



Orleton CE Primary School



Kimbolton St James CE Primary School

SUITE OF INFORMATION FOR PARENTS

This will be reviewed and updated by the Governing Body at least annually.
All references to 'the school' imply both Orleton and Kimbolton Primary Schools.

Date signed off by Full Governing Body: Kimbolton: November 2021

Signed Adam Breakwell, Headteacher

Camilla Argyle, Orleton Chair of Governors

Gill James, Kimbolton Chair of Governors

Date next review due: Kimbolton: November 2022

Introduction

Our vision is rooted in 1 Corinthians 16:13-14: 'Keep alert, stand firm in your faith, be courageous, be strong. Let all that you do be done in love.' To this end, and in order to create a positive learning environment, this policy suite has been designed to provide parents with the information needed to support their child(ren) to get the most out of school, and to appropriately challenge school if this is not happening.

This suite of policies aims:

- to give parents an overview of the key information they need to know from our various policies and procedures;
- to let parents know how to raise issues and complaints with school;
- to identify behaviour that the school considers to be unreasonable from third parties.

This policy suite contains the following chapters:

[Chapter 1](#): Overview of key information for parents

[Chapter 2](#): Charging for activities (charging and remissions)

[Chapter 3](#): SEND Information

[Chapter 4](#): Complaints procedure

[Chapter 5](#): Unreasonable behaviour

Complaints and whistleblowing

Complaints should follow the procedures as set out in the Complaints Policy at chapter 4. Staff also have a responsibility to raise any concerns following the school's whistleblowing policy.

Compliance

This policy is set out in line with the [DfE Good Practice Guidance on Complaints Procedures](#).

CHAPTER 1: OVERVIEW OF KEY INFORMATION FOR PARENTS

This chapter brings together the information from the other policy suites that is of most relevance to parents. You are, of course, welcome to read any or all of our policies in detail should you wish to. You will find most of these on our website, and all are available on request from the school office.

1.1 Admissions

We welcome all children to Orleton and Kimbolton schools, regardless of whether their families attend church. We also frequently have children attending from outside the catchment area. For more detailed information, please see our 'Admissions Frequently Asked Questions' on the website.

1.2 Attendance

Unless a child is ill, it is expected that they will be in school each day by 8.40 (Orleton) or 8.50 (Kimbolton). If your child is ill, please let us know as soon as possible and by 9.30 at the latest. You can let us know by telephone, email, text or written note. If your child is not in school and we have not heard from you by 9.30, we will try to contact you, and will keep trying until we get in touch with you, so we all know your child is safe. If we cannot get in touch with you, we may try to contact other people on your contacts list.

If you wish to take your child out of school for any reason other than illness then please discuss this with the headteacher, but please be aware that there are only very limited circumstances in which the headteacher and governors are allowed by law to approve this.

1.3 Behaviour

Our emphasis is on encouraging positive behaviour; we want to enable children and staff to be kind and to be the best they can be. At a very basic level, we expect adults and children alike to be mutually polite when addressing each other, to respect others and their needs, to treat property with care and respect, and to take pride in their appearance. We aim to create an environment where all pupils and staff feel able to be themselves, free from discrimination or abuse. If people do feel bullied or discriminated against then we take this very seriously, so please let your class teacher or the headteacher know as soon as possible (or encourage your child to do so) if you have any concerns at all.

We consistently reward good behaviour both in individual classes and across the school in collective worship. Poor behaviour will be sanctioned, for example through a verbal reprimand, or missing break-time, speaking with parents, not being able to represent the school in an activity for a short period of time etc.. Where a child has behaved poorly, we will encourage them to reflect and consider what could go better next time.

Staff members do not have a responsibility for managing behaviour of pupils outside school, but we are willing to support if our pupils are involved in child-to-child abuse outside school, either in-person or online. Please let us know if you have any concerns that this may be the case.

Some children have specific behavioural difficulties and in these cases we will work with parents (and other professionals when appropriate) to understand the root causes of the problem and develop a package of support.

Exclusions (fixed-term or permanent) will only ever be used as a last resort. If the headteacher and governors decide that it is necessary to exclude a pupil then parents will be informed immediately and told about the implications. The local authority will also be informed.

Staff are allowed to use reasonable force to control a situation where there is otherwise a significant risk of negative impact on others. Staff are trained where this is an anticipated need, and parents will always be informed as soon as possible if this has been necessary.

1.4 Home learning (or homework)

Small amounts of work completed at home are a useful way to reinforce learning at school, and we ask that parents support their children in this. It will include a combination of:

1. practising skills and knowledge, including 1:1 reading, spelling practice, and times tables practice, and;
2. research, for example finding out information for work done in school, practical challenges to build and make, use of specific online resources recommended by school, and online learning platforms to submit work.

As a general guide, we expect that children will complete around 30-60 minutes of homework per week in the early stages of school, rising to around 2 hours per week by Year 6.

