



Complaints Procedure

2025-2027

Date Issued:	
Prepared by:	Head Teacher
Revised date:	1/5/25
Next review date:	May 2027
Date Adopted by Governing Body:	June 2023
Signed:	H Gregory

Reviewed: May 2025
Next Review: May 2027
Head Teacher: Mrs. H Gregory
Governor: Mrs. C. Robinson

Member of Staff Responsible: Mrs. H Gregory

Who can make a complaint?

This complaints procedure is not limited to parents or carers of children that are registered at the school. Any person, including members of the public, may make a complaint to Durham Lane Primary School about any provision of facilities or services that we provide. Unless complaints are dealt with under separate statutory procedures (such as appeals relating to exclusions or admissions), we will use this complaints procedure.

The difference between a concern and a complaint

A concern may be defined as *'an expression of worry or doubt over an issue considered to be important for which reassurances are sought'*.

A complaint may be defined as *'an expression of dissatisfaction however made, about actions taken or a lack of action'*.

Aims

Our school aims to meet its statutory obligations when responding to complaints from parents/carers of pupils at the school, and others.

When responding to complaints, we aim to:

- Be impartial and non-adversarial
- Facilitate a full and fair investigation by an independent person or panel, where necessary
- Address all the points at issue and provide an effective and prompt response
- Respect complainants' desire for confidentiality
- Treat complainants with respect and courtesy
- Make sure that any decisions we make are lawful, rational, reasonable, fair and proportionate, in line with the principles of administrative law
- Keep complainants informed of the progress of the complaints process
- Consider how the complaint can feed into school improvement evaluation processes

We try to resolve concerns by informal means wherever possible. Where this is not possible, the formal complaints procedures will be followed.

The school will aim to give the complainant the opportunity to complete the complaints procedure in full.

To support this, we will make sure we publicise the existence of this policy and make it available on the school website.

Throughout the process, we will be sensitive to the needs of all parties involved, and make any reasonable adjustments needed to accommodate individuals.

It is in everyone's interest that concerns and complaints are resolved at the earliest possible stage. Many issues can be resolved informally, without the need to use the formal stages of the complaints procedure. Durham Lane Primary School takes concerns seriously and will make every effort to resolve the matter as quickly as possible.

If you have difficulty discussing a concern with a particular member of staff, we will respect your views. In these cases the Head Teacher will refer you to another staff member. Similarly, if the member of staff directly involved feels unable to deal with a concern, the Head Teacher will refer you to another staff member. The member of staff may be more senior but does not have to be. The ability to consider the concern objectively and impartially is more important.

We understand however, that there are occasions when people would like to raise their concerns formally. In this case, the Head Teacher will attempt to resolve the issue internally, through the stages outlined within this complaints procedure.

Legislation and guidance

This document meets the requirements of section 29 of the [Education Act 2002](#), which states that schools must have and make available a procedure to deal with all complaints relating to their school and to any community facilities or services that the school provides.

It is also based on [guidance for schools on complaints procedures](#) from the Department for Education (DfE), including the model procedures for complaints and for managing serial and unreasonable complaints.

In addition, it addresses duties set out in the [Early Years Foundation Stage statutory framework](#) with regards to dealing with complaints about the school's fulfilment of Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) requirements.

Scope

This policy does **not** cover complaints procedures relating to:

- Admissions
- Statutory assessments of special educational needs (SEN)
- Safeguarding matters
- Suspension and permanent exclusion
- Whistle-blowing
- Staff grievances
- Staff discipline
- School re-organisation proposals
- Curriculum

Please see separate policies for procedures relating to these types of complaint.

Roles and responsibilities

The complainant

The complainant will get a more effective and timely response to their complaint if they:

- Follow these procedures
- Co-operate with the school throughout the process, and respond to deadlines and communication promptly
- Ask for assistance as needed
- Treat all those involved with respect
- Do not approach individual governors about the complaint
- Do not publish details about the complaint on social media

The investigator

An individual will be appointed to look into the complaint and establish the facts. They will:

- Interview all relevant parties, keeping notes
- Consider records and any written evidence and keep these securely
- Prepare a comprehensive report which includes the facts, conclusions and potential solutions

Clerk to the governing body

The clerk will:

