both parties are asked (via the Clerk) to provide any additional information relating to the complaint by a specified date in advance of the meeting
- the meeting is conducted in an informal manner, is not adversarial, and that, if all parties are invited to attend, everyone is treated with respect and courtesy
- complainants who may not be used to speaking at such a meeting are put at ease. This is particularly important if the complainant is a child/young person
- the remit of the committee is explained to the complainant
- written material is seen by everyone in attendance, provided it does not breach confidentiality or any individual's rights to privacy under the DPA 2018 or GDPR.

If a new issue arises it would be useful to give everyone the opportunity to consider and

comment upon it; this may require a short adjournment of the meeting

- both the complainant and the school are given the opportunity to make their case and seek clarity, either through written submissions ahead of the meeting or verbally in the meeting itself
- the issues are addressed
- key findings of fact are made
- the committee is open-minded and acts independently
- no member of the committee has an external interest in the outcome of the proceedings or any involvement in an earlier stage of the procedure
- the meeting is minuted
- they liaise with the Clerk (and complaints co-ordinator, if the PRU has one).

### **Committee Member**

Committee members should be aware that:

- the meeting must be independent and impartial, and should be seen to be so
- no governor may sit on the committee if they have had a prior involvement in the complaint or in the circumstances surrounding it
- the aim of the meeting should be to resolve the complaint and achieve reconciliation between the school and the complainant

We recognise that the complainant might not be satisfied with the outcome if the meeting does not find in their favour. It may only be possible to establish the facts and make recommendations.

- many complainants will feel nervous and inhibited in a formal setting  
Parents/carers often feel emotional when discussing an issue that affects their child.
- extra care needs to be taken when the complainant is a child/young person and present during all or part of the meeting

Careful consideration of the atmosphere and proceedings should ensure that the child/young person does not feel intimidated.

The committee should respect the views of the child/young person and give them equal consideration to those of adults.

If the child/young person is the complainant, the committee should ask in advance if any support is needed to help them present their complaint. Where the child/young person's parent is the complainant, the committee should give the parent the opportunity to say which parts of the meeting, if any, the child/young person needs to attend.

However, the parent should be advised that agreement might not always be possible if the parent wishes the child/young person to attend a part of the meeting that the committee considers is not in the child/young person's best interests. The welfare of the child/young person is paramount.

## **Monitoring and Review**

The Management Committee monitors the complaints procedure in order to ensure that all complaints are handled properly. The Headteacher ensures that the PRU logs all formal complaints received by the school and records how they were resolved. The Headteacher will include details of complaints in his termly reports to the Management Committee who will discuss and review as appropriate so that the need for changes are identified and implemented as appropriate.

## **Serial or Persistent Complaints**

The PRU 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 the PRU. 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.

The PRU 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 PRU 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 the Management Committee 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 the PRU 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 all of the PRU sites.