

**BLESSED HOLY FAMILY
CATHOLIC ACADEMY TRUST**



**Policy for managing
serial and unreasonable complaints**

**“Christ at our centre,
inspiring our pursuit of excellence”**

June 2023

CONTEXT

The Blessed Holy Family Catholic Academy Trust is firmly rooted in the values of the Catholic Church. The Gospel values are embedded within our policies including love, justice, fairness and respect for the dignity of the individual.

This policy applies to all members of the Blessed Holy Family Catholic Academy Trust:

- St. George's Roman Catholic Primary School
- St. John Fisher Roman Catholic Primary School
- St. Joseph's Roman Catholic Primary School
- The Sacred Heart Language College

In keeping with this context the Trust Board formally adopt the policy produced by the Catholic Education Service. This is to ensure that all can work together to ensure all members of our Trust community can thrive.

Policy Ratified by Trust Board: 6th July 2023 (Date)

Signed: 

Date of next review: Summer 2024

The Blessed Holy Family Catholic academy Trust 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 schools across the Trust. 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.

The Blessed Holy Family defines unreasonable behaviour as that which hinders our consideration of complaints because of the frequency or nature of the complainant's contact with our schools 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 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
- 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 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 a specific school within the Trust 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 of each individual school 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 any school within the Blessed Holy Family Catholic Academy Trust 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, all schools within the Trust are expected to immediately inform the police and communicate actions in writing. This may include barring an individual from the premises of any of our designated schools.