1.5 Food in school

Breakfast

Both schools have a breakfast club which offers a rotating menu of varied healthy food items.

Morning Snacks

All our Reception, Year 1 and Year 2 children are entitled to free fruit under the free fruit scheme, so these classes include a morning break-time snack of washed fruit for all children. KS2 children bring snacks from home and we encourage parents to make this a healthy snack.

School dinners

All our school meals are catered by Orleton School Food CIC. Menus and ingredients are prepared in line with the School Food Standards, which ensure a balanced diet for all pupils. School meals are free for those in Reception, Year 1 and Year 2.

Packed lunches

balanced lunch, including a substantial item like a sandwich, wrap or pasta. As school dinners include a pudding each day, children can also pack an item such as a packet of crisps or a cake to be eaten with the packed lunch (and not as a break-time snack). We do not allow confectionery such as chocolate bars at any time, and only water may be sent with packed lunches, although a fruit smoothie may be included as a pudding.

1.6 Online safety

Pupils are taught in school how to remain safe online, and we encourage parents to reinforce this message at home. The online world develops and changes at speed, so the school's approach is to focus on the essential knowledge and behaviours which underpin safe internet use and acceptable online behaviour. This approach includes enabling children to make judgments about what they see online so that they do not assume that it is true, valid or acceptable, understand how companies use marketing, and can identify risks. They will also learn how to navigate the internet responsibly and how to recognise the ways in which online anonymity and invisibility can be manipulated or used for harmful behaviours such as using fake profiles, incitement to hate crimes, and online grooming.

It is also important that young people are aware of the potential negative impact of social media on their own identity, self-esteem, confidence, body image and well-being, and having a healthy self-image forms part of the school's approach to Personal, Social and Health Education and to Relationships Education. We will model a responsible approach to its social media presence. We will not show images of children without parental consent nor breach the privacy of its staff or pupils. We may share general information via social media but will not use social media to communicate with individual parents/carers.

Pupils are not allowed to bring their own electronic devices into school. This means that, within school, all access to the internet is via school-owned devices. If a child tries to search for inappropriate information, to access an inappropriate website, or to send a message or information that may constitute online child-on-child abuse then the headteacher will be alerted. The same applies to staff when they are using devices on the school's network. Staff members are allowed their own devices in school but they are not allowed to take pictures of children, or school activities, on them.

We ask that parents support us in encouraging children to remain safe online. Parents are encouraged to:

- set parental controls and boundaries around internet use;
- be aware of the minimum age requirements for social media sites (usually 13);
- take an interest in their children's online world, including online friends and favourite websites;
- be open with their children that they can always feel comfortable to discuss their online activity, including where there is cause for concern.

Posting pictures online of children in school uniform (other than your own) should be avoided, unless they are images from our official Facebook page. Photos of other children from alternative sources must not be posted online without their parents' consent. Using social media to harass members of staff or other families, or to damage the school's reputation, is not acceptable.

1.7 Visitors, volunteers and helpers

We welcome visitors, volunteers and helpers into our school as a key part of our school community. If you are interested in being involved in any way, please speak to your child's class teacher, the school office or the headteacher.

We do ask, though, that all volunteers and visitors bear in mind that they have a responsibility to act as role models and to display kind, considerate, thoughtful behaviour, not to be deliberately offensive or discriminatory, to respect the confidentiality of any information received in school, and to let us know if you observe anything that gives you cause for concern, in relation either to a pupil or to a member of staff. We also ask that volunteers and visitors do not take pictures of children whilst in school, unless on a school device and authorised by school to do so.

We will ask all volunteers to have a DBS check, which will be organised through school and which school will pay for. In some circumstances, a risk-assessment may be used instead in a very short-term situation and where the volunteer would not be alone with a child.

1.8 Staff conduct

All members of staff are expected to demonstrate consistently high standards of professional and personal conduct. School employees are role models in a unique position of influence and must adhere to behaviour that sets a good example to pupils and the wider school community, and maintains their and the school's reputation, whether inside or outside working hours. If you have any concerns about a member of staff's behaviour, please contact the headteacher (or chair of governors if your concern is about the headteacher).

1.9 Child protection and safeguarding

Child protection and safeguarding concerns arise when there is a concern that a child is, for whatever reason, being neglected or abused by someone at home, in school or elsewhere in the community, or online. This may include abuse by other children. By creating a positive and inclusive atmosphere in school, we aim to have a culture where pupils (and parents/carers) feel

able to talk to us about any worries or concerns they may have. We know this is not always easy, so our staff are also trained to look out for warning signs that a child is being neglected or abused. If a member of staff is concerned, they will always discuss it with the headteacher in the first instance and agree an appropriate course of action, which will usually involve a conversation with parents/carers at an early stage.

