COMPLAINTS POLICY

2026/27

Including arrangements for serial, persistent and unreasonable complaints and contact

Status	DRAFT - for Governing Body approval
School type	Local-authority-maintained primary school
Approved by	Full Governing Body
Approval date	Thursday 22nd October 2026
Review date	Autumn 2027 (or earlier if guidance changes)
Policy owner	MGA (Headteacher)

Legal and guidance basis

This policy has been drafted for Norwood Primary School with regard to section 29 of the Education Act 2002, the Department for Education's Best Practice Guidance for School Complaints Procedures (2020), the DfE model complaints procedure and model policy for managing serial and unreasonable complaints, and the Maintained Schools Governance Guide updated July 2026. It also reflects the DfE guidance on restrictive interventions effective from 1 April 2026.

Table of Contents

Contents....3
Purpose, Principles and Legal Basis....4
Who Can Make A Complaint?....4
Concern or Complaint?....4
Accessibility, Equality and Support....4
How to raise a concern or complaint....5
Time Limits and Complaints Received Outside Term Time....5
Matters Outside this Complaints Procedure and Specific Complaint Routes....6
Informal Resolution....7
Stage 1: Formal Complaint....7
Stage 2: Governing Body Complaints Panel....7
Papers and Evidence....8
10.2 Panel Powers and Outcome....8
Complaints about the Headteacher, Governors or the Governing Body....8
Evidence, Recordings, Confidentiality and Records....8
Resolving Complaints and Remedies....9
Duplicate Complaints, Complaint Campaigns and Third-Party Providers....9
Duplicate Complaints....9
Complaint Campaigns....9
Third-Party Providers....9
Serial, Persistent and Unreasonable Complaints and Contact....9
What may be considered unreasonable?....9
When a Concluded Complaint may be Closed....10
Before Restrictions are Imposed....10
Communication Plan and Proportionate Restrictions....10
Safeguards when Contact is Restricted....11
Review and Representations....11
When the School May Stop Responding....11

Aggression, Harassment and Access to the Site..... 12
Restrictive Interventions, Reasonable Force, Restraint and Seclusion..... 12
Department for Education and Ofsted..... 12
Department for Education..... 12
Ofsted..... 13
Monitoring, Learning and Review..... 13
Appendix 1: Complaint Form..... 14
Appendix 2 - At-A-Glance Procedure..... 16
Appendix 3 - Model Warning Letter: Unreasonable Contact or Behaviour..... 17
Appendix 4 - Model Communication Plan / Restriction Letter..... 18
Reference Framework Used..... 19

Contents

1. Purpose, principles and legal basis
2. Who can make a complaint?
3. Concern or complaint?
4. Accessibility, equality and support
5. How to raise a concern or complaint
6. Time limits and complaints received outside term time
7. Matters outside this complaints procedure and specific complaint routes
8. Informal resolution
9. Stage 1 - Formal complaint
10. Stage 2 - Governing Body Complaints Panel
11. Complaints about the Headteacher, governors or the Governing Body
12. Evidence, recordings, confidentiality and records
13. Resolving complaints and remedies
14. Duplicate complaints, complaint campaigns and third-party providers
15. Serial, persistent and unreasonable complaints and contact
16. Restrictive interventions, reasonable force, restraint and seclusion
17. Department for Education and Ofsted
18. Monitoring, learning and review
Appendix 1 - Complaint Form
Appendix 2 - At-a-glance procedure
Appendix 3 - Warning letter: unreasonable contact/behaviour
Appendix 4 - Communication Plan / restriction letter

Purpose, Principles and Legal Basis

Norwood Primary School is committed to providing a high-quality education and service. We welcome concerns and complaints as an opportunity to listen, put matters right where appropriate, learn and improve.

The Governing Body has established this procedure in accordance with section 29 of the Education Act 2002. It applies to complaints about the school and any community facilities or services it provides where no separate statutory procedure applies.

The school will handle complaints in a way that is:

- simple to understand and use
- fair, impartial and non-adversarial
- proportionate and timely
- capable of a full and fair investigation
- respectful of confidentiality and data-protection requirements
- focused on the issues raised and the outcome sought
- open to learning and improvement

The school will use the wording 'will' wherever a commitment is intended. If, exceptionally, the school needs to depart from this published procedure, the reason will be recorded and explained to the complainant.

Who Can Make A Complaint?

