



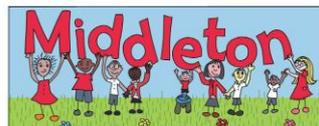
**PETERBOROUGH KEYS
ACADEMIES TRUST**

UNREASONABLE COMPLAINANTS AND UNREASONABLE BEHAVIOUR POLICY

Version 1.0

July 2020

**Trustee Committee: Trust Board
Reviewed by Leadership Group: N/A
Date Policy Reviewed: 13 July 2020
Date of Next Review: July 2022**



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I. Unreasonable Complainants

- I.1 PKAT schools are 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 unreasonable behaviour under any circumstances and we will take action to protect staff from that behaviour, including that which is abusive, offensive or threatening.
- I.2 PKAT defines unreasonable complainants as ‘those who, because of the frequency or nature of their contacts with a school, hinder the school’s consideration of their or other people’s complaints and/or the operating efficiency of the school’.
- I.3 A complaint may be regarded as unreasonable when the person making the complaint:
- (a) refuses to articulate their complaint or specify the grounds of a complaint or the outcomes sought in raising the complaint, despite offers of assistance;
 - (b) in the case of a complaint about a member of staff or student refuses to identify themselves or give sufficient detail about the problem;
 - (c) refuses to co-operate with the complaints investigation process while still wishing their complaint to be resolved;
 - (d) refuses to accept that certain issues are not within the scope of the Trust’s complaints procedure;
 - (e) insists on the complaint being dealt with in ways which are incompatible with the adopted complaints procedure or with good practice;
 - (f) introduces trivial or irrelevant information which the complainant expects to be taken into account and commented on, or raises large numbers of detailed but frivolous questions, and insists they are fully answered, often immediately and to their own timescales;
 - (g) makes unjustified complaints about staff who are trying to deal with the issues, and seeks to have them replaced;
 - (h) changes the basis of the complaint as the investigation proceeds;
 - (i) repeatedly makes the same complaint (despite previous investigations or responses concluding that the complaint is groundless or has been addressed);
 - (j) refuses to accept the findings of the investigation into the complaint where the Trust’s complaints procedure has been fully and properly implemented and completed including referral to the Department for Education;
 - (k) seeks an unrealistic outcome; and/or

- (l) makes excessive demands on school time by frequent, and lengthy contact with staff regarding the complaint in person, in writing, by email and by telephone while the complaint is being dealt with.
- I.4 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 in the following ways:
 - (a) maliciously;
 - (b) aggressively;
 - (c) using threats, intimidation or violence;
 - (d) using abusive, offensive or discriminatory language;
 - (e) knowing it to be false;
 - (f) using falsified information; and/or
 - (g) publishing unacceptable information in a variety of media such as on social media websites and newspapers.
- I.5 Complainants should if possible limit their contact with a school while a complaint is being progressed. This is to ensure that staff resources are utilised in the best way in order to resolve the complaint promptly and not delay the outcome being reached in a reasonable timeframe.
- I.6 Whenever possible, the Headteacher or Chair of Governors will discuss any concerns with the complainant informally before applying an 'unreasonable' marking.
- I.7 If the behaviour continues a Headteacher, or at their instruction, a member of the Senior Leadership Team, will inform the complainant explaining that their behaviour is unreasonable and asking them to change it. For complainants who make excessive contact with a PKAT school causing a significant level of disruption, we may specify certain methods of communication and limit the number of contacts in a communication plan. This may include, but is not limited to:
 - (a) a single point of contact in school;
 - (b) limited contact, at the school's discretion, which could be one telephone call a week;
 - (c) conversations may be minuted, at the discretion of the school.
- I.8 This approach will be reviewed after 6 months and if there has not been a tangible improvement, will be continued until such time as contact reduces to a reasonable level.

2. Unreasonable Behaviour – Barring from the School Premises

- 2.1 Although fulfilling a public function, schools are private places. The public has no automatic right of entry. We will therefore act to ensure that PKAT schools remain safe places for students, staff and other members of our community.
- 2.2 In response to any serious incident of aggression or violence, the concerns and actions to be taken will be put in writing immediately and the police informed. This may include banning an individual from a PKAT site.
- 2.3 If a parent or carer's behaviour is a cause for concern, PKAT schools reserve the right to ask a parent or carer to leave school premises. In serious cases, the Headteacher may notify them in writing that their implied licence to be on school premises has been temporarily revoked, subject to any representations that the parent or carer may wish to make. In this instance parents or carers have the opportunity to formally express their views on the decision to bar within 5 working days of the bar being issued. Any such representations should be put in writing and sent to the Headteacher.
- 2.4 The decision to bar will then be reviewed, taking into account any representations made by the parent or carer and will either be confirmed or lifted within 5 working days. If the decision is confirmed, the parent or carer will be notified in writing, explaining how long the bar will be in place.
- 2.5 Anyone wishing to complain about being barred can do so, by letter or email, to the Headteacher or Chair of Governors. Having received a response from the Headteacher or Chair of Governors if a parent or carer still wishes to complain about being barred they can complain to the Chair of Trustees by contacting the Company Secretary/Clerk to the Board of Trustees via e-mail estephens-dunn@pkat.co.uk or via post to The Company Secretary/Clerk to the Board of Trustees, Jack Hunt School, Bradwell Road, Peterborough, PE3 9PY. Please mark them as Private and Confidential. However, complaints about barring cannot be escalated to the Department for Education. Once the Trust's complaints procedure has been completed, no further action will be taken by the school. The individual is, however, open to seek their own independent advice on the decision if they wish.

3. Version History

3.1 Table of Versions

VERSION	ACTION	RESPONSIBLE	DATE
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1.0	First draft proposed and agreed by Trust Board	Pamela KILBEY	13/07/2020
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