- Be the contact point for the complainant and the complaints committee, including circulating the relevant papers and evidence before complaints committee meetings
- Arrange the complaints hearing
- Record and circulate the minutes and outcome of the hearing

Committee chair

The committee chair will:

- Chair the meeting, ensuring that everyone is treated with respect throughout
- Make sure all parties see the relevant information, understand the purpose of the committee, and are allowed to present their case

Principles for investigation

When investigating a complaint, we will try to clarify:

- What has happened
- Who was involved
- What the complainant feels would put things right

Informal concerns

- Our school will take informal concerns seriously and make every effort to resolve the matter quickly. It may be the case that the provision or clarification of information will resolve the issue.
- The complainant should raise the concern as soon as possible within the timescales set out (3 months).
- The concern should be addressed to the relevant member of school staff or the head teacher, either in person or by letter, telephone or email. If the complainant is unclear who to contact or how to contact them, they should contact the school office on 01642 780742 or via on admin@durhamlane.org.uk.
- The school will acknowledge informal concerns within 5 school days wherever possible, which will confirm how the school intends to proceed, including an indication of the anticipated timescale.
- The informal stage will involve a meeting between the complainant and the generally the head teacher or a member of staff appointed by the Head Teacher. A written response will be provided by the school within 10 school days following the informal meeting.
- Add any other related information on the school's procedures for informal concerns.
- If the concern is not resolved informally, it will be escalated to a formal complaint.

How to raise a concern or make a complaint

A concern or complaint can be made in person, in writing or by telephone. They may also be made by a third party acting on behalf on a complainant, as long as they have appropriate consent to do so.

Concerns should be raised with either the class teacher or the Head Teacher. If the issue remains unresolved, the next step is to make a formal complaint.

Complainants should not approach individual governors to raise concerns or complaints. They have no power to act on an individual basis and it may also prevent them from considering complaints at Stage 2 of the procedure.

Complaints against school staff (except the Head Teacher) should be made in the first instance, to the Head Teacher via the school office. Please mark them as Private and Confidential.

Complaints that involve or are about the headteacher should be addressed to the Chair of Governors via the school office. Please mark them as Private and Confidential.

Complaints about the Chair of Governors, any individual governor or the whole governing body should be addressed to the Clerk to the Governing Body via the school office. Please mark them as Private and Confidential.

For ease of use, a template complaint form is included at the end of this procedure (Appendix 1). If you require help in completing the form, please contact the school office. You can also ask third party organisations like the Citizens Advice to help you.

In accordance with equality law, we will consider making reasonable adjustments if required, to enable complainants to access and complete this complaints procedure. For instance, providing information in alternative formats, assisting complainants in raising a formal complaint or holding meetings in accessible locations.

Anonymous complaints

We will not normally investigate anonymous complaints. However, the Head Teacher or Chair of Governors, if appropriate, will determine whether the complaint warrants an investigation.

Time scales

You must raise the complaint within three months of the incident or, where a series of associated incidents have occurred, within three months of the last of these incidents. We will only consider complaints made outside of this time frame if exceptional circumstances apply.

Complaints received outside of term time

We will consider complaints made outside of term time to have been received on the first school day after the holiday period.

Stages of complaint (not complaints against the headteacher or governors)

We have adopted a 2-stage process for dealing with complaints:

- Stage 1 – formal investigation
- Stage 2 – review panel

Stage 1: formal

Formal complaints can be raised:

- By letter or email (this is preferred)
- Over the phone
- In person
- By a third party acting on behalf of the complainant

The complainant should provide details such as relevant dates, times, and the names of witnesses of events, alongside copies of any relevant documents, and what they feel would resolve the complaint.

If complainants need assistance raising a formal complaint, they can contact the school office on 01642 780742.

The head teacher will record the date the complaint is received and will acknowledge receipt of the complaint in writing (either by letter or email) within 5 school days.

The head teacher (or designated member of the senior leadership team) will call a meeting to clarify the complaint and seek a resolution. The complainant may be accompanied to this meeting, and should inform the school of the identity of their companion in advance.

In certain circumstances, the school may need to refuse a request for a particular individual to attend any such meeting – for example, if there is a conflict of interest. If this is the case, the school will notify the complainant as soon as they are aware, so that the complainant has the opportunity to arrange alternative accompaniment.

