



The Oak Partnership

Complaints Policy

Version 2.0

We are committed to safeguarding and ensuring the health, safety and well-being of all pupils in accordance with safeguarding procedures and guidance for staff outlined in the schools' Health and Safety, Child Protection, Security and Safeguarding policies.

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1 Scope of this Complaints Policy

This policy and the procedures it encompasses covers all complaints about any provision of community facilities or services by The Oak Partnership’s schools, other than complaints that are dealt with under other statutory procedures, including those listed in Appendix 1. The nature of the complaints procedure differs depending on whether the complaint is about a school or about the Trust or CEO of the Trust. Many issues can be resolved informally, without the need to use the formal stages of the complaints procedure. The Oak Partnership takes concerns and complaints seriously and will make every effort to resolve the matter as quickly as possible.

2 Who can make a complaint?

This Complaints Policy is not limited to parents or carers of children that are registered at the school. Any person, including members of the public, may make a complaint to The Oak Partnership 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.

In accordance with equality law, we will consider making reasonable adjustments if required, to enable complainants to access and complete the complaints procedure. For example, providing information in alternative formats, assisting complainants in raising a formal complaint or holding meetings in accessible locations.

3 The difference between a concern and a complaint

For the purposes of this policy a concern is defined as “an expression of worry or doubt over an issue considered to be important for which reassurances are sought” and a complaint is defined as “an expression of dissatisfaction however made, about actions taken or a lack of action”.

If you have difficulty discussing a concern with a member of staff, we will respect your views. In these cases the complaints administrator* will refer you to another staff member. Similarly, if the member of staff directly involved feels unable to deal with a concern, the complaints administrator 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. (*Each school will have a named complaint administrator).

We understand that there are occasions when people would like to raise their concerns formally. In this case, The Oak Partnership will attempt to resolve the issue internally, through the stages outlined within this policy.

4 Resolving complaints

At each stage in the procedure, The Oak Partnership 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 The Oak Partnership’s policies considering the complaint
- ✓ an apology.

5 Anonymous complaints

We will **not** normally investigate anonymous complaints. However, the Head Teacher, Chair of the Local School Committee (“LSC”), CEO or Chair of Trustees, (whichever is appropriate), will determine whether the complaint warrants an investigation.

6 Timescales

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. After this time, it may be more difficult to gather evidence and resolve a complaint. Exceptions to this will be considered on a case-by-case basis.

Any complaint should be raised as soon as possible with the relevant member of school staff or the headteacher, either in person or by letter, telephone or email. If you are unclear who to contact or how to contact them, you should contact their school office.

Stage 1: Informal concerns	Parent brings complaint to attention of member of staff
	Concern acknowledged within 5 school days
	Concern responded to within 10 school days of acknowledgement
	Where no satisfactory solution has been found, parent to be advised that they should proceed to Stage 2
Stage 2: Formal Written Complaint	Parent to put complaint in writing using Complaint Form within 15 school days
	Complaint to be acknowledged within 5 school days
	(Optional) Meeting with parents within 10 school days

	Response to the complaint sent within 10 school days of acknowledgement being sent
Stage 3: Referral to Complaints Committee	Parent to request hearing within 15 school days of receiving notice of the outcome of Stage 2
	Request to be acknowledged within 5 school days
	Hearing to take place within 20 school days of receipt of request
	Notification of date, time and place of the hearing, details of the committee members present and meeting documents circulated at least 5 school days before the hearing
	School representative and parents to submit evidence in support of their case to Clerk at least 5 school days before the hearing
	Complaints Committee decision sent not more than 30 school days after the hearing

7 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.

8 Withdrawal of a Complaint

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

9 Unreasonably persistent complainants and unreasonable complainant behaviour

There are rare circumstances where we will deviate from the Complaints Procedure.

These include, but are not necessarily limited to:

- where the complainant's behaviour or language towards staff, members of the LSC or trustees is abusive, offensive, discriminatory or threatening;
- where the complainant's behaviour or communication is perceived to be threatening or harassing.
- when the complaint's behaviour is hindering our consideration of complaints and/or the proper running of the school because of the frequency or nature of the complainant's contact

See appendix 3 for specific examples.

In these circumstances, we may:

- inform the complainant that their behaviour is unacceptable or unreasonably persistent and ask them to change it;
- restrict the complainant's access to the school e.g. requesting contact in a particular form (for example, letters only), requiring contact to take place with a named person only, restricting telephone calls to specified days and times or banning the complainant from the academy's premises. Any such arrangements will be reviewed after six months;
- conduct the Complaints Committee on the papers only i.e. not hold a hearing;

- refuse to consider the complaint further. In this instance, the Chief Executive Officer, Chair of LSC or Chair of the Trust Board (as relevant) may at any time inform the complainant that the complaints procedure has been exhausted and has come to an end by reason of the conduct of the complainant. The complainant will be informed of the next steps in section 1

In all cases we will write to tell the complainant why we believe his or her behaviour is unacceptable or unreasonably persistent, what action we are taking and the duration of that action.

