

Bitterne C of E Primary School



Vexatious and Persistent Communication Procedure

Headteacher

Last review – June 2022

Next review – June 2024

Chair of Governors- Amanda Humby

Introduction

At Blitterne CE Primary School, we are committed to professional, timely and courteous communication between the school, parents, and other stakeholders. Equally, we expect that parents, carers and members of the local community should always communicate with Bitterne CE Primary Staff in a respectful and appropriate way. These interactions are underpinned by our core Christian values of 'love, trust and forgiveness'.

This procedure should be read in conjunction with the Complaints Policy

There are many structures in place to facilitate open communication and consultation with parents and the local community in an appropriate manner i.e.:

Parents

- Tapestry / Seesaw
- Parents' Evenings
- Contact with classteachers and senior leaders at drop off and pick up
- Contacting the school office by email, phone or in person
- Email communications with relevant members of staff

Community

- Letters, telephone or email

Even with these structures in place, there are occasions when the communication between parents, carers or wider community and school become persistent and/or vexatious in manner and this procedure sets out the definition of vexatious and persistent communication and the steps for dealing with these incidents.

What is Vexatious Communication?

Communication between home and school, as well as the local community is important to us. We are fortunate to have a very dedicated and supportive school community working in partnership to ensure our pupils get the best possible education. **In the event that parents, carers, and members of the community are dissatisfied with the school, then the school's Complaints Procedure should be followed.**

Vexatious communication includes conversations (face to face or on the phone, letters, emails, messages in the home schoolbook) that are:

- Overly persistent, continuing communicating with members of school staff even when it has been made clear that they have responded to their concerns.
- Making unnecessarily excessive demands on the time and resources of the school i.e., telephoning or sending emails daily/several times a day, writing lengthy or complex emails/letters frequently e.g., every few days.
- Making frequent remarks to members of staff that could be considered sarcastic, rude, derogatory, discriminatory or threatening. (Should correspondence in any form to the

school be considered threatening then the school may feel it necessary to act upon these in line with their Abusive and Threatening Behaviour Policy).

- Submitting repeated complaints, about the same issue following completion of the complaint's procedure.
- Raising numerous detailed but unimportant questions and insisting they are answered.
- Refusing to accept that certain issues are outside of the school's control, or that certain issues are not within the remit of the school's statutory duty, policy or procedures.
- Electronically recording meetings and conversations without prior knowledge and consent of the other parties involved.

Dealing with Unreasonably Persistent and/or Vexatious Communication

It is important to distinguish between people who make regular contact with the school due to genuine ongoing issues and those that are unreasonably persistent or vexatious.

Should it be the case where a parent, carer or member of the community are becoming unreasonable in their contact with the school, the member of staff concerned will attempt to deal with the matter and the following steps will be taken:

- The member of staff concerned will politely but clearly indicate that the communication from the individual is becoming vexatious. This communication will be done in writing by either letter or email.
- The parent, carer or member of the community will be sent a copy of this procedure and asked to refer to it in future communications with the school and a record will be made of this.
- At this stage, it may be appropriate to insist that all future communication should be with a member of the Senior Leadership Team.
- Should the vexatious communication continue then a letter of warning will be sent outlining our expectations for positive communication.
- A meeting with a member of the Senior Leadership Team will be arranged to clarify the importance of positive communication and how this is underpinned by the school's core Christian values of 'love, trust and forgiveness'.

Following these steps, any future reoccurrence will unfortunately indicate a breakdown in relationship between the school and the parent, carer, or member of the local community.

Should this situation arise, it will be required for the school to inform the Governing Body of the situation and seek to obtain legal advice from the Local Authority in line with their own Unreasonable Persistent or Vexatious Customer Behaviour Policy. At this point, the parent, carer, or member of the community concerned will be informed of this.

Monitoring and Evaluation

This procedure will be reviewed every two years in line with the Local Authority policy.