The head teacher (or other person appointed by the head teacher for this purpose) will then conduct their own investigation. The written conclusion of this investigation will be sent to the complainant within 10 school days.

How to escalate a complaint

If the complainant wishes to proceed to the next stage of the procedure, they should inform the clerk to the governing board within 10 school days of receipt of the written conclusion of the investigation. Requests received outside of this timeframe will only be considered in exceptional circumstances.

Complaints can be escalated by contacting the clerk to the governing board (details of which will be in the written conclusion of the investigation):

- By letter or email
- Over the phone
- In person

➤ Through a third party acting on behalf of the complainant

The clerk will need the details of the complaint as set out above, as well as details from the complainant on how they feel the previous stage of the procedure has not addressed their complaint sufficiently, and what they feel would resolve the complaint. The clerk will acknowledge receipt of the request within 5 school days.

Stage 2: submit the complaint to the review panel

Convening the panel

The review panel consists of the first 3 members of the governing body available who don't have direct knowledge of the complaint. These individuals will have access to the existing record of the complaint's progress. The governors will select a panel chair from among themselves.

If not enough impartial governors are available, we will seek panel members from other schools or the local authority. We will make sure the governors we source are suitably skilled and can demonstrate that they are independent and impartial.

The complainant will be given reasonable notice of the date of the review panel. The clerk will aim to find a date within 10 school days of the request, where possible.

If the complainant rejects the offer of 3 proposed dates without good reason, the clerk will set a date. The hearing will go ahead using written submissions from both parties.

Any written material will be circulated to all parties at least 5 school days before the date of the meeting.

The board will ensure that the hearing is properly minuted.

At the meeting

The meeting will be held in private. Electronic recordings of meetings or conversations are not permitted unless required as part of reasonable adjustments. Prior knowledge and consent of all parties attending will be sought before meetings or conversations take place. Consent will be recorded in any minutes taken.

At the review panel meeting, the complainant and representatives from the school, as appropriate, will be present. Each will have an opportunity to set out written or oral submissions prior to the meeting.

The complainant must be allowed to attend the panel hearing and be accompanied by a suitable companion if they wish. We don't encourage either party to bring legal representation, but will consider it on a case-by-case basis. For instance, if a school employee is called as a witness in a complaint meeting, they may wish to be supported by their union.

Representatives from the media are not permitted to attend.

At the meeting, each individual will have the opportunity to give statements and present their evidence, and witnesses will be called as appropriate to present their evidence.

The panel, the complainant and the school representative will be given the chance to ask and reply to questions. Once the complainant and school representatives have completed presenting their cases, they will be asked to leave, and evidence will then be considered.

The panel will then put together its findings and recommendations from the case. The panel will also provide copies of the minutes of the hearing and the findings and recommendations to the complainant and, where relevant, the subject of the complaint, and make a copy of the findings and recommendations available for inspection by the head teacher.

The outcome

The committee can:

- Uphold the complaint, in whole or in part
- Dismiss the complaint, in whole or in part

If the complaint is upheld, the committee will:

- Decide the appropriate action to resolve the complaint
- Where appropriate, recommend changes to the school's systems or procedures to prevent similar issues in the future

The school will inform those involved of the decision in writing within 5 school days.

Complaints against the head teacher, a governor or the governing body

Stage 1: formal

Complaints that involve or are about the head teacher should be addressed to the chair of governors, via the school office, and marked as private and confidential.

Complaints about the chair of governors, any individual governor or the whole governing body should be addressed to the clerk to the governing body via the school office, marked as private and confidential.

If the complaint is about the head teacher or 1 member of the governing body (including the chair or vice-chair), a suitably skilled and impartial governor will carry out the steps at stage 1 (set out in section above).

If the complaint is:

- Jointly about the chair and vice-chair
- The entire governing body
- The majority of the governing body

An independent investigator will carry out the steps in stage 1 (set out in the section above). They will be appointed by the governing body and will write a formal response at the end of their investigation.

How to escalate a complaint

If the complainant wishes to proceed to the next stage of the procedure, they should inform the clerk to the governing body in writing within 5 school days. Requests received outside of this timeframe will be considered in exceptional circumstances.

