



Complaints Procedure Policy

We monitor the impact of all policies on pupils, staff, parents and trustees with particular reference to the impact on the progress and wellbeing of pupils. As a community school we believe that our policy should reflect our ethos, which calls us to strive for 'excellence through endeavour'.

Responsibility	Pupils, Parents and Community Committee	
Status	Statutory	
Ratification date	09 10 2018	
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Reference	021/2	

The school has a detailed Risk Register which the Governing Body uses to monitor and measure the impact of its decisions as well as informing its planning. To ensure that Risk Management permeates the working of the Governing Body, this policy is referenced in the Risk Register and the committee responsible for the policy should consider the "likeliness" and "impact" level for the appropriate risks

Contents	
1 Introduction	3
2 School vision	3
3 Framework of principles	3
4 Definition of a complaint	4
5 Definition of a complainant	4
6 Investigating complaints	4
7 Complaints Records	5
8 School contact for complaints	5
8.1 Contact details	5
9 PART A	5
9.1 Complaining about the actions of a member of staff other than the Head Teacher	5
9.1.1 STAGE 1 - Informal Stage	5
9.1.2 STAGE 2 - Formal Stage	6
9.1.3 Stage 3 – Formal: Complaint heard by governing body review panel	6
10 Part B	8
10.1 Complaining about the actions of the Head Teacher	8
10.1.1 STAGE 1 - Informal stage: Complaint heard by the Head Teacher	8
10.1.2 STAGE 2 – Formal: Complaint heard by the Chair of Governors	8
10.1.3 STAGE 3 – Formal: Complaint heard by Governing Body review panel	9
11 Part C Formal Review Process	9
11.1 STAGE 3 – Formal: Complaint heard by Governing Body’s review panel	9
12 Further Stages	9
12.1 Referral to the Secretary of State	10
12.2 Complaining to Ofsted	10
12.2.1 Following a complaint to Ofsted	10
13 Statutory and established procedures	10
14 Timescales	11
15 Unreasonable complaints	11
16 Complaints not in scope of the procedure	12
17 ANNEX A	13
17.1 School Complaint Form	13
18 ANNEX B	15
A summary of dealing with complaints – three stage approach	15
19 ANNEX C	15
19.1 Serial and Persistent Complainants	16
19.1.1 Is it time to stop responding?	16
20 ANNEX D	18
20.1 Policy for Unreasonable Complainants	18
20.2 Barring from the School Premises	19

1 Introduction

This policy reflects the non-statutory guidance in the DfE document: Best Practice Advice for School Complaints Procedures 2016 - <https://goo.gl/d948ds>. (NB any italicised text in this policy is directly from the DfE advice)

The prime concerns of the school's Governors and the Head Teacher are the education and wellbeing of our students. To support this, our aim is to work in partnership with parents and the wider community. It is based on the belief that cooperation and a sense of joint purpose between staff, parents/carers and the school as a whole will assist in ensuring open and positive relationships.

However, even with goodwill on both sides, some concerns are not sorted out easily. It is for this reason that schools have a complaints procedure.

The aim of our procedure is that complaints, whether from staff, students or members of the public, may be resolved as promptly and amicably as possible.

2 School vision

All governors and staff will strive to ensure that all pupils are valued as individuals, who are recognised for their talents, fully included within the school community and provided with every opportunity to achieve 'excellence'. We expect all pupils to emerge as confident, resilient individuals, who can build positive relationships and demonstrate commitment in everything they do.

Pupils at RTS will:

- Be confident and happy individuals who can build positive relationships with others and work purposefully towards achieving their very best at all times.
- Possess the knowledge, communication and technical skills necessary for success as they move into further education and the workplace.
- Have the motivation to work independently and conscientiously to achieve qualifications that reflect their full ability.
- Become lifelong learners with an insatiable curiosity about the world around them and a shared responsibility for their peers, the environment and wider society.

