Bryn Deri Primary School



Unacceptable Actions by Complainants Policy

2025-26

A community developing happy, confident, caring, creative children with a positive attitude to life and learning

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1. Audience

This intended audience for this Policy is any Interested Party of Bryn Deri Primary School that may be/become involved in the complaints process or persistently contact the school or particular members of staff

The School appreciates all feedback, including suggestions, concerns, complaints and compliments. Such feedback is how we know when the School does well, and how we know what we need to improve upon.

2. Purpose

The Head Teacher and Staff deal with complaints as part of their day-to-day management of the School, in accordance with the School's Complaints Policy and Complaints Procedure. The School is committed to addressing all concerns, suggestions and complaints in a timely, fair and respectful manner. The majority of complaints are resolved informally, quickly, sensitively and to the satisfaction of those raising them.

This policy sets out how the School will manage situations where the behaviour of a complainant becomes unreasonable, persistent, or vexatious. Its purpose is to:

- Provide clarity and transparency about what constitutes unacceptable behaviour when engaging with the School, including excessive, aggressive or unreasonable communication;
- Ensure that all complainants are treated fairly and consistently, while maintaining appropriate boundaries to protect the integrity of the complaints process;
- Safeguard the efficient operation of the School, ensuring that time and resources are used effectively and are not disproportionately diverted from the education, wellbeing and safety of pupils;
- Protect the wellbeing, dignity and professional integrity of staff, governors and the wider school community, ensuring they can carry out their roles without undue stress, intimidation or disruption;
- Maintain a balance between the right to raise concerns and the responsibility to do so appropriately, ensuring concerns are heard without causing adverse impact on others;
- Provide a structured and proportionate framework for action, outlining how the School will respond when behaviour falls below expected standards.

While the School recognises and upholds the right of individuals to raise legitimate concerns or complaints, there are occasions when behaviour associated with these becomes unreasonable. In such cases, this policy enables the School to take appropriate action to manage that behaviour, minimise disruption, and ensure that the education and wellbeing of pupils and staff remain the School's priority.

3. Aims

The aims of this Policy are to:

- Uphold the standards of courtesy and reasonableness that should characterize all communication between the School and any Interested person Party or Complainant,
- Support the wellbeing of the children, Staff and Head Teacher, and any other Interested Party, including Governors and parents,

- Deal fairly, honestly, openly and transparently with those who make persistent or vexatious complaints, and those who harass members of Staff in School whilst ensuring that no other stakeholders suffer any detriment.

Neither this Policy nor the corresponding Complaints Procedure will address complaints relating to Child Protection or staff discipline for which specific procedures are in place.

4. Parents' Expectations of the School

Parent/Carers or other Interested Parties who raise an informal or formal complaint with the School can expect the School to:

- Publicise:
  - How and when Complaints can be raised with the School
  - The existence of the School's Complaints Procedure
  - The existence of the School's Policy for dealing with Persistent or Vexatious Complaints/Harassment.
- Respond within a reasonable time
- Be available for consultation within reasonable time limits, bearing in mind the needs of the pupils and Staff within the School, and the nature of the Complaint,
- Respond with courtesy and respect,
- Attempt to resolve problems using reasonable means in line with the Schools' Complaints Procedure, and in consultation with the Local Authority (LA) and Welsh Government (WG).
- Keep Complainants informed of progress towards a resolution of the complaints raised.

5. What the School expect from Members of the School and Wider Community

We understand that raising a complaint can be a stressful time, and we are sympathetic to that. However, whilst we believe that all people have a right to be heard, understood and respected, we also believe that School Staff, Pupils and Governors have the same right.

We expect you to be polite and courteous. We will not tolerate aggressive, abusive or unreasonable behaviour. We will also not tolerate unreasonable demands or unreasonable persistence or vexatious complaining.

6. Persistent or Vexatious Complaints and Harassment - Definitions

The School maintains this Policy in respect of vexatious and/or persistent complaints and may choose to exercise it if appropriate.