Complaints can be escalated by contacting the clerk to the governing body:

- By letter or email
- Over the phone
- In person
- Through a third party acting on behalf of the complainant

The clerk will need the details of the complaint as set out above, as well as details from the complainant on how they feel the previous stage of the procedure has not addressed their complaint sufficiently, and what they feel would resolve the complaint. The clerk will acknowledge receipt of the request within 5 school days.

Stage 2: review panel

If the complaint is about the head teacher or 1 member of the governing body (including the chair or vice-chair), a committee of members of the governing body will hear the complaint. They will carry out the steps at stage 2.

If the complaint is:

- Jointly about the chair and vice-chair
- The entire governing body
- The majority of the governing body

A committee of independent governors will hear the complaint. They will be sourced from local schools or the local authority and will carry out the steps at stage 2.

Referring complaints on completion of the school's procedure

If the complainant is unsatisfied with the outcome of the school's complaints procedure, they can refer their complaint to the DfE. The DfE will not re-investigate the matter of the complaint. It will look at whether the school's complaints policy and any other relevant statutory policies that the school holds were adhered to. The DfE also looks at whether the school's statutory policies adhere to education legislation.

The DfE will intervene where a school has:

- Failed to act in line with its duties under education law
- Acted (or is proposing to act) unreasonably when exercising its functions

If the complaints procedure is found to not meet regulations, the school will be asked to correct its procedure accordingly.

For more information or to refer a complaint, see the following webpage:

www.gov.uk/complain-about-school

We will include this information in the outcome letter to complainants.

Unreasonable complaints/concerns

Most complaints raised will be valid, and therefore we will treat them seriously. However, a complaint/complainant may become unreasonable if the person:

- 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
- Introduces trivial or irrelevant information that they expect to be taken into account and commented on
- Raises many detailed but irrelevant 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
- 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 (either overtly or covertly)
- Uses abusive, offensive or discriminatory language or violence
- Knowingly provides falsified information
- Publishes unacceptable information on social media or other public forums

This is not an exhaustive list.

Complainants should try to limit their communication with the school 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.

Steps we will take

We will take every reasonable step to address the complainant's comments and give them a clear statement of our position and their options. We will maintain our role as an objective arbiter throughout the process, including when we meet with individuals. We will follow our complaints procedure as normal (as outlined above) wherever possible.

Whenever possible, the head teacher or chair of governors will discuss any concerns with the complainant informally before applying an 'unreasonable' marking. If the behaviour continues, the head teacher will write to the complainant explaining that their behaviour is unreasonable, refer them to this policy and remind them to act in accordance with it. For complainants who excessively contact the school causing a significant level of disruption, we may:

- Give the complainant a single point of contact via an email address
- Limit the number of times the complainant can make contact, such as a fixed number per term
- Ask the complainant to engage a third party to act on their behalf, such as [Citizens Advice](#)
- Put any other strategy in place as necessary

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 school premises and ensuring appropriate measures of support are provided to staff where they are the subject of aggression and/or violence.

Serial/persistent complaints/concerns

If a complainant contacts the school repeatedly on the same issue, the correspondence may then be viewed as 'serial' or 'persistent'. We may stop responding to the complainant when the following conditions are met:

- We have taken every reasonable step to address the complainant's concerns
- The complainant has been given a clear statement of our position and their options
- The complainant contacts the school repeatedly, making substantially the same points each time

The case to stop responding is stronger if:

- The complainant's communications are often or always abusive or aggressive
- The complainant makes insulting personal comments about or threats towards staff
- We have reason to believe the individual is contacting the school with the intention of causing disruption or inconvenience

Where we decide to stop responding, we will inform the individual that we intend to do so. We will also explain that we will consider any new complaints they make provided the concerns raised are materially different to those raised previously and/or are unconnected to the previous concern

Who is a persistent complainant?