We may take the decision not to respond to any further correspondence where:

- we have taken every reasonable step to address the complainant's concerns
- the complainant has been given a clear statement of our position and their options and the complainant contacts us repeatedly, making substantially the same points each time.

The case for ceasing further correspondence is stronger where:

- letters, emails, or telephone calls are often or always abusive or aggressive or make insulting personal comments about or threats towards staff
- we have reason to believe the complainant is contacting us with the intention of causing disruption or inconvenience.

Where the behaviour is so extreme that it threatens the safety and wellbeing of staff, members of the local governing committee or trustees, we will consider other options, for example reporting the matter to the police or taking legal action. In such cases, we may not give the complainant prior warning of that action.

10 How to raise a complaint

Complaints about schools:

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 of the complainant if they have appropriate consent to do so. Ideally, complaints should be made in writing, using the complaints form set out in Appendix 2. If you require help in completing the form, please contact the school office. You can also ask third party organizations like the Citizens Advice to help you.

Concerns should be raised with either the class teacher or Head Teacher. If the issue remains unresolved, the next step is to make a formal complaint.

Complainants should not approach individual Members of the LSC 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 Stage 3 of the procedure.

Complaints against school staff (except the Head Teacher) should be made in the first instance to the Head Teacher via the school office. Complaints should be made in writing and marked as "Private and Confidential".

Complaints that involve or are about the Head Teacher should be addressed to the Chair of the LSC, via the school office. Complaints should be made in writing and marked as "Private and Confidential".

Complaints about the Chair of the LSC or any individual member of the LSC should be addressed to the Clerk to the LSC, via the school office. Complaints should be made in writing and marked as "Private and Confidential".

Complaints about the Trust/CEO

If your concern relates to the running or organization of the Trust, please direct it to the Chief Executive Officer (CEO). This concern will be dealt with in an informal way, involving others as necessary, and the CEO may delegate the matter to staff as appropriate and depending on the nature of the concern. If after this informal process has concluded you are still not satisfied, you can lodge a formal complaint which should be addressed to the CEO.

If your concern or complaint relates to the CEO it should be addressed to the Chair of Trustees.

Both the CEO and Chair of Trustees can be contacted via the Trust central office:

The Oak Partnership
 Selworthy Special School
 Hazelbrook Campus
 Lyngford Road
 Taunton
 Somerset
 TA2 7EG

Your complaint should be made in writing, preferably using the template form within this Complaints Policy.

11 The Three Stage Complaints Procedure

Stage 1	
Complaints about Schools	Complaints about the Trust/CEO
<p>Complaint heard by staff member or the Head Teacher</p> <p>It is in everyone’s interest that complaints are resolved at the earliest possible stage. The experience of the first contact between the complainant and the school or the Trust can be crucial in determining whether the complaint will escalate.</p> <p>Therefore, staff will be made aware of the procedures and know what to do when they receive a complaint. It is of paramount importance that the complainant is listened to and taken seriously. Complaints will escalate if the person complaining feels humiliated, marginalized or that their concern has been minimised.</p> <p>Some complainants will find completing a written complaint difficult. When requested, the school or Trust will provide assistance or accept a complaint in person or by telephone, and record this for the complainant on the complaints form.</p> <p>Every complaint will be considered objectively and impartially. The school will respect the views of a complainant who indicates that he/she would have difficulty discussing a complaint with a particular member of staff. In these cases, the Head Teacher can refer the complainant to another staff member or will hear the complaint themselves. Where the complaint concerns the Head Teacher, the complainant will be referred to the Chair of the LSC.</p>	<p>A complaint about the running or organisation of the Trust will be investigated by the CEO or a member of staff nominated by them. Where the CEO has delegated the investigation to another individual, the CEO will remain the person with final responsibility for ensuring an investigation is conducted and reported back to the complainant.</p> <p>Complaints about the CEO should be sent to the Chair of Trustees or forwarded to them if received by another member of staff, trustee or governor. When the Chair of Trustees receives a complaint about the CEO, the Clerk to Oak Partnership Trust will be notified to administer the complaint process.</p> <p>The investigation of the complaint may be conducted by a trustee appointed by the Chair, or by an independent investigator if the content requires this. Any investigation undertaken by an independent investigator would report back to the nominated trustee for action. The trustee will then report the findings and any recommendations back to the complainant. The Chair of Trustees will also receive a copy of the findings and recommendations and ensure that any lessons are learnt from the complaint.</p> <p>As is the case with any member of the Trust staff, if the complaint concerns a matter which should be properly dealt with using a different process, for example the Grievance or Disciplinary Procedure, this will be implemented and concluded before the complaint process is concluded. In this instance the complainant will</p>