3 Framework of principles

Our complaints procedure:

- encourages resolution of problems by informal means wherever possible;
- is easily accessible and publicised;
- is simple to understand and use;
- is impartial;
- is non-adversarial;
- allows for swift handling with established time-limits for action and keeping people informed of the progress;
- ensures a full and fair investigation by an independent person where necessary;
- respects people's desire for confidentiality;
- addresses all the points at issue and provides an effective response and appropriate redress, where necessary;
- provides information to the school's senior management team so that practices can be improved;
- ensures procedures are without prejudice, and respects all equality and disability rights.

4 Definition of a complaint

A school complaint is any communication received by a person or persons with a legitimate interest in the school which expresses dissatisfaction about the standards of teaching of the teaching staff, or about the conduct, actions or omissions of members of the teaching or support staff employed at the school.

A complaint against the school does not include matters where statutory procedures exist, these include:

- admissions to community schools
- exclusions from schools and pupil referral units
- special education provision
- school organisation
- complaints by school staff or prospective staff
- education staff and child protection
- public examination administration
- schools records on individual students.

(NB: A concern is the raising of a potential issue that is an expression of some worry or apprehension).

5 Definition of a complainant

A complainant is someone:

- who allegedly has been wronged;
- whose child(ren) has allegedly been wronged (parent or carers or other person with parental responsibility); or
- someone representing a person in one of the above groups, for example a councillor.

Where a complainant is a student under the age of 18 years, the complaint may be pursued only by the child's parent or carer, or by some person who both has the express consent of the student or carer and is acting on their behalf.

6 Investigating complaints

All persons investigating any complaints will ensure at each stage that they:

1. establish what has happened so far, and who has been involved;
2. clarify the nature of the complaint and what remains unresolved;
3. meet with the complainant or contact them (if unsure or further information is necessary);
4. clarify what the complainant feels would put things right;
5. interview those involved in the matter and/or those complained of, allowing them to be accompanied if they wish;
6. conduct the interview with an open mind and be prepared to persist in the questioning; and
7. keep notes of the interview.

7 Complaints Records

A copy of all complaints received in writing will be kept in a central electronic folder on the school shared drive. A copy of all responses will be placed in the same folder. The owner of the Complaints folder is **Ms Wright**, the complaints co-ordinator.

8 School contact for complaints

The School reserves the right to nominate one member of staff as the sole point of contact for any complaint in order to ensure clear communication throughout the process.

8.1 Contact details

School telephone:	0208 891 2985	
School email:	info@rts.richmond.sch.uk	
Head Teacher	Ms K Dooley Info@rts.richmond.sch.uk	school telephone
Chair of Governors	Ms S Bhatt clerk@rts.richmond.sch.uk	school telephone
Complaints Co-ordinator	Ms P Wright Info@rts.richmond.sch.uk	school telephone

9 PART A

9.1 Complaining about the actions of a member of staff other than the Head Teacher

9.1.1 STAGE 1 - Informal Stage

If you have a concern or a complaint you should make contact with the person(s) concerned. This may be done by telephone, in writing or in person. You may use the complaint form attached to this policy **Annex A**. You may wish to take a friend with you when you meet with the school if you feel it would help you.

Our aim at this stage is that by careful listening, constructive discussion and sensible actions we can work together to solve problems and so improve the school. If further clarification is required the school staff member will investigate your complaint and give you a response, making clear any action or monitoring of a situation that may be necessary to ensure a positive outcome.

An unreasonable refusal to attempt an informal resolution may result in the procedure being terminated.

9.1.2 STAGE 2 - Formal Stage

If no satisfactory solution to the complaint has been reached, you must put your complaint in writing to the Head Teacher who will investigate the complaint on your behalf.

The Head Teacher would normally be informed of any complaint even when s/he is not dealing with it his/herself.

The Head Teacher will collect evidence, as s/he deems necessary. Where this involves an interview with a member of staff who is the subject of the complaint, a friend or representative may accompany that member of staff if they wish.