For the purposes of this Policy, a **Vexatious** or **Persistent** complainant is any Interested Party who raises complaints (either informally or formally) or who frequently raises issues that the complainant considers to be within the remit of the School, and/or whose behaviour is unreasonable. Such behaviour may be characterised by:

a. Actions which are obsessive, persistent, harassing, prolific or repetitious;
b. Prolific correspondence or excessive email or telephone contact about a complaint;

c. Use of statutory requests for information such as those under the Freedom of Information Act 2000 or subject access requests under the Data Protection Act 1998 excessively or unreasonably;
d. An insistence upon pursuing unsubstantial complaints, and/or unrealistic or unreasonable outcomes;
e. An insistence upon pursuing complaints in an unreasonable manner;
f. An insistence upon only dealing with the Head Teacher on all occasions, irrespective of the issue and/or the level of delegation in the School to deal with such matters;
g. An insistence upon repeatedly pursuing a complaint when the outcome is not satisfactory to the complainant but cannot be changed, for example: if the desired outcome is beyond the remit of the School because it is unlawful.
h. Not respecting the confidentiality of others including pupils, staff or governors

For the purposes of this Policy, **Harassment** is the unreasonable pursuit of such actions as in [a] to [g] above in such a way that they:

a. Appear to be targeted over a course of conduct, at one or more members of Staff and/or
b. Cause ongoing stress to individual member(s) of Staff, and/or
c. Have a significantly adverse effect on the whole/parts of the School, and/or
d. Are pursued in a manner which could be perceived as intimidating and/or oppressive by the recipient(s). This could include situations where persistent demands or criticism, whilst not especially taxing or serious when viewed in isolation, have the cumulative effect over time of undermining confidence, well-being and health.

7. The School's Actions

In the first instance, the School will verbally inform the person that his/her behaviour is considered to be approaching unreasonable/unacceptable and, if it is not modified, action may be taken in accordance with this Policy. This will be confirmed in writing by the Head Teacher/Chair of Governors (if vexatious complaint directed at Headteacher) or their delegated member of Staff [ML1].

If the person's behaviour is not modified, or the behaviour is considered so serious, this School will take some or all of the following actions as necessary, having regard for the person's behaviour, and the effect of this behaviour on the School. In exceptional circumstances, the Chair of Governors may deem it appropriate to move directly to ML2:

a. Inform the person in writing [ML2] that his/her behaviour is now considered by the School to have be unreasonable/unacceptable and, therefore to fall within the terms of this Policy;
b. Inform the person in writing [ML2] that all meetings with any member(s) of Staff will be conducted with a third person present, and that notes of meetings may be taken in the interests of all parties;
c. Inform the person in writing [ML2] that, except in emergencies, all routine communication between the complainant and the School should be by letter only;
d. (in the case of physical or verbal aggression) take advice from LA HR and/or Legal Services, and consider warning the person about being banned from the School site; or proceed immediately to a temporary ban;
e. Consider taking advice from the LA on pursuing a case under Protection from Harassment legislation;

f. Consider taking advice from LA HR/Legal Services about implementing specific procedures for dealing with complaints from the complainant, ie, the complainant will not be able to deal directly with the Head Teacher. Instead, they communicate with a third party to be identified by the Governing Body of the School who will investigate to determine whether or not the complaint is reasonable or vexatious, and then advise the Head Teacher accordingly.

g. If the conduct is considered to be anti-social behaviour, nuisance or a crime the matter will be reported to the police.

Thus, based upon [f] above, legitimate new complaints may still be considered, even if the person making them is, or has been, subject to the terms of this Policy. In such matters, the School may be additionally advised by the Local Authority HR and/or Legal Services.

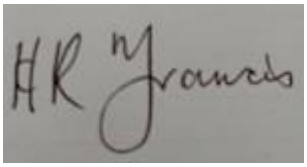
If a complainant's persistent complaining/harassing behaviour is modified and is then resumed at a later date, within a reasonable period of time, then the School may resume the process identified above, at an appropriate level. In these circumstances, the School may be advised by the Local Authority HR and/or Legal Services.

8. Annex A - Abbreviations and Definitions

FGB	Full Governing Body (the entire body of the legally mandated Governorship) (also: 'the Governors')
HR	(Local Authority) Human Resources Department
Interested Party	Pupil, Parent, Carer, Guardian, members of Staff or the local community or Governors; or other person with a valid and justifiable interest in the function of the School.
LA	Local Authority (The City and County of Cardiff: Schools and Lifelong Learning Service)
BDPS	Bryn Deri Primary School (also: 'the School')
School Day	Any whole day on which the School is normally open. This is not the same as a Working Day, and 'School Days' do not include Public/Bank/School Holidays or Inset Days.
School Staff	All members of the School Staff (both Teaching and non-Teaching) excepting the Head Teacher.
WG	Welsh Government

9. Signature Sheet

Signed by Chair of Governors on behalf of the Governing Body.