For the purpose of this policy, a persistent complainant is a parent/carer or member of the public who complains about issues, either formally or informally, or frequently raises issues that the complainant considers to be within the remit of the school, and whose behaviour is unreasonable. Such behaviour may be characterised by:

- Actions which are obsessive, persistent, harassing, prolific, repetitious
- Prolific correspondence or excessive e-mail or telephone contact about a concern or complaint uses
- Excessive and unreasonable Freedom of Information requests
- An insistence upon pursuing unsubstantiated complaints and/or unrealistic or unreasonable outcomes
- An insistence upon pursuing complaints in an unreasonable manner
- An insistence on introducing trivial or irrelevant information which the complainant expects to be taken into account and commented upon, or raising many detailed but unimportant questions insisting that they are answered fully
- Makes unjustified complaints about the investigator seeking to have them replaced
- An insistence on only dealing with the Head teacher on all occasions irrespective of the issue and the level of delegation in the school to deal with such matters
- An insistence upon repeatedly pursuing a complaint when the outcome is not satisfactory to the complainant but cannot be changed, for example, if the desired outcome is beyond the remit of the school because it is unlawful.

For the purpose of this policy, harassment is the unreasonable pursuit of such actions in such a way that they:

- Appear to be targeted over a significant period of time on one or more members of school staff
- Cause ongoing distress to individual member(s) of school staff
- Have a significant adverse effect on the whole/parts of the school community
- Are pursued in a manner which can be perceived as intimidating and oppressive by the recipient. This could include situations where persistent demands and criticisms, whilst not particularly taxing or serious when viewed in isolation, have a cumulative effect over time of undermining confidence, well-being and health
- Unnecessarily take up an inordinate amount of staff time, detracting from staff members' ability to undertake legitimate school business.

Dealing with Persistent or Vexatious Complaints and/or Harassment in Schools

In the first instance the school will verbally inform the complainant that his / her behaviour is considered to be becoming unreasonable / unacceptable and, if it is not modified, action may be taken in accordance with this policy.

- This will be confirmed in writing (Model Letter 1).
- If the behaviour is not modified the school will take some or all of the following actions as necessary, having regard to the nature of the complainant's behaviour and the effect of this on the school community:
 - Inform the complainant in writing that his/her behaviour is now considered by the school to be unreasonable/unacceptable and, therefore, to fall under the terms of this policy (see Model Letter 2)
 - Inform the complainant that all meetings with a member of staff will be conducted with a second person present and that notes of meetings may be taken in the interests of all parties (see Model Letter 2)

- Inform the complainant that, except in emergencies, all routine communication with the complainant to the school should be by letter only (see Model Letter 2)
- (In the case of physical, or verbal aggression) take advice from HR / Legal Services consider warning the complainant about being banned from the school site; or proceed straight to a temporary ban
- Consider taking advice on pursuing a case under Anti-Harassment legislation
- Consider taking advice from HR / Legal Services about putting in place a specific procedure for dealing with complaints from the complainant, i.e. the complainant will not be able to deal directly with the Head teacher but only with a third person to be identified by the governing body of the school, who will investigate, determine whether or not the concern / complaint is reasonable or vexatious and then advise the Head teacher accordingly.

To confirm. legitimate new complaints may still be considered even if the person making them is, or has been, subject to the Complaints Policy (Section - Dealing with Persistent or Vexatious Complaints and/or Harassment in Schools).

If a complainant's persistent complaining/harassing behaviour is modified and is then resumed at a later date, the school may resume the process identified above at an appropriate level.

If a parent's behaviour is a cause for concern, a school can ask him/her to leave school premises. In serious cases, the Head teacher can notify them in writing that their implied licence to be on school premises has been temporarily revoked subject to any representations that the parent may wish to make. The schools will always give the complainant the opportunity to express their views formally and in writing, the decision to bar in writing. Although fulfilling a public function, schools are private places. The public has no automatic right of entry. Schools will therefore act to ensure they remain a safe place for pupils, staff and other members of their community.

The School reserves the right to:

- Cease to respond to complaints of a vexatious nature
- Bring legal action for harassment against the complainant
- Direct the complainant to the Department of Education

Duplicate complaints

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

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

- Tell the new complainant that we have already investigated and responded to this issue, and that the local process is complete
- Direct them to the DfE if they are dissatisfied with our original handling of the complaint

If a duplicate complaint is raised, which in the view of the school, warrants further consideration, the procedure outlined above will be repeated.

Complaint campaigns

Where the school receives a large volume of complaints about the same topic or subject, especially if these come from complainants unconnected with the school, the school may respond to these complaints by:

- Publishing a single response on the school website
- Sending a template response to all of the complainants

If complainants are not satisfied with the school's response, or wish to pursue the complaint further, the normal procedures will apply.