<p>Note that all complaints start at Stage 1 and progress through each stage in turn and this applies to those complaints which will be heard by the Headteacher or by the Chair of the LSC, if they concern the Head Teacher.</p> <p>Where the first approach is made to a member of the LSC, the next step would be to refer the complainant to the appropriate staff member and provide advice about the procedure for making a complaint. LSC members will not act unilaterally on an individual complaint outside the formal procedure or be involved in the early stages, in case they are needed to sit on a panel at a later stage.</p> <p>At Stage 1 and Stage 2 the Head Teacher or the Chair of the LSC can delegate the investigation to another member of staff or to a specialist, depending on the circumstances. Where this is done, the Head Teacher or the Chair of the LSC will remain the person with final responsibility for ensuring an investigation is conducted and reported back to the complainant.</p> <p>Following a review of the complaint, a written response will be provided.</p>	<p>be informed that appropriate action is being taken, but they will not receive the detail of this, as this is confidential.</p>
Stage 2	
Complaints about Schools	Complaints about the Trust/CEO
<p>Complaint heard by the Head Teacher, or Chair of the LSC (if already heard by Head Teacher)</p> <p>The Head Teacher's influence will already have shaped the way complaints are handled in the school. If the complainant was dissatisfied with the way the complaint was handled at Stage 1 by a member of staff, the Head Teacher will hear and investigate the complaint. The Head Teacher can delegate the task of collating information about the complaint to another staff member, but not the decision or any action to be taken.</p> <p>If the Head Teacher has heard the complaint at Stage 1, then the Chair of the LSC will hear the complaint at Stage 2. The complainant will write to the Chair of the LSC giving details of the complaint. This will be investigated and the Chair will write to the complainant.</p> <p>Should the complainant still not be satisfied, he/she may ask for the matter to be referred to Stage 3. Where there are specific reasons to do so, the investigation of a complaint at</p>	<p>Where a complaint about the Trust has been investigated by the CEO, or nominated staff, at Stage 1 and remains unresolved, the complainant can escalate the complaint to Stage 2 where the Chair of the Trust Board or another trustee nominated by the Chair will conduct the subsequent Stage 2 investigation.</p> <p>If a complainant wishes to escalate to stage 2, they should inform the Clerk to The Oak Partnership Trust.</p> <p>Where a complaint about the CEO is unresolved at Stage 1, the Stage 2 process will be undertaken by the Chair of Trustees. In the case of complaints which have required specialist investigation at Stage 1, a second suitable independent specialist investigator may be used at Stage 2. Where this is used the Chair of Trustees remains the person who is responsible for reporting the findings and recommendations to the complainant and ensures lessons are learnt by the Trust.</p>

<p>Stage 2 can be undertaken by a Trust employee, but the responsibility for replying to the complaint remains with the Chair of the LSC.</p> <p>If at this stage the Head Teacher has heard and investigated the complaint and the complainant remains dissatisfied, the Chair of the LSC could act informally to try and resolve the complaint before the matter is escalated to a Stage 3 complaints panel. Any informal action taken does not remove the right of the complainant to ask for Stage 3 but may resolve the issue without the need for a Stage 3 panel. Such informal action can only be undertaken with the explicit agreement of the complainant.</p>	
Stage 3	
Complaints about Schools	Complaints about the Trust/ CEO
<p>The complainant will write to the clerk to the LSC giving details of the complaint and asking that it is put before the complaints panel.</p> <p>The complaints panel is the last stage of the complaints process and is not convened to rubber-stamp previous decisions. The Chair, or if the Chair has been involved at any previous stage in the process, a nominated member of the LSC, will convene a complaints panel.</p> <p>The panel will consist of one member from another Trust school's LSC, one Trust appointed member (who could be a trustee or a member from another Trust school, but not a Trust employee) and an independent person (who has no formal links to the Trust). The panel cannot be made up solely of LSC members because they are not independent of the management and running of the school. Individual complaints would not be heard by the whole LSC at any stage, as this would compromise the impartiality of any complaints panel or a panel set up for a disciplinary hearing against a member of staff following a serious complaint.</p> <p>The independent person will be sourced with help from the Trust central team. The independent person would not be an employee of Oak Partnership Trust.</p> <p>The complainant must be allowed to attend the panel meeting to present their evidence and be accompanied if they wish, however, they will not be able to be present for the whole hearing – specifically other evidence and panel deliberations. The complainant, subject of the complaint and any potential witnesses will not</p>	<p>Should the complainant still not be satisfied, he/she may ask for the matter to be referred to Stage 3.</p> <p>To escalate to Stage 3 the complainant should write to the clerk to the LSC giving details of the complaint and asking that it is put before the complaints panel.</p> <p>The complaints panel is the last stage of the complaints process and is not convened to rubber-stamp previous decisions</p> <p>The panel will also not review any new complaints at this stage or consider evidence unrelated to the initial complaint. New complaints must be dealt with from Stage 1 of the procedure.</p> <p>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.</p> <p>Where the panel is convened to answer a complaint made about the Trust, the panel will consist of two trustees, both of whom have had no involvement with the complaint, and one person who is independent of the management and running of the Trust.</p> <p>A panel to hear a complaint about the CEO will comprise a trustee, who has had no involvement with the complaint matter, an</p>