1.10 Data management

All data at Orleton and Kimbolton are handled first and foremost with yours and your child's welfare in mind. We only gather the information we need in order to deliver your child a high quality education and wider school experience. All information we do hold is kept safely and securely and only those who have a right and need to access it are able to do so. Copies of our privacy notices are available from the school office, which explain in more detail why and how we use the data we collect. Some information we are allowed to hold and use appropriately without consent, as explained in our privacy notices. For other data, you will be asked for consent. You will also be asked for consent for photographs or videos of your child to be included in displays, on the website etc. On occasion, it may be necessary for the school to share sensitive information without consent, but this will only be done in extreme circumstances (e.g. where there is a risk of immediate harm, in link with our child protection and safeguarding policy). When information is shared (whether with or without consent), it will be transferred securely and only shared with those who have a need and right to know it.

Under the Data Protection Act, you have a right to request that any data held on you or your child be shared with you. Under the Freedom of Information Act, you have a right to request that non-sensitive or non-personal information held by the school is released.

1.11 Premium funding

Premium funding enables additional support at school for those who most need it, helps to close any gaps in progress and attainment, and ensures that all children have the best chance of having good physical and mental health and learning outcomes. We receive additional 'premium' funding for some pupils, and we encourage all families who may be eligible for additional funding to let us know so that we can make the best use of the additional support available.

CHAPTER 2: CHARGES FOR ACTIVITIES (CHARGING AND REMISSIONS)

2.1 Introduction

We do not charge for any activity undertaken as part of the National Curriculum. There are some charges relating to school trips, residential visits, transport to and from swimming lessons, some after-school clubs, and music tuition (where this is not part of the National Curriculum). With the exception of music lessons which are invoiced directly by peripatetic music teachers, these charges are requested on a voluntary basis. Pupils for whom the school receives Pupil Premium funding are entitled to a reduction in some of these charges. The headteacher may make a discretionary subsidy available to other pupils whose families are unable to fund the full cost. The school calculates the cost based on a per-pupil figure and may have to cancel trips which are financially unviable.

Parents/carers have a right to know how each trip is funded, and we will provide this information on request. Pupils will not be treated differently based on the level of contribution which their parents/carers have paid for their participation in school trips.

2.2 School trips

School trips are organised to enhance pupils' educational experience and enrich the curriculum and are subsidised by the school. This could include museum or theatre visits, musical or sporting events or outdoor adventure activities. School trips are expected to be self-financing.

2.3 Residential visits

If we organise a residential visit in school time (or mainly in school time) which relates directly the National Curriculum, no charge is made for staff time, but we do charge for the costs of activities, board, lodging and travel.

2.4 Swimming

We organise swimming lessons for all children in Key Stage 1 at Kimbolton and Year 2 and upwards at Orleton, which take place in school time and are part of the National Curriculum; voluntary contributions are invited towards the cost of transport. We inform parents/carers when these lessons are due to take place and seek their written permission for their children to take part.

2.5 After-school clubs

Some after-school clubs (e.g. additional sports coaching run by qualified coaches who are not members of staff) attract an additional charge towards the additional cost of qualified coaching.

2.6 Music tuition

Peripatetic music teachers who are accredited by Encore (the Herefordshire Music Service) or who are experienced music teachers charge parents/carers directly for individual lessons and for instrument hire.

2.7 School meals and milk

Parents whose children are not eligible for free school meals are asked to pay for school meals. Milk is provided free of charge to pupils under the age of 5. Pupils in Reception who reach the age of 5 may continue to have milk at a subsidised rate, paid for by parents. School milk is also provided free of charge to those pupils in receipt of benefits-assessed Free School Meals whose parents request it.

CHAPTER 3: SEND INFORMATION

This chapter outlines what we offer to all pupils with Special Educational Needs or Disability (SEND). A copy can be obtained from our school website or the school office or by contacting 01568 780366 (Orleton) or 01568 612691 (Kimbolton).

A pupil is considered to have Special Educational Needs or Disability (SEND) if they have defined difficulties over and above those generally experienced by the majority of their peer group. This statement outlines what the school currently provides.

How does the school identify SEND?

We firmly believe in early intervention, ensuring that the youngest children that enter school are assessed and monitored to decide upon any support needed. We continuously monitor all children and use a variety of methods to identify additional support needs, including:

- concerns raised by parents/carers, teachers or the child;
- if a child is 12 months or more behind the Age-Related Expectation;
- termly pupil progress meetings;
- additional needs that require support (e.g. diagnosed condition from a medical professional).

We very quickly have meetings with parents to gain more information and provide them with ideas to help support the children as fully as possible.

What should I do if I think my child may have Special Educational Needs?

The class teacher is the initial point of contact for responding to parental concerns. If you have further concerns, please contact the SENCo (see contact details at the end of this chapter).

What support will be put in place?