The investigation will begin as soon as possible and when it has been concluded, you and the member of staff concerned will be informed in writing of the outcome. This may be to the effect that:

- There is insufficient evidence to reach a conclusion, so the complaint cannot be upheld; or
- The complaint is not substantiated by the evidence; or
- The complaint is substantiated in part or in full.

Should the complaint be upheld any written note of the outcome may contain one or more of the following:

- an apology;
- an explanation;
- an admission that the situation could have been handled differently or better;
- an assurance that the event complained of will not recur;
- an explanation of the steps that have been taken to ensure that it will not happen again; or
- an undertaking to review school policies in light of the complaint.

You will be informed that consideration of your complaint by the Head Teacher is now concluded.

Details of the investigation or of any disciplinary procedures will not be released.

If you are not happy with the manner in which the process has been followed, you may request that the governing body review the process followed by the Head Teacher in handling the complaint. Any such request must be made in writing to the Chair of Governors within two weeks of receiving notice of the outcome from the Head Teacher, and include a statement specifying any perceived failures to follow our procedure. **The procedure in Part C will be followed.**

If you do not agree with the decision of the Head Teacher or you believe that the Head Teacher has acted unreasonably in considering your complaint, then you may bring a complaint against the Head Teacher **(following the procedure detailed in part B of this policy).**

9.1.3 Stage 3 – Formal: Complaint heard by governing body review panel

If you remain dissatisfied with the way in which the process has been followed/or the outcome, you may request the governing body to review the process followed by the Head Teacher in the handling of the complaint.

Any such request must be made in writing within two weeks of receiving notice of the outcome from the Head Teacher, and include a statement specifying any perceived failures to follow the procedure.

The procedure outlined in Part C – Stage 3 should be followed.

10 Part B

10.1 Complaining about the actions of the Head Teacher

10.1.1 STAGE 1 - Informal stage: Complaint heard by the Head Teacher

At this early stage it is usually expected that you would speak directly with the Head Teacher. Many concerns can be resolved by a simple clarification or by the provision of information. Should the matter not be resolved and with both parties' agreement, a third party may be invited to act as a mediator at a further meeting. A refusal, unreasonably, to attempt an informal resolution may result in the procedure being terminated. A friend or representative may accompany you at this meeting.

In the case of serious concerns, it would be appropriate to raise them directly with the Chair of the governing body, (**following the procedure detailed in Part B – stage 2 of this policy**).

10.1.2 STAGE 2 – Formal: Complaint heard by the Chair of Governors

If your complaint is not resolved at the informal stage as above, you must put your complaint in writing and pass it to the Chair of Governors who will be responsible for its investigation. The Chair may nominate another member of the Governing Body to conduct the investigation. Please address your complaint to the Chair using the school's address. The Chair of Governor's details and the school's full postal address can be found on the school website: <http://www.richmonduponthameschool.org.uk/contact>

You should include details that might help the investigation, such as names of potential witnesses, dates and times of events, copies of relevant documents. You may be invited to meet with the Chair or nominee to present or discuss your evidence or to clarify your complaint.

The Chair or nominee will then collect any other evidence they think is necessary. This may include the interviewing of witnesses and others who may provide relevant information.

The Head Teacher will be provided with a copy of the complaint and any additional evidence presented by you or collected by the Chair.

Once there has been an opportunity for the Head Teacher to consider the complaint, s/he will be invited to meet separately with the Chair to present written and oral evidence in response. A friend or representative may accompany the Head Teacher at this meeting.

The investigation will begin as soon as possible and when it has been concluded, you and the Head Teacher will be informed in writing of the outcome. This may be to the effect that:

- there is insufficient evidence to reach a conclusion, so the complaint cannot be upheld;
- the concern is not substantiated by the evidence
- the concern was substantiated in part or in full. Some details may then be given of action the school may be taking to review procedures, but details of the investigation or of any disciplinary or capability action will not be released
- the matter has been fully investigated and appropriate procedures are being followed which are strictly confidential (for example, where staff disciplinary procedures are followed).