- This procedure is not limited to parents or carers of pupils currently registered at Norwood. Any person, including a former parent/carer, a pupil or former pupil, or a member of the public, may make a complaint about a facility or service provided by the school, unless a separate statutory procedure applies.
- A complaint may be made by a third party acting on behalf of a complainant. The school will normally require appropriate written consent before sharing personal information with that person.

Concern or Complaint?

- A concern is an expression of worry or doubt about an issue considered important for which reassurance is sought.
- A complaint is an expression of dissatisfaction, however made, about actions taken or a lack of action.
- The school encourages early informal resolution where appropriate. However, a complainant who wishes to make a formal complaint will not be required to complete an informal stage first.

Accessibility, Equality and Support

In accordance with the Equality Act 2010, Norwood will consider reasonable adjustments to enable a complainant to access and complete this procedure.

- accepting a complaint in person, by telephone or in writing
- providing information in an alternative format
- support with completing the complaint form
- interpretation or communication support where reasonably practicable
- accessible meeting arrangements
- additional support where the complainant is a child or young person

A complaint form is provided at Appendix 1 for convenience, but use of the form is not compulsory.

How to raise a concern or complaint

A concern or complaint may be made in person, by telephone, in writing or by email.

Matter	Normally addressed to	Route
Informal concern	Class teacher or appropriate staff member	Raise directly or via the school office.
Formal complaint about a member of staff (other than Headteacher)	Headteacher	Via the school office, marked Private and Confidential.
Formal complaint about the Headteacher	Governance Professional / Clerk / School Business Manager	Via the school office, marked Private and Confidential. The Chair will arrange impartial consideration.
Complaint about the Chair, Vice-Chair or another governor	Governance Professional / Clerk / School Business Manager	Via the school office, marked Private and Confidential.
Complaint about the whole or majority of the Governing Body, or jointly about Chair and Vice-Chair	Governance Professional / Clerk / School Business Manager	Independent arrangements will be made.

Complainants should not approach individual governors to raise concerns or complaints. Governors have no authority to act individually and prior involvement may prevent them from serving impartially at a later stage.

Time Limits and Complaints Received Outside Term Time

- Complaints should normally be raised within three months of the incident or, where a series of related incidents has occurred, within three months of the last incident.
- The school will consider complaints outside this period where exceptional circumstances apply. Complaints received outside term time will be treated as received on the first school day after the holiday period.
- Where another body is investigating related matters, for example the police, local authority safeguarding team, LADO, tribunal or court, the school may pause or adapt its process where necessary to avoid prejudicing that process. The complainant will be informed.

Matters Outside this Complaints Procedure and Specific Complaint Routes

Some matters are governed by separate statutory or employment procedures. The school will identify the correct route and will not use this policy to bypass those arrangements.

Type of Complaint / Concern	How it is Normally Handled	Important Distinction
School admissions	Through the relevant local authority admissions/appeal arrangements.	Not dealt with under this complaints procedure.
Statutory SEND assessment / EHC plan decisions	Through the local authority and, where applicable, SEND Tribunal arrangements.	Complaints about the school's own SEND provision may be considered under this policy; the school's SEN Information Report also sets out complaint arrangements.
Suspension or permanent exclusion	Through the statutory suspension/permanent exclusion review arrangements.	A complaint about how the school's behaviour policy has been applied, where it is not itself the statutory exclusion decision, may be considered under this policy.
Safeguarding / child protection matter likely to require investigation	Under the Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy and relevant local safeguarding/LADO procedures; police or social care may also be involved.	A complaint about the school's handling may be considered under this procedure when it is appropriate and does not prejudice a safeguarding process.
Allegation that a member of staff has harmed a child or may pose a risk of harm	Referred to the Headteacher/Chair as appropriate and managed under KCSIE and local allegations-management procedures, including LADO consultation where required.	The complainant will not receive confidential employment or disciplinary information.
Staff grievance	School's staff grievance procedure.	For employees; not this complaints procedure.
Staff conduct / disciplinary matter	May be considered under the school's disciplinary procedure.	The complainant may be told that the matter has been addressed, but disciplinary outcomes or confidential employment information will not normally be shared.
Whistleblowing	School's whistleblowing procedure and prescribed-person routes.	A worker raising wrongdoing in the public interest should use the whistleblowing route.
Freedom of Information / Environmental Information / Subject Access	Under the applicable information-rights legislation and the school's information governance arrangements.	Different statutory tests and review/ICO routes apply; these requests are not restricted merely because a person is subject to a communication plan.
National Curriculum content	Concerns about prescribed curriculum content should be directed to the Department for Education where appropriate.	Complaints about the school's delivery, organisation or implementation may fall within this procedure.
Services provided by an external provider using school premises	The provider's own complaints procedure.	The school may consider a complaint about its own decision-making or oversight where relevant.
School transport provided by the local authority	Local authority complaints/appeal arrangements.	School-specific actions may still fall within this procedure.

