



Vexatious Complaints Policy

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads 'Parneet Kang'.

Parneet Kang
Principal

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads 'William Holland'.

William Holland
Chair of Trustees

Written: September 2019
Review: September 2020
Reviewed: 2nd September 2020 - CGH

The Principal and the Board of Trustees are committed to the improvement of our school. We welcome feedback from parents/carers and will always try to resolve any concerns as quickly as possible.

There is a procedure for parents/carers to use if they wish to make a formal complaint. Sometimes, however, parents/carers pursuing complaints or other issues may treat staff and others in a way that is unacceptable and or behave in an unacceptable manner. Whilst we recognise that some complaints may relate to serious and distressing incidents, we will not accept threatening, inappropriate or harassing behaviour.

The aim of this policy is to clarify the process for dealing with unreasonable complainants or parents who do not act appropriately. An unreasonable 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 and those who do not act in an appropriate manner towards staff at our school

This may include:

- Out of proportion to the nature of the complaint.
- Persistent – even when the complaints procedure has been exhausted.
- Personally harassing.
- Unjustifiably repetitious. Where the complainant has no view about what would satisfy him/her and/or no intention to resolve the complaint
- Obsessive, harassing, or prolific correspondence or excessive email or telephone contact about a concern or complaint.
- An insistence on pursuing unjustified, unmeritorious complaints or having unrealistic outcomes to unjustified complaints.
- An insistence on pursuing justifiable complaints in an unreasonable manner e.g. using abusive or threatening language.
- Making complaints in public and/or refusing to attend appointments to discuss the complaint.

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. For example; to be deliberately targeted over a significant period at one or more members of school staff or others. The way in which a complaint or other issues is pursued (as opposed to the complaint itself) causes ongoing distress to school staff or others.

Anyone who raises informal or formal issues and complaints with the school can expect the school to follow the school's complaints procedure. We expect parent/carers/visitors to the school to treat all staff with courtesy and respect, respect the needs of pupils and staff within the school and never use violence (including threats of violence) towards people or property.

This policy is intended to be used in conjunction with the school's complaints procedure. Taken together, these documents set out how we will always seek to work with parents/carers with a legitimate complaint to resolve a difficulty and reach a resolution.

However, in cases of unreasonably persistent complaints or harassment, our school may take any or all the following steps, as appropriate:

- Inform the complainant informally or in writing that his/her behaviour is now considered by the school to be unreasonable or unacceptable and request a changed approach and falls under the terms of the Unreasonably Persistent Complaints/Harassment Policy.
- Require all future meetings with a member of staff to be conducted with a third person present. In the interests of all parties, notes of these meetings may be taken.
- Inform the complainant that, except in emergencies, the school will respond only to written communication.
- Inform the complainant in writing that his/her behaviour is now considered to fall under the terms of this policy and that any complaint will not be investigated further until it is pursued in a manner the School considers to be reasonable.
- Place restrictions on the individual's access to school and/or school staff.
- Cease all correspondence and communication with the complainant other than that necessary for the health and safety of any child/adult in school.

The Emscote School has a duty of care to staff and pupils and will take emergency measures should these become necessary in extreme cases. The school and Board of Trustees will not tolerate any form of physical or verbal aggression or personal harassment against school staff. If staff are subject to this type of aggression the school may:

- Prohibit the individual from entering the school site, with immediate effect and inform the individual that communication with them will cease other than in an emergency.
- Prosecute under Anti-Harassment legislation. 7.

We reserve the right not to respond to communications from individuals subject to the policy.