If a child goes onto the SEND register, they will have a termly meeting with the class teacher and the SENCo, and an Individual Education Plan (IEP) (or School Action Plus plan if outside agencies are involved) will be put in place. Some children receive either top-up funding or an EHCP. Each child's educational programme will be planned by the class teacher, in consultation with the SENCo, and will be differentiated to suit the individual needs of pupils. This may include additional support from the class teacher or a teaching assistant. If a child has more specific needs relating to an area of their education, then the pupil will be placed in a small focus group run by the teacher or teaching assistant. The length of time of any intervention will vary according to each pupil's needs, and interventions will be regularly reviewed to ascertain the effectiveness of the provision and to inform future planning. Interventions will be recorded on a 'provision map' (which records the interventions, timings, and impact of the interventions). Some children who are not considered to have SEND may receive interventions if the teacher and SENCo consider it necessary.

Occasionally, a child may need more expert support from an outside agency. In these situations, a referral will be made, with parental consent, and forwarded to the most appropriate agency. After a series of assessments, a programme of support will be recommended and implemented in consultation with the parents/carers and the child.

If you have any queries related to the interventions, please contact the class teacher or SENCo.

How will the curriculum be matched to my child's needs?

When a child has been identified as having SEND, their work will be differentiated by the class teacher (and TA) to enable them to access the curriculum more easily. If a child has been identified with SEND, an Individual Education Plan (IEP) will be written in conjunction with the parents and the child. Targets are set according to the child's specific area of need. These will be monitored by the class teacher and the SEND coordinator over the year. Plans will be discussed with parents/carers and the child during parents' evenings or at a specially organised meeting to

suit all parties. Reasonable adjustments will be made should a child require specialist equipment to help them access the curriculum effectively.

How will I know how my child is doing?

You will be able to discuss your child's progress at parents' evenings. The class teacher will also be available at the end of each day, and appointments can be made to speak in more detail to the class teacher and/or the SENCo.

The interventions each child receives will be regularly reviewed to ascertain the effectiveness of the provision and to inform future planning. Termly pupil progress meetings identify how pupils are progressing over time and are an opportunity for the teacher, headteacher, SENCo and governors to highlight any potential barriers to learning that a child or children might be experiencing, so that further support can be provided. Annual reports are sent home to parents/carers, but we pride ourselves on close liaison with parents/carers and if we have a concern about a child, we will contact you immediately to discuss how best to support a child's learning, without waiting for an annual report.

The governors are responsible nominate annually a link governor to monitor the SEND provision.

How will I be involved in discussions about planning for my child's education?

All parents are encouraged to contribute to their child's education. This may be through:

- discussion with the class teacher, either in a scheduled meeting or after school;
- parents' evenings;
- separate discussions with the SENCo and other professionals involved with their child;
- engagement with an external agency.

How will my child be involved in Physical Education?

Each child's needs will be assessed individually, and we will work with parents and teachers to find the most effective way for every child to be included.

How will you help me to support my child's learning?

The class teacher may suggest ways you can support your child.

The SENCo may meet with you to discuss how best to support your child with given strategies if appropriate.

If outside agencies have been involved, they may make suggestions or work with you to support you child.

How will my child be included in activities outside the classroom, including school trips?

Activities and school trips are available to all. Risk assessments are carried out and procedures are put into place to enable all children to participate where possible, and parents/carers are consulted about every trip.

How accessible is the school environment?

We are happy to discuss individual access requirements. Some of the key features of our schools are that:

- Kimbolton has ramps throughout school that allow access to the vast majority of the site; there are currently two classrooms inaccessible to wheelchairs but a ramp would be installed should a child need this;
- Orleton is all on one level in the main building; an external building will have a ramp fitted should a child need this.

In both schools, we seek to keep our outside spaces as accessible as possible, with wide spaces and (where possible) paths and play surfaces that are accessible to wheelchairs.

What support is there for my child's social, emotional and mental wellbeing?

The schools employ a counsellor who works in each school for one day per week. The counsellor also supports connection to outside agencies. Staff have had training in areas such as emotion coaching and we respond to specific needs of children by organising training and support to meet their needs. Teachers and TAs will always take time to talk to children when asked (so long as it is not to the detriment of the rest of the class).

How will the school prepare and support my child when they join the school or transfer to a new school?

The transition process is managed to make the process as smooth as possible. Some of the things we do include:

- strong links with the on-site nursery to ensure smooth transition, and visits to other nurseries before children join our school;
- opportunities for new starters to visit and to discuss access arrangements;
- allowing time for teachers to talk to parents and/or the child(ren) to understand individual needs;
- transition sessions where pupils spend some time with their new class teacher;
- visits to local high schools and work with their students and teachers, including more structured support in Year 6 and, for children with SEND, liaison with the high school's SENCo and, if needed, a separate meeting with parents/carers.

How will the school ensure that we make 'reasonable adjustments' to meet the learning needs of a SEND child?