Record keeping and confidentiality

Our school will record the progress of all complaints, including information about actions taken at all stages, the stage at which the complaint was resolved, and the final outcome. The records will also include copies of letters and emails, and notes relating to meetings and phone calls.

This material will be treated as confidential and stored securely, and will be viewed only by those involved in investigating the complaint or on the review panel.

This is except where the secretary of state (or someone acting on their behalf) or the complainant requests access to records of a complaint through a freedom of information (FOI) request or through a subject access request under the terms of the Data Protection Act, or where the material must be made available during a school inspection.

Records of complaints will be kept securely, only for as long as necessary and in line with data protection law, our privacy notices and records management policy.

The details of the complaint, including the names of individuals involved, will not be shared with the whole governing body in case a review panel needs to be organised at a later point.

Where the governing body is aware of the substance of the complaint before the review panel stage, the school will (where reasonably practicable) arrange for an independent panel to hear the complaint.

Complainants also have the right to request an independent panel if they believe there is likely to be bias in the proceedings.

The decision to approve this request is made by the governing board, who will not unreasonably withhold consent.

Learning lessons

The governing body will review any underlying issues raised by complaints with the head teacher, where appropriate, and respecting confidentiality, to determine whether there are any improvements that the school can make to its procedures or practice to help prevent similar events in the future.

Monitoring arrangements

The Governing Body will monitor the effectiveness of the complaints procedure in making sure that complaints are handled properly. The governing body will track the number and nature of complaints, and review underlying issues as stated in the section above.

The complaints records are logged and managed by Helen Gregory

This policy will be reviewed by Helen Gregory, the head teacher, every 2 years.

At each review, the policy will be approved by the full governing body.

Links with other policies

Policies dealing with other forms of complaints include:

- Child protection and safeguarding policy and procedures
- Admissions policy
- Suspension and permanent exclusion policy
- Staff grievance procedures
- Staff disciplinary procedures
- Special educational needs policy and information report
- Privacy notices

This procedure covers all complaints about any provision of community facilities or services by Durham Lane Primary School, other than complaints that are dealt with under other statutory procedures, including those listed below.

Exceptions	Who to contact
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Admissions to schools Statutory assessments of Special Educational Needs School re-organisation proposals 	Concerns about admissions, statutory assessments of Special Educational Needs, or school re-organisation proposals should be raised with Stockton Borough Council.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Matters likely to require a Child Protection Investigation 	<p>Complaints about child protection matters are handled under our child protection and safeguarding policy and in accordance with relevant statutory guidance.</p> <p>If you have serious concerns, you may wish to contact the local authority designated officer (LADO – Philip Curtis 01642 130080) who has local responsibility for safeguarding or the Multi-Agency Safeguarding Hub (MASH – 01642 130080).</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Exclusion of children from school 	Further information about raising concerns about exclusion can be found at: www.gov.uk/school-discipline-exclusions/exclusions .
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Whistleblowing 	<p>We have an internal whistleblowing procedure for all our employees, including temporary staff and contractors.</p> <p>The Secretary of State for Education is the prescribed person for matters relating to education for whistleblowers in education who do not want to raise matters direct with their employer. Referrals can be made at: www.education.gov.uk/contactus.</p> <p>Volunteer staff who have concerns about our school should complain through the school's complaints procedure. You may also be able to complain direct to the LA or the Department for Education (see link above), depending on the substance of your complaint.</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Staff grievances 	Complaints from staff will be dealt with under the school's internal grievance procedures.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Staff conduct 	<p>Complaints about staff will be dealt with under the school's internal disciplinary procedures, if appropriate.</p> <p>Complainants will not be informed of any disciplinary action taken against a staff member as a result of a complaint. However, the complainant will be notified that the matter is being addressed.</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Complaints about services provided by other providers who may use school premises or facilities 	Providers should have their own complaints procedure to deal with complaints about service. Please contact them direct.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> National Curriculum - content 	Please contact the Department for Education at: www.education.gov.uk/contactus

If other bodies are investigating aspects of the complaint, for example the police, local authority (LA) safeguarding teams or Tribunals, this may impact on our ability to adhere to the timescales within this procedure or result in the procedure being suspended until those public bodies have completed their investigations.