Date Approved by FGB	June 2026
Signed on behalf of FGB	
Name (Chair of Governors)	Mrs Helen Francis
Date	June 2026
Date of next review (Annual Review)	May 2027

MODEL LETTER 1 (ML1) [*delete before sending*]

Initial letter concerning unreasonable/unacceptable behaviour

[Date]

RECORDED DELIVERY

Dear *[insert name of complainant]*

This letter is to inform you that the School considers your actions *[describe actions, dates & behaviour]* on ……. when you …… , which the School considers to be unreasonable / unacceptable *[delete as appropriate]*.

We would ask you to bear in mind the fact that such behaviour on the School site can be disruptive and distressing to Pupils, Staff and parents/carers. *[Delete this paragraph if the behaviour in question did not physically occur on the School site]*

We are aware that you have raised concerns/complaints, and would advise you that these are being dealt with most effectively through the Schools' Complaints Procedure.

At the moment, we are dealing with these issues by *[describe actions being taken to resolve concern].*

Please note that the Schools Policy for Dealing with Persistent or Vexatious Complaints/Harassment sets out the standards of behaviour expected of all people in their dealings with the School. These include:

- Behaving reasonably;
- Treating others with courtesy and respect;
- Resolving complaints using the Schools' Complaints Procedure;
- Avoiding physical and verbal aggression at all times.

The Policy also details the steps that we may take if these standards are breached. These steps include:

- Making special arrangements for meetings and communication between you and the School;
- Considering banning you from the School premises;
- Considering Legal action, which could include informing the police.

I would ask you to allow the School time to investigate and resolve your complaint in accordance with the Complaints Procedure or other procedure as appropriate. I would assure you that we shall take every step to move this investigation and resolution forward as quickly as possible.

Yours sincerely

Head Teacher/Chair of Governors

MODEL LETTER 2 (ML2) [*delete before sending*]

Secondary letter concerning unreasonable/unacceptable behaviour now falling under the terms of this Policy.

[Date]

RECORDED DELIVERY

Dear *[insert name of complainant]*

You will recall that I wrote to you on *[insert date]* telling you that I felt your behaviour was unreasonable/unacceptable *[delete as applicable].*

I am now writing to inform you that in view of your behaviour on *[Date],* when you *[describe actions/behaviour]* it has been decided that the Schools' Policy for Dealing with Persistent or Vexatious Complaints/Harassment will apply from the date of this letter.

With consideration for the circumstances, I have made the following arrangements for your future contact with the School:

*[*Delete A or B as applicable]*

***A:** For the foreseeable future, should you wish to meet with any member of Staff, I would ask you to note:

a) All routine communication, including any request for a meeting between you and the School, will be by letter only. Letters from you need to be addressed to the School address; please note that email correspondence will not be responded to;
b) An appointment will be arranged and confirmed in writing as soon as possible;
c) A third party from the School will be present throughout the meeting;
d) In the interest of all parties, formal notes of the meeting may be made.

***B:** For the foreseeable future, all meetings arising from any written communication with the School will not be conducted by a member of Staff, but will be conducted by [insert name] who will represent the School. I would ask you to note:

a) All routine communication, including any request for a meeting between you and the School, will be by letter only. Letters from you need to be addressed to *[insert as applicable]* at the School address; please note that email correspondence will not be responded to;
b) An appointment will be arranged and confirmed in writing as soon as possible;
c) A third party from the School will be present throughout the meeting;
d) In the interest of all parties, formal notes of the meeting may be made.

Exceptionally, these arrangements do not apply to any emergency involving *[insert name of pupil]* – in which case you should contact the School in the usual way.

Please note that information normally provided on parents' evening(s) will be delivered in a summary written report whilst these arrangements are in place.

The arrangements described above take effect immediately. If you wish to make a representation about the content of this letter, you can do so by writing to me at the School within ten School days of the date of this letter. If you wish to express any regret on your part, and/or are prepared to give assurances about your future good conduct, you can do so by writing to me at the School. If, upon receipt of your comments, I consider that the arrangements outlined above should continue, you will be provided with details of how to review a circumstance of your case.

I hope that the difficulties that we are currently experiencing can soon be resolved.

Yours sincerely

Head Teacher/ Chair of Governors