The school's budget is organised in such a way as to allow for specialist support to be provided for any pupil that should require it. This may take the form of staff time or equipment to help a child access the curriculum effectively. Need is prioritised, and appropriate adjustments arrived at, in order to make best use of the school's resources.

What if my child has a specific medical need?

A detailed 'Individual Healthcare Plan' (IHP) will be compiled by the school with support from the school nurse or other agencies, in consultation with the parents/carers, and shared with all staff that support children with their learning. Reasonable adjustments (to include relevant training) will be put in place to support children to access the curriculum effectively.

Where necessary, in agreement with parents/carers and with a signed medicine consent form, to ensure safety of both children and staff members, medicines may be administered in school. This may involve contact with the child's GP or other healthcare professionals.

Further details of the school's approach to specific medical needs can be found in the policy on supporting pupils with medical conditions.

What if my child already has an Education, Health and Care Plan (EHCPs)

The school is experienced in working with EHC plans and will ensure that it works closely with the agencies and professionals involved to help to deliver these plans effectively. EHC plans are reviewed at least annually, and the school prides itself on close liaison between the child, parents/carers and other professionals to help meet the specific needs of these plans.

What specialist services and expertise are available at or accessed by the school?

School counsellor

Educational psychologist
School nurse
Learning support specialists
CAMHS (Child and Adolescent Mental Health Service)
Speech and language therapists
Occupational therapists
Looked-after children support team
Behaviour support team
Gypsy, Roma and traveller support team
English as an Additional Language (EAL) team
Support for visual, hearing impairments and physical difficulties team
Specialist child counsellors

What additional support is available?

For more information about services offered at a county level, please refer to the Local Authorities [Local Offer](#). Contact details of specific agencies can be found [here](#).

What training do staff have to support children and young people with SEND?

The training of staff is a priority for our school. Different members of staff have training related to SEND. Due to the wide variety of need that a school may encounter, this training is targeted based on the needs of pupils at the current time.

What if I have a complaint about the school or an individual?

Our complaints policy outlines the process for making a complaint. A copy of this is part of this policy suite and is accessible on the school website, or by contacting or visiting the school (see contact details at the end of this document).

Whom can I contact for further information?

Any parent who wishes to talk to someone about their child(ren)'s educational needs should contact their class teacher or the SENCo via the school office (for Kimbolton: Charlotte Hyde, admin@kimbolton-st-james.hereford.sch.uk or 01568 612691; for Orleton: Lisa Butler, admin@orleton.hereford.sch.uk or 01568 780366).

CHAPTER 4: COMPLAINTS PROCEDURE

4.1 General Principles

This procedure is intended to allow parents, or any other individual, to raise a concern or complaint relating to the school, or the services that it provides. To enable a proper investigation, concerns or complaints should be brought to the attention of the school as soon as possible. In general, any matter raised more than three months after the event, will not be considered. An anonymous concern or complaint will not be investigated under this procedure unless there are exceptional circumstances.

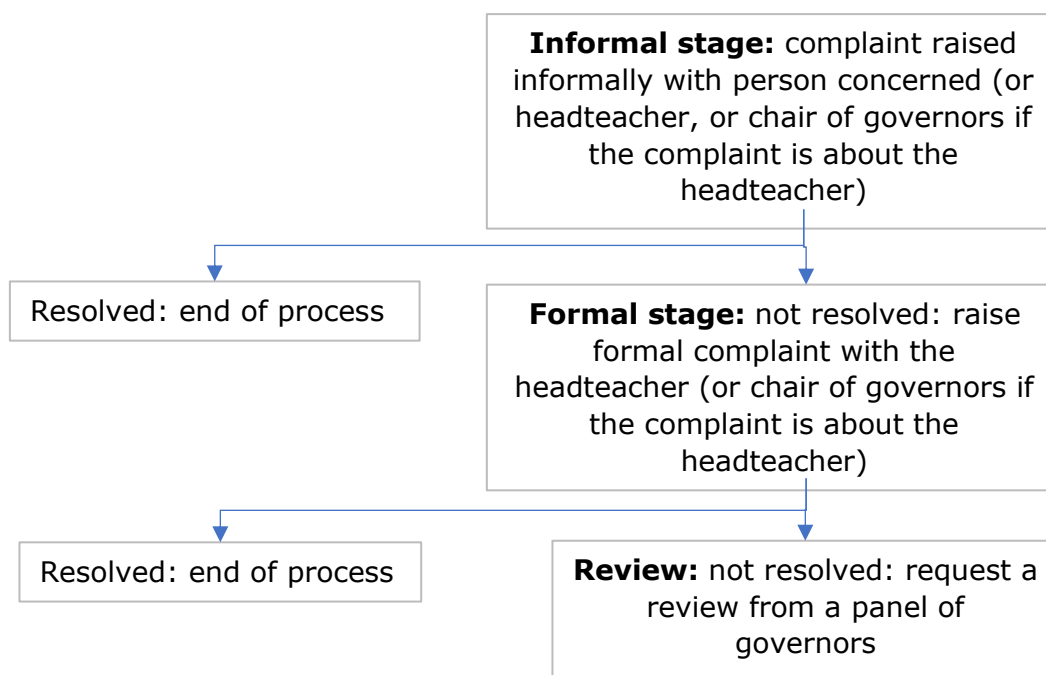
4.2 Scope of this complaints procedure

This complaints procedure covers any complaints about the school, except for those covered by alternative statutory processes, including the following:

Exceptions	Whom to contact
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Admissions to schools • School re-organisation proposals • Statutory assessments of Special Educational Needs 	Concerns about admissions, statutory assessments of SEND, or school re-organisation proposals should be raised initially with the governing body, and subsequently with the Diocese of Hereford Board of Education and Herefordshire Council.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Matters likely to require a Child Protection Investigation 	Complaints about child protection matters that cannot be dealt with within school may be raised with the Local Authority Designated Officer, whose contact details are available in the Child Protection & Safeguarding Policy Suite.
<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

4.3 Raising a concern or complaint

Most complaints are resolved informally, but on occasion then a more formal response may be needed. The following diagram summarises the process, which is elaborated upon in more detail below.



Informal Stage

It is normally appropriate to communicate directly with the member of staff concerned. This may be by letter, by telephone or in-person by appointment, requested via the school office. Many concerns can be resolved by simple clarification or the provision of information and it is anticipated that most complaints will be resolved by this informal stage.

In the case of serious concerns, it may be appropriate to address them directly to the headteacher (or to the chair of the governing body if the complaint is about the headteacher). If you are uncertain about whom to contact, please seek advice from the school office or the clerk to the governing body.

Formal Stage

If your concern or complaint is not resolved at the informal stage you may choose to put the complaint in writing and pass it to the headteacher, who will be responsible for ensuring that it is investigated appropriately. If the complaint is about the headteacher, your complaint should be passed to the clerk to the governing body, for the attention of the chair of the governing body. If the complaint is jointly about the chair and vice-chair, or the entire governing body, or the majority of the governing body, then the complaint at this stage will be considered by an independent investigator appointed by the governing body or (for Kimbolton) the Diocese of Hereford. At the conclusion of their investigation, the independent investigator will provide a formal written response.

A Complaint Form is provided to assist you; forms are available from the school office. You should include details which might assist the investigation, such as names of potential witnesses, dates and times of events, and copies of relevant documents. It is very important that you include a clear statement of the actions that you would like the school to take to resolve your concern. Without this, it is much more difficult to proceed. Please pass the completed form, in a sealed envelope to the school office. The envelope should be addressed to the headteacher, or to the clerk to the governing body, as appropriate.

If you prefer to let us know your complaint verbally and for us to take notes, the school office or clerk to the governors can assist with this, or the headteacher may assist if you feel more comfortable with this.

The headteacher (or chair of the governing body) will acknowledge your complaint within two working days. The headteacher (or chair of the governing body) may invite you to a meeting to clarify your concerns and to explore the possibility of an informal resolution. If you accept that invitation, you may be accompanied by a friend, if you wish, to assist you in explaining the nature of your concerns.

It is possible that your complaint will be resolved through a meeting with the headteacher (or chair). If not, arrangements will be made for the matter to be fully investigated, using the appropriate procedure, which may include interviews which will be fully documented. In any case you should learn in writing, usually within five school days of the school receiving your formal complaint, of how the school intends to proceed. This notification should include an indication of the anticipated timescale, which will vary depending on the complexity of the situation.

Any investigation will begin as soon as possible and when it has been concluded, you will be informed in writing of its conclusion.

If you are not satisfied with the manner in which the process has been followed, you may request that the governing body reviews the process followed by the school, in handling the complaint. Any such request must be made in writing to the clerk to the governing body, within ten school days of receiving notice of the outcome, and include a statement specifying any perceived failures to follow the procedure. The procedure described below will be followed. A Review Request form, available from the school office, is provided for your convenience.

Review Process

Any review of the process followed by the school will be conducted by a panel of three impartial members of the governing body who have not been involved in the process previously. If there are fewer than three impartial governors of the school, the clerk will source additional governors from other local schools. If the complaint is about jointly about the Chair and Vice Chair, or about the entire governing body, or the majority of the governing body then the complaint at this stage will be considered by a committee of independent governors.

The review will usually take place within ten school days of receipt of your request. The review will normally be conducted through a consideration of written submissions, but reasonable requests to make oral representations will be considered sympathetically. In this case, the clerk will organise a meeting; if more than three reasonable dates are turned down without good reason, the clerk will select a date. If a meeting is to take place, the clerk will notify all parties at least a full working week before the date of the meeting, and will circulate any written materials at the same time. If the above timescales cannot be met then the clerk will let you know as soon as possible and will let you know the revised timescale.