You will be informed that consideration of your complaint by the Chair has now been concluded.

10.1.3 STAGE 3 – Formal: Complaint heard by Governing Body review panel

If you remain dissatisfied with the way in which the process has been followed/or the outcome, you may request the governing body review the process followed by the Chair of Governors in the handling of the complaint.

Any such request must be made in writing within two weeks of receiving notice of the outcome from the Chair, and include a statement specifying any perceived failures to follow procedure.

The procedure outline in Part C – Stage 3 should then be followed.

11 Part C Formal Review Process

11.1 STAGE 3 – Formal: Complaint heard by Governing Body’s review panel

Any review of the process followed by the Head Teacher or the Chair will be conducted by a panel of at least three members of the governing body.

The panel can:

- dismiss your complaint in whole or in part;
- uphold your complaint in whole or in part;
- decide on the appropriate action to be taken to resolve the complaint; or
- recommend changes to the school’s systems or procedures to ensure that problems or a similar nature do not recur.

The review will normally be conducted by considering written submissions, but reasonable requests to make oral representations will also be considered.

The panel will first receive your written evidence.

The panel will then invite the Head Teacher or the Chair, as appropriate, to make a response to your complaint.

The panel may also have access to the records kept of the process followed.

You will not be entitled to access any details of the investigation except for any statements that may have been provided by your child. Any information relating to the application of disciplinary procedures is strictly confidential.

You, and the Head Teacher or the Chair, as appropriate, will be informed in writing of the outcome. This may be to the effect that:

- there is insufficient evidence to reach a conclusion, so your complaint cannot be upheld;
- the concern is not substantiated by the evidence;
- the concern was substantiated in part or in full but that the procedural failure did not affect the outcome significantly so that matter is now closed; or
- the concern was substantiated in part or in full and the governing body will take steps to prevent a recurrence or to rectify the situation (where this is possible).

12 Further Stages

12.1 Referral to the Secretary of State

You do not have a general right of appeal should you disagree with the Governors' decision. You may, however, raise the matter with the Secretary of State for Children, Families and Schools, if you consider the governing body is acting 'unreasonably', or is failing to carry out its statutory duties properly. If the Governors have followed a proper procedure and considered the complaint reasonably the Secretary of State cannot overturn the decision.

The governing body must give full consideration to any recommendations or directions the Secretary of State may make.

12.2 Complaining to Ofsted

As well as inspecting schools and monitoring how they perform, Ofsted also consider complaints if they affect the school as a whole. For example:

- the school is not providing a good enough education;
- the students are not achieving as much as they should, or their different needs are not being met;
- the school is not well led and managed, or is wasting money or
- the students' personal development and wellbeing are being neglected
- Safety including bullying.

12.2.1 Following a complaint to Ofsted

If requested to do so, the governing body must provide Ofsted with any information specified by Ofsted that the school holds and any other information that the school considers to be relevant to the investigation of the complaint.

If, for the purpose of an investigation, Ofsted considers it appropriate to meet with you, the governing body must cooperate with Ofsted to arrange the meeting, including allowing a meeting to take place on school premises, fixing a date for the meeting and notifying you and the LA of the meeting. A representative of the governing body and the LA may also attend the meeting.

If Ofsted prepares a report of an investigation, that report must be passed to the governing body. The governing body must then send a copy of the Ofsted report to all registered parents.

13 Statutory and established procedures

The following list, specified in the Education Reform Act (1988), outlines areas that are currently the responsibility of the LA to ensure complaints are fully investigated and given proper consideration:

- the provision of a curriculum, including religious education and worship, which meets the general requirements of Sections 1 and 2 of the Act;
- the implementation of the National Curriculum and compliance with Orders and Regulations made about its requirements and exceptions to its provision (Sections 4, 10 and 17);
- provision to students of compulsory school age of courses leading to an external qualification, only if that qualification and the associated syllabus or syllabus criteria have been approved (Section 5);
- provision of religious education and worship as required by the Act and other enactments (Sections 6-10 and 12);
- in the case of an LA, establishment of a Standing Advisory Council on Religious Education (SACRE) and review of the agreed syllabus for the area if the SACRE so requires (section 11);