<p>be in the hearing at the same time.</p> <p>The complainant 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 panel hearing. However, there may be occasions when legal representation is appropriate.</p> <p>For instance, if a school employee is called as a witness in a complaint meeting, they may wish to be supported by union and/or legal representation.</p> <p>Representatives from the media are not permitted to attend.</p> <p>Any written material will be circulated to all parties before the date of the meeting. The panel will not normally accept, as evidence, recordings of conversations that were obtained covertly and without the informed consent of all parties being recorded.</p> <p>The panel 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.</p> <p>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.</p> <p>The panel will consider the complaint and all the evidence presented. The panel can:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • uphold the complaint in whole or in part • dismiss the complaint in whole or in part. <p>If the complaint is upheld in whole or in part, the panel will:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 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. <p>The Chair of the panel will provide the complainant and the school with a full explanation of their decision and the reason(s) for it, in writing, within thirty school days.</p> <p>The letter to the complainant will include details of how to contact the Education, Skills and Funding Agency (ESFA) if they are dissatisfied with the way their complaint has been handled</p>	<p>independent person and a Trust appointed person. The Chair of Trustees and the Clerk to Oak Partnership will work together to appoint the panel for a complaint against the CEO. The panel will choose their own Chair.</p> <p>The complainant must be allowed to attend the panel meeting to present their evidence and be accompanied if they wish, however, they will not be able to be present for the whole hearing – specifically other evidence and panel deliberations. The complainant, subject of the complaint and any potential witnesses will not be in the hearing at the same time.</p> <p>The complainant 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 panel hearing. However, there may be occasions when legal representation is appropriate. For instance, if a Trust employee is called as a witness in a complaint meeting, they may wish to be supported by union and/or legal representation. Representatives from the media are not permitted to attend.</p> <p>Any written material will be circulated to all parties before the date of the meeting. The panel will not normally accept, as evidence, recordings of conversations that were obtained covertly.</p> <p>The Chair of the panel will provide the complainant and the Trust with a full explanation of their decision and the reason(s) for it, in writing, within thirty school days.</p> <p>If the complaint is upheld in whole or in part, the panel will:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • decide on the appropriate action to be taken to resolve the complaint • where appropriate, recommend changes to systems or procedures to prevent similar issues in the future. <p>The letter to the complainant will include details of how to contact the Education, Skills and Funding Agency (ESFA) if they are dissatisfied with the way their complaint has been handled by the Trust.</p>
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12 Roles and Responsibilities at Complaints Committee (Stage 3)

The Role of the Clerk

Any panel or group of governors considering complaints will be clerked. The clerk would be the contact point for the complainant and be required to:

- set the date, time and venue of the hearing, ensuring that the dates are convenient to all parties and that the venue and proceedings are accessible;
- collate any written material and send it to the parties in advance of the hearing;
- meet and welcome the parties as they arrive at the hearing for their slot;
- minute the proceedings;
- notify all parties of the panel's decision.

The Role of the Chair of the Panel

The Chair of the Panel has a key role, ensuring that:

- the remit of the panel is explained to the parties and each party has the opportunity of putting their case without undue interruption;
 - the issues are addressed;
- key findings of fact are made;
- parents and others who may not be used to speaking at such a hearing are put at ease;
- the hearing is conducted in an informal manner with each party treating the other with respect and courtesy;
- the panel is open minded and acting independently;
- no member of the panel has a vested interest in the outcome of the proceedings or any involvement in an earlier stage of the procedure;
- each side is given the opportunity to state their case and ask questions;
- they write a letter to the complainant with the outcome of the hearing;
- written material is seen by all parties

The chair of the panel needs to ensure that the complainant is notified of the panel's decision, in writing, with the panel's response; no more than 30 days after the hearing. The letter needs to explain if there are any further rights of appeal and, if so, to whom they need to be addressed.