Next steps

If the complainant believes the school did not handle their complaint in accordance with the published complaints procedure or they acted unlawfully or unreasonably in the exercise of their duties under education law, they can contact the Department for Education after they have completed the Review Process.

The Department for Education will not normally reinvestigate the substance of complaints or overturn any decisions made by the school. They will consider whether the school has adhered to education legislation and any statutory policies connected with the complaint.

The complainant can refer their complaint to the Department for Education online at: www.education.gov.uk/contactus, by telephone on: 0370 000 2288 or by writing to

Department for Education, Piccadilly Gate, Store Street, MANCHESTER M1 2WD.

4.4 Provision for children with special educational or disability needs.

If you feel that the school has not provided the support required by your child's SEN statement or education, health and care (EHC) plan you should talk to the school's special educational needs coordinator. If your complaint remains unresolved you should follow the complaints procedure outlined above and if you then remain unhappy you should [contact the local authority here](#).

If you disagree with a decision that the LA has made about a SEN statement or an EHC plan you can appeal the decision through one of the following websites: <https://www.gov.uk/appeal-ehc-plan-decision> or <https://www.gov.uk/appeal-sen-statement-decision>. Please note that complaints of this kind cannot be investigated by the school.

CHAPTER 5: UNREASONABLE BEHAVIOUR

5.1 Introduction

We are keen to positively and proactively work with parents, visitors, residents and contractors to resolve issues, using our resources to achieve the best outcomes for our school and, specifically, our pupils. However, there are, very rarely occasions when this is not possible. This policy has been produced to create a joint understanding of what is considered acceptable and unacceptable behaviour when working with school-based staff and school governors, including dealing with abusive, persistent or vexatious complaints and complainants. Employers have a duty to provide a safe and healthy working environment to all employees. This includes protection from peer to peer abuse, harassment and unreasonable behaviour of any kind. Section 547 of the Education Act 1996 makes it a criminal offence for a person who is on school premises without lawful authority to cause or permit a nuisance or disturbance and individuals may be dealt with under this legislation and by way of a barring order should this be deemed necessary. Although fulfilling a public function, schools are private places. The public has no automatic right of entry. Those with parental or caring responsibility of enrolled pupils have an 'implied licence' to come onto the school premises at certain stated times. It is for schools to define and set out the extent of such access. Parents exceeding this would be trespassing.

5.2 What behaviour is unreasonable?

We recognise that there may be times when people contact our school where they may have reason to feel aggrieved, upset or distressed. We do not view assertive behaviour (for example, putting forward their case in a persuasive manner) as unreasonable. However, we will manage behaviour that is aggressive, rude or abusive, or which places unreasonable demands on our staff under the terms of this policy. Unreasonable behaviour is behaviour or language, whether face to face, by telephone, social media or written that may cause staff to feel intimidated, threatened or abused.

5.3 Unreasonable requests and communication

We ask you to recognise that, due to the volume of work with which we deal, we may not be able to respond immediately to your requests. This does not mean that your concerns are any less important to us. If we have asked for your patience but you continue to pursue your concerns, we may consider such behaviour to be unreasonable.

Requests may be unreasonable by the nature and scale of service expected. Examples may include requesting responses within unreasonable timescales, insisting on speaking with certain members of staff, adopting a "capture-all" approach by contacting many staff members and third parties.

Communication may be considered unreasonable if, for example, individuals continually contact us while we are in the process of looking at a matter, make a number of approaches about the same matter without raising new issues, refuse to accept a decision made where explanations for the decision have been given, continue to pursue complaints/issues which have no substance, continue to pursue complaints/issues which have already been investigated and determined, continue to raise unfounded or new complaints arising from the same set of facts.

5.4 How will we manage unreasonable behaviour?

All our staff within school have the authority to manage unreasonable behaviour, including assaults by pupils upon staff. We have a zero-tolerance position on violence and threats against staff and any such behaviour from adults will always be reported to the police. In all other cases, we will only restrict communication with you if we have informed you that your behaviour is unreasonable and have asked you to modify your behaviour. We will explain what action will be taken if the warning is ignored and, if you do not modify your behaviour, we will take steps to restrict communications with you. The School's Leadership Team will, in consultation with

relevant employees, complete a risk assessment in appropriate circumstances. If we decide a restriction is appropriate, the school will consider which of the options below best fits the circumstances. The level of restriction that is applied will be proportionate, taking into account the nature, extent and impact of your behaviour on our ability to do our work. We will be transparent and explain to you what restriction we are putting in place, our reasons for doing so, and how long the restriction will apply. If the school has already made a reasonable adjustment for you, this will be taken into account when deciding upon the appropriate course of action. In exceptional cases, we may consider barring individuals from school; where this seems necessary we will work with the local authority and will always give the person concerned the right to comment before making a final decision.

