



FINHAM PARK
MULTI ACADEMY TRUST

FPMAT Serial and Unreasonable Complaints Policy

Policy written: January 2025

Last reviewed: January 2025

Review date: January 2026

Document History

Version	Date	Author	Summary Changes
V1	January 2025	J Waldron	New Policy

Persistent and Unreasonable Complaints

Finham Park Multi 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. 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, please see the Abusive Parents Policy for more information.

Finham Park Multi Academy Trust 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. Examples might include 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
- 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 defamatory 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 the Local Governing Body 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 their Finham Park Multi Academy Trust school or Finham Park Multi 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, we will immediately inform the police and communicate our actions in writing. This may include barring an individual from their Finham Park Multi Academy Trust school in line with our Abusive Parents Policy.

Where a complainant tries to re-open the issue with the school after the complaint's procedure has been fully exhausted and the school has done everything it reasonably can in response to the complaint, the Chair of the Local Governing Body or CEO/Executive Headteacher (or other appropriate person in the case of a complaint about the Chair or CEO/Executive Headteacher) will inform the complainant that the matter is closed.

Once the school has decided that it is appropriate to stop responding, the complainant will be informed in writing, either by letter or email.

The school will ensure when making this decision that complainants making any new complaint are heard, and that the school acts reasonably.

Duplicate Complaints

If a complaint has been resolved under this procedure and the school receives a duplicate complaint on the same subject from a partner, family member or other individual, the school will assess whether there are aspects that they hadn't previously considered, or any new information they need to take into account.

If they are satisfied that there are no new aspects, they will:

- Tell the new complainant that they have already investigated and responded to this issue, and the local process is complete
- Direct them to the relevant appeals process or other external body, e.g. Local Authority

If there are new aspects, we will follow this procedure again.

Written by:

J Waldron

January 2025

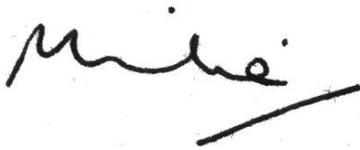
Next review date:

January 2026

Approved by Trustees:

11th February 2025

Signed:

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Mark Bailie', with a horizontal line underneath.

MARK BAILIE
Executive Headteacher

Signed:

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Peter Burns', written in a cursive style.

PETER BURNS MBE
Chair of Board of Trustees