
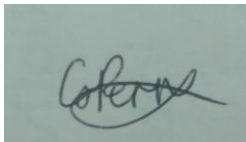


Persistent Complainants Policy for Parsons Down Partnership

Headteacher	Sign & Date: April 2018 Uploaded to web-site April 2018	 DONNA SHAVE
Chair of Governing Board	Sign & Date: April 2018 Uploaded to web-site April 2018	GEORGINA PERRY 

Review schedule (this policy will be reviewed every 3 years)

Date	Description of any changes	Date approved by Governing Board
April 2018	Reviewed	April 2018

Persistent Complainants Policy

Parsons Down Partnership 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.

Parsons Down Partnership defines Persistent 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*'.

Where complainants are abusive or threaten staff, a formal written record will be kept by all staff of all contacts made by the complainant, making careful record of any abusive behaviour or threats – preferably recording actual words used where possible. These will be kept on file as evidence of the complainant's behaviour as this may be required for legal purposes at a later date.

A complaint may be regarded as Persistent 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,
- 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; or
- 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 persistent 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 the 'unreasonable' marking is applied to the complaint.

If the behaviour continues the Head teacher or Chair of Governors will write to the complainant explaining that their behaviour is Persistent and asking them to desist.

For complainants who excessively contact Parsons Down Partnership 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.

School will continue to provide parents with the information they are entitled to under The Education (Pupil Information) (England) Regulations 2005 (S.1.1437) and subsequent amendments in the School information (England) Regulations 2008 (S1.1471)

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 Parsons Down Partnership.

Banning 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 it remains a safe place for pupils, staff and other members of their community.

If an individual's behaviour is a cause for concern, a school can ask him/her to leave school premises. If the complainant presents himself/herself regularly at the school site and behaves inappropriately, the school will seek advice and guidance from the LA about managing this situation.

In serious cases, the Head teacher or the local authority can notify them in writing that their implied license to be on school premises has been temporarily revoked subject to an appeal hearing. If this decision is taken, this will be put in writing and explain how the decision can be appealed. The

individual will be given the opportunity to formally express their views on the decision to ban in writing.

The decision will be reviewed and either confirmed or lifted. If the decision is confirmed the individual will be notified in writing, explaining how long the ban will be in place.

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

Managing staff understanding of communication with persistent complainant

All relevant staff likely to receive contacts will be notified of any actions they are required to take in the future – such as logging calls, not discussing the case, etc.

Where appropriate, the case may be included as a specific item for routine inclusion in meetings with involved staff.

Policy reviewed and agreed: April 2018

Policy to be reviewed: April 2021

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Chair of Governors