Should an incident of cyber peer to peer abuse occur, the school will take steps to remove the offending material from view and where appropriate, consult with the Local Authority's legal department regarding what action should be initiated.

5.5 Options to restrict contact

If you continue to behave unreasonably after we have asked you to modify your behaviour, the options we will consider are as follows.

Option 1: Requiring you to contact a named staff member(s) only.

Option 2: Restricting contact (whether via telephone, face to face, or digital) to specified days and times, as agreed with you.

Option 3: Terminating contact if you persistently raise issues which we have already responded to in full. We will politely explain that we are unable to comment further on the matter and will ask if there are any other issues you wish to raise. If no new issues are raised and you persist in raising issues which we have already addressed, we will tell you so before ending contact. Where relevant a written warning will then be sent, with a view to limiting future communication to written communication only. If digital contact is made under a username, if necessary, we will aim to seek identity.

Option 4: Terminating contact if you are aggressive, rude, abusive or offensive. We will politely ask you to modify your behaviour, but if the behaviour continues, we will tell you again that your behaviour is unacceptable and end the conversation. The manager of the member of staff involved will intervene including where relevant a written warning, with a view to limiting future communication to written only. As above, if digital contact is made under a username, if necessary, we will aim to seek identity.

Option 5: Restricting the issues we will correspond on.

Option 6: Returning documents to you if you send us a large volume of irrelevant documentation, or in extreme cases advising you that further irrelevant documents will be destroyed.

Option 7: If we have already fully explained our reasons for a decision and you have exhausted the procedure to request a review of that decision, declining to respond to further correspondence which does not raise new issues, and although reading and filing this correspondence, not acknowledging your correspondence unless you provide significant new information or evidence relating to the matter.

Option 8: Blocking your emails if the number and length of emails sent causes difficulties for us to conduct our business.

Option 9: Not responding to correspondence which is abusive or offensive and blocking emails that are abusive or offensive.

Option 10: If you make a large number of reports to us which prove to be unfounded, asking that in future any further allegations you submit are supported by an independent third party

such as the Citizens Advice Bureau, a legal representative or an advocate, to ensure that in future our staff resources are spent in a proportionate way. Physical violence, verbal or written abuse, threats or harassment against our staff will not be tolerated and will be reported to the police, who may decide to prosecute. Any one of the above options (or a combination of these) may be applied to an individual.

In extreme circumstances, you may be banned from the school site and asked not to communicate with any school staff, other than through a nominated representative.

5.6 Applying this policy to complainants

In some circumstances, someone who has raised a complaint with the school may be considered persistent or vexatious. For example, where they are making unreasonable demands on staff to respond rapidly; repeatedly make the same complaint when it has already been responded to; display aggressive or abusive behaviour etc.

When the decision has been taken to apply this policy to a complainant, the Solicitor to the School will contact the complainant in writing to explain why we have taken the decision, what action we are taking, the duration of that action, the review process of this policy, the right of the complainant to contact the Director of Children's Wellbeing about the fact that they have been treated as a vexatious/persistent complainant. The Solicitor to the School will enclose a copy of this policy in the letter to the complainant. Where a complainant continues to behave in a way which is unacceptable, the Solicitor to the School in consultation with the Local Authority Director of Children's Services may decide to refuse all contact with the complainant and stop any investigation into his or her complaint. Where the behaviour is so extreme or it threatens the immediate safety and welfare of staff, we will consider other options, for example reporting the matter to the police or taking legal action. In such cases, we may not give the complainant prior warning of that action. In incidents which are deemed as being severe, Herefordshire Council will, in conjunction with the police, initiate legal action.

The status of a complainant judged to be unreasonably persistent or vexatious will be reviewed by the Solicitor to the School after three months and at the end of every subsequent three months within the period during which the policy is to apply. The complainant will be informed of the result of this review if the decision to apply this policy to them has been changed or extended. In some cases, relations between schools and unreasonably persistent or vexatious complainants break down completely while complaints are under investigation and there is little prospect of achieving a satisfactory outcome. In such circumstances, there may be little purpose in following all the stages of the complaint's procedure. Where this occurs, the Ombudsman may be prepared to consider a complaint before the procedure has run its course.

5.7 Record keeping

Adequate records will be retained of the details of the case and the action that has been taken. The Solicitor to the School will retain a record of the name and address of each individual who is treated as abusive, vexatious or persistent, when the restriction came into force and ends, what the restrictions are, when the individual and departments were advised, where this relates to a pupil, parents/guardians/carers will also be advised. The lead executive member for complaints will be provided with an annual report giving information about individuals who have been treated as vexatious/persistent as per this policy.

5.8 Health & Safety

All incidents where the member of staff feels aggrieved will be reported by the employee and management, to Herefordshire Council's Health and Safety Officer, who will complete a RIDDOR report for the HSE whenever necessary.