Complaints about equality/discrimination by the school	May be considered under this procedure, alongside the school's equality duties.	Nothing in this procedure removes any separate legal rights or routes available to the complainant.

Informal Resolution

Many concerns can be resolved quickly through discussion with the appropriate member of staff. Informal resolution may include clarification, explanation, a meeting, agreed action or an apology where appropriate.

There is no compulsory informal stage. If a person states that they wish to make a formal complaint, the school will move to Stage 1.

Stage 1: Formal Complaint

Formal complaints should be sent to the Headteacher via the school office unless the complaint is about the Headteacher. They may be made in person, by telephone, in writing or by email.

- The school will record the date the complaint is received and acknowledge it within 5 school days.
- The Headteacher will clarify the complaint, what remains unresolved and the outcome sought.
- The Headteacher may delegate fact-finding to a suitably senior and impartial member of staff, but will normally retain responsibility for the Stage 1 decision.
- The investigator will consider relevant records and may interview the complainant, staff, pupils or other witnesses. Notes will be kept.
- A formal written response will normally be provided within 10 school days of receipt. If this cannot be achieved, the school will explain the reason and give a revised date.
- The response will set out the issues considered, the findings and reasons, any action to be taken, and how to escalate to Stage 2.

DfE-aligned safeguard
A Stage 1 response will address the substance of the complaint. The school will not require the complainant to obtain permission before escalating to Stage 2.

Stage 2: Governing Body Complaints Panel

If the complainant remains dissatisfied after Stage 1, they may request Stage 2 within 10 school days of receiving the Stage 1 response. The request should be made to the Governance Professional / Clerk via the school office.

- The request will be acknowledged within 5 school days.
- The Governance Professional / Clerk will aim to convene the panel within 20 school days of receiving the request. If this is not possible, an anticipated date will be provided.
- The panel will comprise at least three impartial governors with no prior involvement or knowledge that could compromise their independence.
- Where there are insufficient impartial governors, suitable independent governors may be sourced from another school or through governor services. An entirely independent panel may be convened where appropriate.
- The panel may determine the complaint at a meeting or by written representations, taking account of fairness, accessibility and the complainant's needs.

- If invited to a meeting, the complainant may bring a friend, relative or supporter. Legal representation is not normally necessary, but may be appropriate in exceptional circumstances.
- The meeting will be held in private. Media representatives are not permitted.
- Both parties will be given a fair opportunity to make their case and to respond to relevant evidence.

Papers and Evidence

The Governance Professional / Clerk will normally confirm the arrangements at least 5 school days before the meeting and request any further written material at least 3 school days before the meeting. Papers will be circulated to the parties as soon as practicable before the meeting.

The panel will consider the complaint as presented through the procedure. It will not normally determine unrelated new complaints at Stage 2; those will be considered separately under the appropriate route.

10.2 Panel Powers and Outcome

- uphold the complaint in whole or in part
- dismiss the complaint in whole or in part
- decide or recommend proportionate action to resolve matters
- recommend changes to systems, policies or practice to reduce the likelihood of recurrence

The Chair of the panel will provide a written outcome, with reasons, normally within 10 school days of the meeting. This is the final stage of the school's complaints procedure.

Complaints about the Headteacher, Governors or the Governing Body

Complaint about	Stage 1	Stage 2
Headteacher	A suitably skilled, impartial governor appointed through the Chair/Governance Professional will investigate and determine the complaint.	A panel of three impartial governors with no prior involvement.
Individual governor, including Chair or Vice-Chair	A suitably skilled, impartial governor will investigate. Where the Chair is complained about, they will have no role in appointing or deciding the complaint.	A panel of three impartial governors with no prior involvement.
Chair and Vice-Chair jointly; majority or whole Governing Body	An independent investigator will be appointed.	A panel of independent governors will hear the complaint.

Any governor or other person involved in an earlier stage, or in imposing/reviewing a communication restriction connected with the matter, will not sit on a later complaints panel where their impartiality could reasonably be questioned.

Evidence, Recordings, Confidentiality and Records

- Brief notes will be kept of relevant meetings and telephone calls, and copies of written responses will be retained with the complaint record.
- Complainants should obtain informed consent from everyone present before recording a meeting or conversation.