13 Next Steps

If the complainant believes the Academy 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 law, they can contact the ESFA after they have completed Stage 3.

The ESFA will not normally reinvestigate the substance of complaints or overturn any decisions made by The Oak Partnership Trust. Their responsibility is to ensure academies comply with their funding agreements. They will consider whether The Oak Partnership Trust has adhered to legislation and any statutory policies connected with the complaint and where they feel that the Trust has not dealt with the complaint properly they will request that the complaint is looked at again.

If the Trust's procedure does not meet regulations, they will ask the school to put this right and will enforce this request under the terms of the funding agreement.

The complainant can refer their complaint to the ESFA online enquiry form "Complain about an

Academy" and tick the box that says complaint. Or in writing to:

ESFA Complaints
Chief Executive's Office
Cheylesmore House
Quinton Road
Coventry CV1 2Wf

14 Appendix 1- Exclusions from Complaints Policy

Excluded Matters	Signposting
Admissions	The process for challenging admissions decisions is set out in our admissions policy in accordance with relevant statutory guidance.
Child protection matters	Complaints about child protection matters are handled under our child protection and safeguarding policy and in accordance with relevant statutory guidance. 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).
Exclusions	The process for challenging exclusions decisions is set out in the DfE's statutory guidance and information can be found at School suspensions and permanent exclusions - GOV.UK (www.gov.uk)
National Curriculum content	Please contact the Department for Education at www.education.gov.uk/contactus
School re-organisation proposals	Where concerns are not adequately addressed by the trust, complaints can be raised direct with the Department for Education.
Complaints about services provided by other providers who may use school premises or facilities	Providers should have their own complaints procedure to deal with complaints about service. Please contact them direct.
Staff grievances	Complaints from staff will be dealt with under the school's internal grievance procedures.
Staff conduct	Certain complaints about staff may need to be dealt with under the school's internal disciplinary procedures, if appropriate. 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.
Statutory assessments of Special Educational Needs (SEN)	Concerns about statutory assessments of special educational needs should be raised direct with the local authority.
Whistleblowing	We have an internal whistleblowing procedure for all our employees, including temporary staff and contractors. The Secretary of State for Education is the prescribed person for whistleblowers in education who do not want to raise matters direct with their employer. Referrals can be made at: www.education.gov.uk/contactus Volunteer staff who have concerns should complain through the school's complaints procedure. You may also be able to complain direct to the Department for Education (see link above), depending on the substance of the complaint
<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.</p> <p>If a complainant commences legal action against The Oak Partnership Trust 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.</p>	

15 Appendix 2- Complaint Form

Your name:
Pupil(s) name:
Your relationship to pupil (s):
Your address and postcode:
Your daytime telephone number:
Your evening telephone number:
Your email address:
Date incident causing complaint occurred:
Your complaint is: (if you have more than one complaint, please number these)
What action have you already taken to try and resolve your complaint(s)? (Who did you speak to and what was the response?)

What would you like as an outcome from your complaint(s)?

Are you attaching paperwork? If so, give us details here:

Signature:

Name:

Date:

Official use

Date acknowledgement sent:

By whom:

Complaint referred to:

Date:

16 Appendix 3- Examples of Unreasonable Behaviour

These are behaviours that we consider to be unreasonable complainant behaviour:

- 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
- seeks an unrealistic outcome, such as the inappropriate dismissal of staff
- 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
- knowingly provides falsified information
- publishes unacceptable information on social media or other public forums
- seeks to re-open complaints or progress concerns that have previously not been escalated by the complainant within the timescales provided and which are regarded as withdrawn or settled.
- where the complainant's complaint is clearly frivolous, vexatious and/or has patently insufficient grounds. The Office of the Independent Adjudicator defines the characteristics of a 'frivolous' or 'vexatious' complaint as: complaints which are obsessive, persistent, harassing, prolific, repetitious
- insistence upon pursuing unmeritorious complaints and/or unrealistic outcomes beyond all reason
- insistence upon pursuing meritorious complaints in an unreasonable manner
- complaints which are designed to cause disruption or annoyance
- demands for redress that lack any serious purpose or value
- where the complainant's complaint is the same, similar to or based on the same facts of a complaint which has already been considered in full.

17 Appendix 4- Complaints Procedure Summary

Note: Timescales and specific detail in Complaints Policy

