George Stephenson High School

Unreasonable Complaints Policy V3

September 2025

Policy Compliance Governance Page

Governance	Resources Committee and Governing Body	
Policy Officer	Deputy Headteacher	
Policy Suite	Personnel	
Policy Version	V3	
Re-adopted by Governing Date	October 2023	
Last Updated	September 2025	
Review Date	September 2028 (Reviewed Every 3 Years)	
Statutory Policy	No	
Uploaded to School Website and Date	Yes	September 2025

DATE	SECTION	FEEDBACK AND PROPOSED AMENDMENTS
June 2025	Governance Page	Updated to include *"Policy SUITE"* and updated review period and Date.

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Note:

This policy can also be adapted to manage unreasonable or persistent contact not directly associated with, or resulting from, formal complaints.

George Stephenson High School 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 our 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.

George Stephenson High School defines unreasonable behaviour as that which hinders our consideration of complaints because of the frequency or nature of the complainant's contact with the school, such as, if the complainant:

• 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 complaint's investigation process

• refuses to accept that certain issues are not within the scope of the complaint's procedure

• insists on the complaint being dealt with in ways which are incompatible with the complaint's procedure or with good practice

• introduces trivial or irrelevant information which they expect to be considered 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

• 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

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• 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

• uses 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, email or text), as it could delay the outcome being reached.

Whenever possible, the headteacher or Chair of Governors will discuss any concerns with the complainant informally before applying an '*unreasonable'* marking.

If the behaviour continues, the headteacher will write to the complainant explaining that their behaviour is unreasonable and ask them to change it. For complainants who excessively contact George Stephenson High School causing a significant level of disruption, we may specify methods of communication and limit the number of contacts in a communication plan. This 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 barring an individual from George Stephenson High School.

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