- The school will not normally accept covert recordings as evidence unless exceptional circumstances justify doing so.
- Where recording is required as a reasonable adjustment, arrangements will be agreed in advance.
- Complaints will be handled confidentially and in accordance with the Data Protection Act 2018 and UK GDPR.
- Information will be shared only where there is a lawful and proportionate reason, including safeguarding, legal or regulatory requirements.
- Complaint records will be retained securely in line with the school's retention schedule.

Resolving Complaints and Remedies

At any stage the school may, where appropriate, offer:

- an explanation or clarification
- an acknowledgement that something could have been handled differently or better
- an apology
- an assurance that action will be taken to reduce the risk of recurrence
- a review of policy, procedure, training or practice
- restorative discussion or another proportionate remedy

An acknowledgement or apology does not, by itself, amount to an admission of legal liability.

If a complainant wishes to withdraw a complaint, the school will ask for confirmation in writing where practicable.

Duplicate Complaints, Complaint Campaigns and Third-Party Providers

Duplicate Complaints

After the school has completed its procedure, it may receive a complaint about substantially the same subject from another person. The school may explain that the matter has already been considered and the local procedure is complete, while taking care to identify and consider any materially new aspect that has not previously been investigated.

Complaint Campaigns

Where the school receives a high volume of complaints about substantially the same subject, particularly from people unconnected with the school, it may use a proportionate campaign response. This may include a standard response to complainants and/or a single published response. Any genuinely individual or materially different issue will still be considered on its merits.

Third-Party Providers

External providers using school premises or facilities are expected to have their own complaints procedures. Complaints about the provider's service should normally be directed to that provider. Complaints about Norwood's own decisions, oversight or conduct will be considered under this policy where appropriate.

Serial, Persistent and Unreasonable Complaints and Contact

Core principle
Norwood will focus on behaviour, contact and the subject matter of correspondence rather than labelling a person as 'vexatious'. The terms 'serial', 'persistent' or 'unreasonable' will normally be applied to the complaint, correspondence or pattern of contact, not to the individual.

What may be considered unreasonable?

Behaviour or contact may be considered unreasonable where its frequency, nature or manner hinders the fair consideration of a complaint, places a disproportionate burden on the school, or has a significant adverse impact on pupils, staff, governors or the operation of the school.

- refusing to articulate the complaint, grounds or outcome sought despite reasonable assistance
- refusing to cooperate with the complaints process or insisting on a process incompatible with the published procedure
- changing the basis of the complaint as the investigation proceeds without a reasonable explanation
- introducing large volumes of trivial, irrelevant or repetitive material and demanding individual responses to each point
- making excessive demands on school time through frequent, lengthy or repeated contact across email, telephone, meetings, social media or different members of staff/governors
- repeatedly pursuing substantially the same complaint after the school procedure has been properly completed
- seeking outcomes that are unlawful, impossible, wholly disproportionate or outside the school's powers
- making unjustified complaints about staff dealing with the matter and repeatedly seeking their replacement
- using threats, intimidation, abusive, offensive or discriminatory language, or violence
- knowingly providing materially false information or deliberately misrepresenting information
- publishing information in a way that is abusive, threatening, discriminatory, knowingly false, or which materially interferes with the fair handling of the complaint
- contact that, while individually minor, has a cumulative effect that is oppressive, intimidating or significantly damaging to staff wellbeing or the effective operation of the school

The school will not treat a complaint as serial or unreasonable merely because the complainant is persistent, asks complex questions, disagrees strongly with the school's decision, uses their right to contact an MP, or refers the matter to an external body.

When a Concluded Complaint may be Closed

Once the school's complaints procedure has been exhausted, the school will not normally enter into further correspondence about the substantive merits of the same complaint unless materially new information is provided that could reasonably affect the outcome.

Repetition of substantially the same arguments, disagreement with the outcome, rewording the same complaint, or contact from another person raising the same concluded issue will not normally cause the complaint to be reopened.

Before Restrictions are Imposed

Except where immediate protective action is required, the school will normally:

- identify the behaviour or pattern of contact causing concern
- explain why it is considered unreasonable
- ask the person to change the behaviour or contact pattern
- explain the possible consequences if it continues
- give a reasonable opportunity for the contact to become manageable

The warning will normally be confirmed in writing. A model warning letter is provided at Appendix 3.

Communication Plan and Proportionate Restrictions

Where unreasonable contact continues or causes a significant level of disruption, the Headteacher may introduce a tailored Communication Plan. If the Headteacher is the subject of the complaint, the decision will be made by the Chair or another suitably impartial governor. If the Chair is directly involved, the Vice-Chair or another uninvolved governor will act.

