



Ysgol Gyfun Bryntirion | 
Bryntirion Comprehensive

UNREASONABLE BEHAVIOUR OR VEXATIOUS COMPLAINANT POLICY

REVIEWED BY

REV EDWARD EVANS – CHAIR OF GOVERNORS

MR MEAD – HEADTEACHER

APPROVED BY GOVERNING BODY DATE

MARCH 2026

Unreasonable Behaviour or Vexatious Policy

1. Policy objective

1.1 This policy and procedure sets out how Bryntirion Comprehensive School will deal with unreasonable behaviour or vexatious complainants when dealing with members of staff of the School. It applies to all parents, carers and others in their interaction with the School. This approach gives a clear message to the public that any violent, abusive or threatening behaviour towards any employee of the School is unacceptable and will not be tolerated.

1.2 All employees of the School have the right to work in a safe environment. The Governing Body of the School expects its staff to be treated with courtesy, dignity and respect. We are strongly committed to equality and diversity and have a zero tolerance approach towards any harassment or victimisation in any form whatsoever of our staff. As part of this, we also expect anyone engaging with the School in any capacity to respect legal protections that employees have under the Equality Act 2010. The School will take appropriate action that is available, including a referral to South Wales Police, wherever it proves necessary to do so.

1.3 The School is committed to dealing with all complaints fairly and impartially, and to making our services of a high quality and as accessible as possible.

1.4 Most of the contact that the School has with parents and carers is positive. However, there may be occasions when parents and carers act in an unreasonable or unacceptable manner. In some cases the frequency and the nature of their contact with the School can hinder the consideration of their own or other people's enquiries. In some instances the sheer number or nature of their inquiries lead them to be considered as 'persistent' or 'vexatious' in their dealings with staff.

1.5 This policy explains the School's:

- Definition of unreasonable behaviour
- Definition of vexatious request
- Process for dealing with parents and carers who behave in an unreasonable way
- Process for dealing with vexatious requests

1.6 This policy should only be used in exceptional circumstances after all reasonable measures have been taken to try to resolve the complaints under the School's Complaints Policy

2 Definitions

Unreasonable Behaviour

2.1 It is difficult to produce a comprehensive list of the actions that would be deemed unreasonable parent and carer behaviour. Ultimately, it will be a matter for the

Headteacher and Chair of the Governing Body to decide whether particular actions or behaviour are inappropriate, having regard to the circumstances of each case. Examples of behaviour which may be considered unreasonable are listed below but the list is not exhaustive:

- Acts or threats of violence or aggression by an individual toward a member of staff. Where the behaviour is so extreme that it threatens the immediate safety and welfare of staff, the School may report the matter to the police or consider taking legal action. In such cases, the School may not give the complainant prior warning;
- Persistent failure to show respect in dealings with staff or acting in a threatening or abusive way. Examples of such behaviour include shouting, verbal abuse, unsubstantiated allegations, derogatory remarks, inflammatory statements;
- Malicious, unwarranted or defamatory comments or making remarks which are related to any protected characteristics as defined by the Equality Act 2010;
- Hindering objective consideration of an enquiry or operation of a service by the nature or frequency of contact with the School;
- Attempting to pursue any matter, having exhausted all stages of the School's Complaints Policy. This will include where the substance of a complaint is the same as that originally made;
- Contacting the School through different routes about the same issue in a persistent manner. This may include other parties, such as members of the School's Governing Body or the Local Authority;
- Excessive demands on the time and resources of staff with the expectation of an immediate response;
- Being unable to identify the precise issue a parent or carer wants the School to deal with or investigate, despite the School having taken reasonable steps to assist the parent or carer with this issue;
- Focusing on a trivial matter to an extent which is out of proportion to its significance and continue to focus on this point. It is recognised that determining what is 'trivial' can be subjective and careful judgments will be used in applying this criteria;
- Changing the substance of a complaint or continually raising new issues or seeking to prolong contact;

Vexatious requests

2.2 The School defines this as any request which is likely to cause distress or disruption, without any proper or justified cause. Examples would include:

- High volume of correspondence, including telephone calls, or combining requests with accusations and complaints;
- Requests for information that has already been provided, or to reconsider issues that have already been dealt with;
- When compliance with the request would impose significant burden on the School in terms of expense and negatively impact on the School's ability to provide service to others.

3. Strategy for dealing with unreasonable behaviour or vexatious requests

3.1 If a member of the School's staff is of the opinion that a parent or carer's actions or behaviour are unreasonable or to classify a request as vexatious, they shall, in the first instance discuss this with a member of the School's Senior Leadership Team in order to consider any informal steps that can be followed to resolve the concerns. Every effort will be made to satisfy the request or resolve the issue that has been made. For complaints, this will include exhausting all stages of the School's Complaints Policy.

3.2 In the event that no informal steps are appropriate or informal attempts to resolve the concerns do not work, the School will note the comments, and a decision to classify a parent or carer's behaviour as unreasonable or a request as vexatious, will be considered by the Headteacher on an individual basis, in consultation with the Chair of the Governing Body. Each case will be viewed individually and decided on its merits. However, a parent or carer may be deemed to have behaved unreasonably or be vexatious if previous or current contact with them shows that they meet the criteria, dependent upon degree.

3.3 The Headteacher and Chair of the Governing Body will determine the action to be taken which will depend upon the circumstances of each case.