- the need to act reasonably in deciding whether or not to be associated with an application for exemption from all or part of the National Curriculum in order to carry out developmental work (Section 16);
- in the case of a governing body, consideration of appeals by parents about the temporary withdrawal of students from part or all of the provisions of the National Curriculum (Section 19);
- operation of charging policies in relation to the curriculum (Section 109);
- compliance with regulations about the provision of the information (section 22); and o compliance with any other enactments relating to the curriculum.

14 Timescales

It is recommended that the following time limits should apply to all complaints handled under the school's complaints procedure:

- The Complainant has 3 months to lodge their complaint from the time of the incident which triggered their complaint
- The expectation from the school is that all stages of the process will be dealt with as promptly as possible.

Timescales outlined below are the maximum time that could be taken.

Stage 1 - Informal	It is reasonable that parents seeking to resolve issues should receive a response within 20 working days of making initial contact, unless there is a good reason not to do so.	The response should offer the complainant a full explanation, or set out the steps that are proposed to resolve the complaint.
Stage 2 - Formal	Review by Head Teacher or Chair of Governors. Should be responded to in 30 working days .	
Stage 3 - Formal	Review by governing body panel Should be responded to in 30 working days .	The longer time limit for Stage 3 reflects the fact that these complaints may be complex and therefore likely to take longer to resolve. Where it is not possible to respond to complaints within these timescales, the complainant should be informed in writing of the reason for the delay and given an anticipated response date.

15 Unreasonable complaints

Where a complainant raises an issue that has already been dealt with via the school's complaints procedure, and that procedure has been exhausted, the school will not re-investigate the complaint except in exceptional circumstances, for example where new evidence has come to light.

16 Complaints not in scope of the procedure

A complaints procedure should cover all complaints about any provision of facilities or services that a school provides with the **exceptions** listed below, for which there are separate (statutory) procedures.

Exceptions	Who to contact?
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Admissions to schools ● Statutory assessments of Special Educational Needs (SEN) ● School reorganisation proposals ● Matters likely to require a Child Protection Investigation 	<p>Concerns should be raised direct with local authorities (LA).</p> <p>For school admissions, it will depend on who is the admission authority (either the school or the LA).</p> <p>Complaints about admission appeals for maintained schools are dealt with by the Local Government Ombudsman.</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Exclusion of children from school 	<p>Further information about raising concerns about exclusion can be found at: www.gov.uk/school-discipline-exclusions/exclusions</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Whistleblowing 	<p>Schools have an internal whistleblowing procedure for their employees and voluntary staff.</p> <p>This can be found on the school's website.</p> <p>Other concerns can be raised direct with Ofsted by telephone on: 0300 123 3155, via email at: whistleblowing@ofsted.gov.uk or by writing to: WBHL, Ofsted Piccadilly Gate Store Street Manchester M1 2WD.</p> <p>The Department for Education is also a prescribed body for whistleblowing in education.</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Staff grievances and disciplinary procedure 	<p>These matters will invoke the school's internal grievance procedures. Complainants will not be informed of the outcome of any investigation.</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Complaints about services provided by other providers who may use school premises or facilities. 	<p>Providers should have their own complaints procedure to deal with complaints about service. They should be contacted direct.</p>
<p>From Best Practice Advice for School Complaints Procedures 2016</p>	

17.1 School Complaint Form

Please complete this form and return it to Head Teacher or Clerk to Governing Body, who will acknowledge its receipt and inform you of the next stage in the procedure.

Your name

.....

Relationship with the school (e.g. Parent of a child on the school's roll)

.....

Student's name (if relevant to your complaint)

.....

Your address

Your telephone number

Daytime

.....

.....

Evening

.....

.....

.....

Please give concise details of your complaint, (including dates, names of witnesses etc), to allow the matter to be fully investigated:

You may continue on separate paper, or attach additional paperwork, if you wish.