A Communication Plan may include one or more of the following:

- a single named point of contact
- one agreed email or postal address for routine correspondence
- grouping multiple messages into a single periodic response
- a reasonable limit on the frequency of routine contact
- routine contact in writing only
- meetings by prior appointment only
- a second member of staff present at meetings and written notes made
- requiring routine communication to be made through an agreed advocate or representative
- stating that correspondence outside the agreed arrangements may be acknowledged but will not necessarily receive an individual substantive response

When assessing frequency, the school may consider substantially related contact collectively across different communication channels and different members of staff or governors.

Safeguards when Contact is Restricted

Any restriction will be proportionate and will not prevent:

- reporting an emergency
- raising a safeguarding or child-protection concern
- reporting an immediate health or safety issue
- receiving information to which a parent/carer is legally entitled
- making a statutory information-rights request under the applicable legal regime
- raising a genuinely new complaint

Freedom of Information, Environmental Information and data-protection correspondence will be considered under the relevant statutory framework, not refused simply because a Communication Plan applies.

Review and Representations

The school will set out any restriction in writing, the reasons for it, its scope and duration. The complainant may make written representations about the restriction within 10 school days.

Restrictions will normally be reviewed after three months and, in any event, no later than six months. They will be lifted or reduced where they are no longer necessary or proportionate.

When the School May Stop Responding

The decision to stop providing substantive responses on a concluded issue will not be taken lightly. The school will normally do so only where:

- every reasonable step has been taken to address the complainant's concerns
- the complainant has received a clear statement of the school's position and their remaining options

- the person continues to contact the school repeatedly while making substantially the same points

The case is stronger where correspondence is abusive or aggressive, contains personal insults or threats, or there is evidence that contact is intended to cause disruption or inconvenience.

The school will write to the individual when it decides that substantive responses on a concluded matter will cease.

Aggression, Harassment and Access to the Site

Nothing in this procedure prevents the school from taking immediate proportionate action to protect pupils, staff, governors or visitors from violence, threats, harassment, intimidation or serious abuse. This may include contacting the police, seeking local authority or legal advice, or considering restrictions on access to the school site under the appropriate legal/procedural route.

If behaviour may amount to harassment, the school will seek legal advice. Decisions about site access are separate from the merits of any complaint.

Restrictive Interventions, Reasonable Force, Restraint and Seclusion

Complaints concerning restrictive intervention, reasonable force, restraint or seclusion will be handled promptly, sensitively and impartially, with regard to the DfE guidance effective from 1 April 2026 and any applicable recording/reporting duties.

An investigation may consider, as relevant:

- the circumstances leading to the intervention and any foreseeable triggers
- whether preventative and de-escalation strategies were considered or attempted where appropriate
- whether the intervention was necessary, reasonable and proportionate
- whether the least restrictive practicable response was used
- statutory records and notifications
- behaviour, safeguarding and incident records
- individual risk assessments, plans and SEND documentation
- medical information and reasonable adjustments
- witness accounts and CCTV where lawfully available and relevant

Where the matter meets the threshold for safeguarding, allegations-management, disciplinary or criminal procedures, those procedures will take precedence. The complaints procedure may be paused and resumed when appropriate.

Department for Education and Ofsted

Department for Education

After the school's final stage, a complainant who believes Norwood has not followed its published procedure, has acted unlawfully or has acted unreasonably in exercising duties under education law may complain to the Department for Education.

The Department for Education does not normally reinvestigate the substance of a complaint or substitute its judgement for the school's. Its role includes considering whether the school has acted lawfully and reasonably and followed the relevant procedure.

Current referral information is available through GOV.UK: 'Complain about a school to the Department for Education'.

Ofsted

Ofsted may consider qualifying complaints from parents/carers about the school as a whole and may use them to inform inspection activity. Ofsted does not normally resolve individual disputes between a complainant and the school.

Monitoring, Learning and Review

The school will maintain secure records and use complaint information to:

- identify themes and recurring issues
- inform school improvement, policy and training
- review the effectiveness and fairness of this procedure
- identify any disproportionate impact on pupils with SEND, disabilities or protected characteristics where relevant
- monitor the use and review of Communication Plans without compromising individual confidentiality

The Governing Body will receive appropriately anonymised information about complaint themes, timeliness, outcomes and learning. Governors will not be given case detail that could prejudice their independence in any live or potential panel.