If a complainant commences legal action against Durham Lane Primary School in relation to their complaint, we will consider whether to suspend the complaints procedure in relation to their complaint until those legal proceedings have concluded.

Appendix 1

Complaint Form

Please complete and return to the Head Teacher who will acknowledge receipt and explain what action will be taken.

Your name:
Pupil's name (if relevant):
Your relationship to the pupil (if relevant):
Address: Postcode: Day time telephone number: Evening telephone number:

Please give details of your complaint, including whether you have spoken to anybody at the school about it.

What actions do you feel might resolve the problem at this stage?

Are you attaching any paperwork? If so, please give details.

Signature:

Date:

Official use

Date acknowledgement sent:

By who:

Complaint referred to:

Date:

Model letter 1:

Initial letter informing a complainant that his/her behaviour is considered to fall below a reasonable/ acceptable standard (recorded delivery)

Dear

This letter is to inform you that the school considers your actions in [describe actions, dates, behaviour] on when you, to be unreasonable/unacceptable [delete as appropriate].

We would ask you to bear in mind the fact that such behaviour on a school site can be disruptive and distressing to pupils, staff and parents/carers [delete if behaviour complained of did not occur on school site e.g. persistent use of e-mail, verbally abusive telephone calls].

We are aware that you have raised some concerns, and would advise you that these are usually dealt with most effectively through the School's Complaints Procedure.

At the moment, we are dealing with these issues by [describe actions being taken to resolve concern].

Please note that the School's Policy for Dealing with Persistent or Vexatious Complaints/Harassment sets out standards of behaviour expected of all people in their dealings with the School. These include:

- behaving reasonably;
- treating others with courtesy and respect;
- resolving complaints using the School's Complaints Procedure;
- avoiding physical and verbal aggression at all times.

The Policy also indicates the steps that we may take if these standards are breached. These include:

- making special arrangements for meetings and communication with the school;
- considering a ban from the school premises; considering legal action.

I would ask that you allow school time to resolve the issues according to the correct procedures, and would assure you that we shall take every step to move this process forward as quickly as possible.

Yours sincerely,

Headteacher

Model letter 2:

Informing a complainant that his/her behaviour is now considered to fall under the terms of the policy for dealing with persistent or vexatious complaints/ harassment (recorded delivery)

Dear

You will recall that I wrote to you on [insert date] telling you that I felt your behaviour was unreasonable.

I am now writing to inform you that, in view of your behaviour on [date], when you [describe actions/behaviour] it has been decided that the actions within the section titled '**Dealing with Persistent or Vexatious Complaints and/or Harassment in Schools' within our Complaints Policy** will apply from the date of this letter.

In this circumstance, I have made the following arrangements for your future contact with the school:

[*Delete A or B as applicable]

*A For the foreseeable future, should you wish to meet with any member of staff, I would ask you to note:

- all routine communication, including any request for a meeting between you and the school, will be by letter only. Letters from you need to be addressed to at the school address; email correspondence will not be responded to;
- an appointment will be arranged and confirmed in writing as soon as possible;
- a third party from the school will be present;
- in the interests of all parties, formal notes of this meeting may be made.

*B For the foreseeable future, all meetings arising from any written communication with the school, will not be conducted by a member of staff, but will be conducted by representing the school. I would ask you to note:

- all routine communication, including any request for a meeting between you and the school, will be by letter only. Letters from you need to be addressed to at the school address; email correspondence will not be responded to;
- an appointment will be arranged and confirmed in writing as soon as possible;
- a third party will be present;
- in the interests of all parties, formal notes of this meeting may be made.

Exceptionally, these arrangements do not apply to any emergency involving [insert name of pupil] – in which case you should contact the school in the usual way.

While these arrangements are in place, with respect to normal access to information available on parents' evenings, this will be provided in a summary written report. These arrangements take effect immediately. If you wish to make a representation about the contents of this letter, which may include any expressions of regret on your part and any assurances that you are prepared to give about your future good conduct, you can do so by writing to me at the school by [state ten working days from the date of the letter]. If on receipt of your comments, I consider that the arrangements outlined above should continue, you will be supplied with details of how to review a circumstance of your case.

I do hope that the difficulties we are currently experiencing can soon be resolved.

Yours sincerely

Headteacher