

Stroud Valley Community Primary School

Managing Serial and Unreasonable Complaints



Stroud Valley Community Primary School (SVCS) is committed to dealing with all complaints fairly and impartially and to providing a high quality service to those who complain. SVCS would not normally limit the contact complainants have within school. However, we do not expect our staff to tolerate unacceptable behaviour and will take action to protect staff from such behaviour, including that which is abusive, offence or threatening.

SVCS defines unreasonable behaviour as that which hinders our consideration of complaints because of the frequency or nature of the complainants contact with the school, such as, if the complaint:

- refuses to articulate their complaint or specify the grounds of a complaint or the outcomes sought by raising the complaint, despite the 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 time scales
- 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
- refuse to accept the findings of the investigation into that complaint where the schools complaints procedures has been fully and properly implemented and completed, including referrals to the Department for Education
- seeks an unreasonable outcome
- makes excessive demands on school time by frequent, lengthy and complicated contact with the staff regarding the complaint in person, in writing, by e-mail or by telephone while the complaint is being dealt with
- use 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, e-mail or text), as it could delay the outcome being reached.

If the behaviour continues, the Headteacher or Chair of Governors will contact the complainant explaining that their behaviour is unreasonable and the stage the school is at in regard to the complaint. In meeting with a complainant at this level there will always be two people present, including a member of the governing body.

For complainants who excessively contact SVSC causing a significant level of disruption, we may specify methods of communication and limit the number of contacts in a communication plan. This plan 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 an individual barring from SVCS

Policy Review

Policy Title	Managing Serial and Unreasonable Complaints
Date Policy Ratified by Governors	March 2024
Committee Responsible	Finance, Staffing and G P
Date for next review	March 2026