This policy will be reviewed annually and earlier if legislation, DfE guidance or local procedures materially change.

Appendix 1: Complaint Form

This form is provided for convenience. A formal complaint can also be made in person, by telephone, by email or in another accessible format.

Your name	
Pupil's name (if relevant)	
Your relationship to the pupil (if relevant)	
Address	
Telephone number	
Email address	
Preferred method of contact / reasonable adjustment needed	
Have you already spoken to anyone at school? If so, who and when?	

Please give details of your complaint. If there is more than one issue, number each issue clearly.

What action has already been taken to try to resolve the matter?

What outcome would you like the school to consider?

Please list any documents or evidence you are providing.

Signature	Date

Appendix 2 - At-A-Glance Procedure

Step	Who leads	Key timescale	Outcome / next step
Informal resolution (optional)	Appropriate staff member	As soon as reasonably practicable	Resolve informally or move to Stage 1.
Stage 1 - Formal complaint	Headteacher (or alternative route if complaint concerns Headteacher/governance)	Acknowledge within 5 school days; written response normally within 10 school days	Written findings, reasons, actions and Stage 2 route.
Stage 2 - Complaints Panel	Three impartial governors / independent governors where required	Request within 10 school days; acknowledge within 5; aim to convene within 20; outcome normally within 10 school days	Final school decision; signpost to DfE.

Important
Informal resolution is encouraged where appropriate but is not a compulsory gateway to a formal complaint. A complaint cannot be escalated only with the school's permission.

Appendix 3 - Model Warning Letter: Unreasonable Contact or Behaviour

Private and Confidential

[Date]

Dear [Name],

I am writing about your recent contact with Norwood Primary School concerning [briefly identify matter]. The school remains committed to considering your concerns fairly and in accordance with its published Complaints Policy.

However, the following behaviour/contact is causing concern: [set out specific examples, dates, frequency and impact].

The school considers this pattern to be becoming unreasonable because [explain objectively]. We ask that future contact is limited to [set out reasonable expectation].

If this pattern continues, the school may introduce a written Communication Plan under section 15 of the Complaints Policy. This may include a single point of contact, limits on the frequency or method of routine communication, or agreed arrangements for meetings.

This warning does not prevent you from raising a genuinely new complaint, a safeguarding concern, an emergency or a statutory information-rights request.

We hope that these arrangements will allow the matter to be managed constructively and proportionately.

Yours sincerely,

[Headteacher / Chair / other authorised person]

Appendix 4 - Model Communication Plan / Restriction Letter

Private and Confidential

[Date]

Dear [Name],

On [date] the school wrote to you explaining that aspects of your contact/behaviour were considered unreasonable and asking that the pattern change. Since then, the school has recorded the following further contact/behaviour: [specific examples].

Having considered the frequency, nature and impact of the contact, the school has decided that a Communication Plan is necessary and proportionate. This decision relates to the management of contact; it does not determine the merits of any genuinely new complaint.

With effect from [date], the following arrangements will apply:

- [Named point of contact]
- [Permitted method(s) of routine contact]
- [Frequency of routine correspondence / how multiple messages will be grouped]
- [Meeting arrangements, including second person / notes if applicable]
- [Any other proportionate restriction]

These arrangements do not prevent you from reporting an emergency, safeguarding concern or immediate health and safety issue; receiving information to which you are legally entitled; making a statutory information-rights request; or raising a genuinely new complaint.

You may make written representations about this Communication Plan within 10 school days of the date of this letter. The arrangements will be reviewed on [date - normally three months and no later than six months].

Correspondence outside the agreed arrangements may be acknowledged but will not necessarily receive an individual substantive response unless it raises a new, urgent, statutory or safeguarding matter.

Yours sincerely,

[Headteacher / Chair / other authorised person]

Reference Framework Used

- Education Act 2002, section 29.
- Department for Education: Best Practice Guidance for School Complaints Procedures 2020 (current maintained-school guidance as at October 2026).
- Department for Education: Model complaints procedure for maintained schools.
- Department for Education: Model policy for managing serial and unreasonable complaints.
- Department for Education: Maintained Schools Governance Guide, updated July 2026.
- Department for Education: Restrictive interventions, including the use of reasonable force, in schools, effective from 1 April 2026.
- School Information (England) Regulations 2008, as amended - publication of the complaints procedure.
- Equality Act 2010; Data Protection Act 2018; UK GDPR.

This policy is a school procedure and does not replace statutory appeal, safeguarding, employment, information-rights or legal processes where those apply.