3.4 The Headteacher, in consultation with the Chair of the Governing Body, will determine what action to take including:

- (a) Restricting the manner in which the parent or carer may contact the School;
- (b) The times at which the parent/carer may contact the School;
- (c) Restrict contact through a designated member of member of staff;
- (d) Notify the parent or carer that the School has responded fully to the points raised and has tried to resolve the complaint and continuing contact will serve no useful purpose and advise them to contact the Ombudsman;
- (e) Withdraw contact with the parent or carer either in person, by telephone, by email or any combination of these, provided at least one form of contact is maintained. The School shall not, without the consent of the Headteacher or Chair of the Governing Body, withdraw or not provide any services to which the parent or carer or his/her family are entitled to receive;
- (f) Inform the parent or carer that the School reserves the right to pass the matter to the School's legal advisers which may result in legal action against the parent or carer;
- (g) Removal from the School by a member of the Senior Leadership Team or the police if the behaviour is considered to be a public nuisance offence;
- (h) Other suitable options will be considered in light of the parent or carer's circumstances.

3.5 The Headteacher or the Chair of the Governing Body will write to the parent or carer to:

- (a) Detail the action that will be taken and why as outlined at paragraph 3.4;
- (b) Explain what this means in terms of contact with the School;
- (c) Advise how long any restrictions will be in place and when they will be

- reviewed;
(d) Enclose a copy of this policy.

3.6 The Headteacher shall maintain a central register of decisions relating to the above.

4. Review

4.1 Any restriction imposed shall be subject to a regular review and the timing of such reviews will be notified to the parent or carer. Reviews will be based on the individual circumstances of the case but could typically be for a period of 6 months, dependent on the severity of the situation.

5. Social Media

5.1 The School will remove, without notice, offensive or abusive posts from its social media channels. Additionally, the School reserves the right to take any action it considers necessary where derogatory comments are made about any staff of the School.

6. New complaints

6.1 New complaints from individuals whose behaviour has previously been deemed unreasonable or their complaints vexatious will be treated on their merits. Restrictions imposed in respect of an earlier complaint will not automatically apply to a new matter. The Headteacher will decide if any restrictions which have been applied before are still appropriate and, if necessary, in relation to the new complaint or request.

7. Monitoring Arrangements

7.1 Information will be presented termly to the Governing Body with details of parents or carers who have been categorised as vexatious or have behaved unreasonably.

8 Code of Conduct

8.1 This policy should be read in conjunction with the School's Code of Conduct for Parents, Carers and Visitors as adopted by the Governing Body on 15 May 2025. A copy of this is included as Appendix A.

Appendix A

Bryntirion Comprehensive School

Code of Conduct for Parents, Carers and Visitors

May 2025

Introduction

At Bryntirion Comprehensive School, we value the partnership between parents, carers, and the school in educating children. We welcome your participation and aim to maintain a safe and respectful environment for everyone.

Purpose

This policy outlines acceptable behaviour for parents, carers, and visitors, and the steps taken when behaviour is deemed unacceptable.

Aims

- Ensure respect and safety for all members of the school community.
- Address concerns constructively.
- Encourage support for the school's work.

Expectations

We expect all parents, carers, and visitors to:

- Respect the school's ethos and values.
- Work collaboratively with staff and governors.
- Treat everyone with respect.
- Approach staff courteously to resolve issues.
- Make appointments to speak with staff.
- Clarify a child's version of events with the school's perspective.
- Address their child's behaviour to avoid conflict or aggression.
- Comply with school policies.
- Avoid using staff as threats to influence children's behaviour.
- Respect the school environment and follow instructions from staff.

Unacceptable Behaviour

The following behaviours are not acceptable:

- Interfering with school operations.
- Using threatening, abusive, or insulting language or behaviour.
- Threatening harm to anyone.

- Damaging school property.
- Sending abusive or threatening communications.
- Dictating staff behaviour.
- Aggressive or intimidating behaviour towards staff.
- Defaming the school or staff on social media.
- Physical aggression towards anyone.
- Approaching someone else's child to discuss or chastise them.
- Wearing offensive clothing.
- Making discriminatory comments.
- Smoking, consuming alcohol, or using illegal drugs on school premises.
- Attending school under the influence of alcohol or drugs.
- Bringing dogs, except assistance dogs, to school.

Consequences

Unacceptable conduct will result in:

- Being asked to leave school premises.
- Termination of phone calls if abusive language is used.
- Contacting authorities if necessary.
- Restricting access to school grounds.
- Implementing communication strategies to limit interactions.

Social Media

Concerns should be raised through appropriate channels, not social media. Harmful and defamatory abuse on social media will be reported to the police. This includes social media apps such as Facebook and WhatsApp.

Responding to Serious Incidents

Serious incidents will be reported to the Local Authority or police. The school will take necessary steps to protect learners and staff from harm.

Steps for Addressing Unacceptable Behaviour

1. **Verbal Warning:** Private conversation with the headteacher or SLT member.
2. **Written Warning:** Letter informing the perpetrator of unacceptable conduct.
3. **Final Written Warning:** Final warning letter before further action.
4. **Exclusion from School Premises:** Enforcing exclusion and contacting police if necessary.
5. **Exclusion and/or Removal by Police:** Reporting persistent trespassing to the police.

Incident Reporting

Relevant incidents include trespass, nuisance, verbal abuse, abuse via text/email/social media, sexual or racial abuse, threats, aggression, physical violence, and property damage. Incidents of this nature should be recorded fully in writing.