Number of additional pages attached =

What action, if any, have you already taken to try to resolve your complaint? (i.e. who have you spoken with or written to and what was the outcome?)

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

Signature

Date

School use:	
Date form received:	
Received by:	
Date acknowledgement sent:	
Acknowledgement sent by:	
Complaint referred to Date:	

A summary of dealing with complaints – three stage approach

1. Complaint heard by staff member

- Ensure complaints co-ordinator informed of outcome
- Complainant is encouraged to speak directly with the member of staff concerned or the Head Teacher

Issue resolved	Issue not resolved
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2. Complaint heard by Head Teacher or Chair of Governors

- Acknowledge receipt of written complaint
- Write to complainant with outcome of the investigation
- Ensure complaints co-ordinator informed of outcome

Issue resolved	Issue not resolved
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3. Governors' review of process followed by Chairman of Governors

- Consideration of written submissions by panel of three members of the governing body
- Written submissions are considered
- Written evidence is considered from the complainant
- Complainant, Head Teacher or the Chair, as appropriate, informed in writing of the outcome
- Ensure complaints co-ordinator informed of outcome

19 ANNEX C

(From Best Practice Advice for School Complaints Procedures 2016)

19.1 Serial and Persistent Complainants

Schools should do their best to be helpful to people who contact them with a complaint or concern or a request for information. However, in cases where a school is contacted repeatedly by an individual making the same points, or who asks them to reconsider their position, schools will need to act appropriately.

There will be occasions when, despite all stages of the complaint procedure having been followed, the complainant remains dissatisfied. It is important for schools to recognise when they really have done everything they can in response to a complaint. It is a poor use of schools' time and resources to reply to repeated letters, emails or telephone calls making substantially the same points. If a complainant tries to re-open the same issue, the Chair of Governors can inform them that the procedure has been completed and that the matter is now closed.

If the complainant contacts the school again on the same issue, then the correspondence may be viewed as 'serial' or 'persistent' and the school may choose not to respond. However, schools must be careful that they do not mark a complaint as 'serial' before the complainant has completed the procedure.

Note: *The Department for Education does not itself use the term 'vexatious' when dealing with serial or persistent correspondents as it could potentially be inflammatory. However, it is a recognised term. In the context of Freedom of Information (FOI) requests, the Upper Tribunal concluded that 'vexatious' could be defined as the '...manifestly unjustified, inappropriate or improper use of a formal procedure.' An exemption therefore exists in Section 14(1) of the Freedom of Information Act 2000. However, this exemption can only be applied to requests themselves, and not the individuals who submit them. More information about dealing with vexatious requests for information is available on the Information Commissioner's Office (ICO) website.*

Under no circumstances should an individual be marked as serial for exercising their democratic right to refer their complaint to their local MP regardless of which stage the complaint has reached. The application of a 'serial or persistent' marking should be against the subject or complaint itself rather than the complainant.

19.1.1 Is it time to stop responding?

The decision to stop responding should never be taken lightly. A school needs to be able to say yes to all of the following:

- *The school has taken every reasonable step to address the complainant's needs;*
- *The complainant has been given a clear statement of the school's position and their options (if any); and*
- *They are contacting the school repeatedly but making substantially the same points each time.*

The case is stronger if the school agrees with one or more of these statements:

- *The school has reason to believe the individual is contacting them with the intention of causing disruption or inconvenience - have they actually said as much in a letter, email or telephone call?*
- *Their letters/emails/telephone calls are often or always abusive or aggressive.*
- *They make insulting personal comments about or threats towards staff.*

Schools should not stop responding just because an individual is difficult to deal with or asks complex questions. In most circumstances the subject matter is what you can refuse to respond to, not the correspondent.

Schools must provide parents with the information they are entitled to under The Education (Pupil Information) (England) Regulations 2005.

However, where an individual's behaviour is causing a significant level of disruption schools may wish to implement a tailored communications strategy such as restricting them to a single point of contact via an email address or by limiting the number of times they make contact; e.g. a fixed number of contacts per term.

Complainants have a right to have any new complaint heard and failure to respond at all to a complainant could mean that the school is failing to comply with its legal obligations. A school needs to ensure that they are acting reasonably and that any genuine complaint can still be heard.

If school staff find it difficult to deal direct with a complainant because of their unreasonable behaviour and other strategies are not working, they may be able to approach the governor services team at their LA to ask for assistance. If this is agreed, complainants can be advised not to contact the school, but to communicate instead with the LA who will coordinate any response. Complainants who may have been restricted in their communications with the school can also be advised to ask a third party to act on their behalf, such as the local Citizens' Advice Bureau. Ultimately, if a complainant persists to the point that the school considers it to constitute harassment, legal advice should be sought as to the next steps. In some cases, injunctions and other court orders have been issued to complainants because of their behaviours.

Different procedures apply to FOI and Data Protection (DP) correspondence. You should talk to your FOI/DP advisor contact about those or approach the ICO for further advice.

Once a school has decided that it is appropriate to stop responding, they will need to let the complainant know; ideally, through a hard copy letter but an email will suffice.

20 ANNEX D

(From Best Practice Advice for School Complaints Procedures 2016)

20.1 Policy for Unreasonable Complainants

The Richmond upon Thames School (RTS) 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 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.

RTS defines unreasonable complainants as ‘those who, because of the frequency or nature of their contacts with the school, hinder our consideration of their or other people’s complaints’.

A complaint may be regarded as unreasonable when the person making the complaint:

- *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 while still wishing their complaint to be resolved;*
- *refuses to accept that certain issues are not within the scope of a complaints procedure;*
- *insists on the complaint being dealt with in ways which are incompatible with the adopted complaints procedure or with good practice;*
- *introduces trivial or irrelevant information which the complainant expects to be taken into account and commented on, or 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, complicated and stressful contact with staff regarding the complaint in person, in writing, by email and by telephone while the complaint is being dealt with.*

A complaint may also be considered unreasonable if the person making the complaint does so either face-to-face, by telephone or in writing or electronically:

- *maliciously;*
- *aggressively;*
- *using threats, intimidation or violence;*
- *using abusive, offensive or discriminatory language;*
- *knowing it to be false;*
- *using falsified information;*
- *publishing unacceptable information in a variety of media such as in social media websites and newspapers.*

Complainants should limit the numbers of communications with a school while a 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 Head Teacher or Chair of Governors will discuss any concerns with the complainant informally before applying an 'unreasonable' marking.

If the behaviour continues the Head Teacher will write to the complainant explaining that their behaviour is unreasonable and asking them to change it. For complainants who excessively contact RTS causing a significant level of disruption, we may specify methods of communication and limit the number of contacts in a communication plan. This will usually be reviewed after 6 months.

In response to any serious incident of aggression or violence, the concerns and actions taken will be put in writing immediately and the police informed. This may include banning an individual from RTS.

20.2 Barring from the School Premises

Although fulfilling a public function, schools are private places. The public has no automatic right of entry. Schools will therefore act to ensure they remain a safe place for pupils, staff and other members of their community.

If a parent's behaviour is a cause for concern, a school can ask him/her to leave school premises. In serious cases, the Head Teacher or the local authority can notify them in writing that their implied licence to be on school premises has been temporarily revoked subject to any representations that the parent may wish to make. Schools should always give the parent the opportunity to formally express their views on the decision to bar in writing.

The decision to bar should then be reviewed, taking into account any representations made by the parent, and either confirmed or lifted. If the decision is confirmed the parent should be notified in writing, explaining how long the bar will be in place.

Anyone wishing to complain about being barred can do so, by letter or email, to the Head Teacher or Chair of Governors. However, complaints about barring cannot be escalated to the Department for Education. Once the school's own complaints procedure has been completed, the only remaining avenue of appeal is through the Courts; independent legal advice must therefore be sought.