

# Cottenham Primary School

## COMPLAINTS POLICY



Date:	October 2024
Reviewed by:	Personnel
Next Review date	Autumn 1 2025
Equality Review Checklist	<p>In reviewing this policy due consideration must be given to the impact that changes may have on issues of equality for the protected groups:</p> <p>Age                      Disability                      Religion or belief                      Race Pregnancy and Maternity      Sex</p> <p>Sexual orientation      Gender reassignment                      Marriage/civil partnerships</p> <p>If the equality of a protected group is likely to be compromised by changes to the policy then please complete an equality risk assessment and tick here: <input type="checkbox"/></p>

# An Introduction to the Complaints Policy

The Governing Body is required by law (section 29 of the Education Act 2002) to establish procedures and publish those procedures for dealing with complaints relating to the school, or to the provision of facilities or services (unless the issue is covered by other legislation – see Appendix 3). **The Local Authority has no statutory authority to investigate our school complaints and complaints must be directed to the school**

## 1. 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’*.

It is in everyone’s interest that complaints are resolved at the earliest possible stage. Many issues can be resolved informally, without the need to follow formal procedures. Schools should have procedures in place to take informal concerns seriously and make every effort to resolve the matter as quickly as possible. However, there will be occasions when complainants want to raise their concerns formally, in those cases, the formal complaints procedure will be followed.

## 2. Who can make a Complaint?

Any person who has a legitimate interest in the school may make a complaint. This will include pupils on roll at the school irrespective of their age, although normally a complaint from a pupil would come through a parent. This includes parents or carers of children no longer at the school and members of the public.

Unless complaints are dealt with under separate statutory procedures (see Appendix 3 pages 21 and 22), we will use this complaints procedure.

Where a person is not able to make a complaint himself or herself, a friend or other family member may do so on their behalf, but that person does not become the complainant. The Governing Body will not accept complaints from legal representatives.

**In accordance with administrative law principles, complainants will be given the opportunity to complete the complaints procedure in full, unless the school possess clear evidence that the complainant meets our serial and unreasonable complaints criteria.**

If that is the case and the complainant contacts us again on the same issue, the correspondence may then be viewed as ‘serial’ or ‘persistent’ and we may choose not to respond. **We will not mark a complainant as ‘serial’ before the complainant has completed the procedure.**

We have published a separate Serial and Persistent Complaints Policy and further details are provided below.

## Anonymous complaints

We will not normally investigate anonymous complaints. However, the headteacher 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 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.

## Scope of this Complaints Procedure

This procedure covers all complaints about any provision of community facilities or services by [Cottenham 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"> <li>• Admissions to schools</li> <li>• Statutory assessments of Special Educational Needs</li> <li>• School re-organisation proposals</li> </ul>	<p>Concerns about admissions, statutory assessments of Special Educational Needs, or school re-organisation proposals should be raised with Cambridgeshire Local Education Authority</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Matters likely to require a Child Protection Investigation</li> </ul>	<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) who has local responsibility for safeguarding or the Multi-Agency Safeguarding Hub (MASH).</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Exclusion of children from school*</li> </ul>	<p>Further information about raising concerns about exclusion can be found at: <a href="http://www.gov.uk/school-discipline-exclusions/exclusions">www.gov.uk/school-discipline-exclusions/exclusions</a>.</p> <p><i>*complaints about the application of the behaviour policy can be made through the school's complaints procedure. Please refer to the schools' behaviour polic</i></p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Whistleblowing</li> </ul>	<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: <a href="http://www.education.gov.uk/contactus">www.education.gov.uk/contactus</a>.</p> <p>Volunteer staff who have concerns about our school</p>

	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.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Staff grievances</li> </ul>	Complaints from staff will be dealt with under the school's internal grievance procedures.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Staff conduct</li> </ul>	Complaints about staff will be dealt with under the school's internal disciplinary procedures, if appropriate.  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.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Complaints about services provided by other providers who may use school premises or facilities</li> </ul>	Providers should have their own complaints procedure to deal with complaints about service. Please contact them direct.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• National Curriculum - content</li> </ul>	Please contact the Department for Education at: <a href="http://www.education.gov.uk/contactus">www.education.gov.uk/contactus</a>

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 [Cottenham 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.

## 2. 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 initially with either the class teacher or head teacher.

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.

A school complaint form is included at the end of this procedure. 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.

### **3. Purposes of the Complaints Procedure**

The purpose of our Complaints Procedure is to provide a comprehensive, open, transparent, fair and timely vehicle through which:

- something that may have gone wrong can be identified, acknowledged and, where necessary, put right;
- an apology may be made where appropriate;
- the school and its senior management can, where appropriate, learn from the process, making it less likely that a similar complaint will be brought in the future.

A written record will be kept of all complaints along with details of how they were resolved following a formal investigation or progression to a panel hearing.

### **4. Publicising the Complaints Procedure**

We will do this by:

- copies of the procedure and the complaints forms are available from the school (clearly this will be easily accessible without a potential complainant being asked the reason why it is being requested);
- including the procedure and complaints forms on the school's web site, ensuring that it is easy to find through a link from the home page

### **5. Adopting the Complaints Procedure**

The Governing Body formally adopted this procedure on 4 November 2019 and it will be reviewed annually.

A review might be required earlier in the following circumstances:

- to take account of any changes to legislation or to reflect new local authority or government guidance;
- in the light of any recommendations from the Chair or a Review Panel arising from consideration of a complaint. This complaint should be made in writing using the formal School Complaints Form at the end of this document and available on the school website or from the school office.

# Stage 1 – Making a formal complaint to the Headteacher/ Chair of Governors

1.1 Formal complaints must be made to the headteacher (unless they are about the headteacher), via the school office. This may be done in person, in writing (preferably on the Complaint Form), or by telephone.

1.2 The headteacher will record the date the complaint is received and will acknowledge receipt of the complaint in writing (either by letter or email) within 3 school days.

1.2 Within this response, the headteacher will seek to clarify the nature of the complaint, ask what remains unresolved and what outcome the complainant would like to see. The headteacher can consider whether a face to face meeting is the most appropriate way of doing this.

*Note: The headteacher may delegate the investigation to another member of the school's senior leadership team but not the decision to be taken.*

During the investigation, the headteacher (or investigator) will:

- if necessary, interview those involved in the matter and/or those complained of, allowing them to be accompanied if they wish
- keep a written record of any meetings/interviews in relation to their investigation.

At the conclusion of their investigation, the headteacher will provide a formal written response within 10 school days of the date of receipt of the complaint.

If the headteacher is unable to meet this deadline, they will provide the complainant with an update and revised response date.

The response will detail any actions taken to investigate the complaint and provide a full explanation of the decision made and the reason(s) for it. Where appropriate, it will include details of actions Cottenham Primary School will take to resolve the complaint.

The headteacher will advise the complainant of how to escalate their complaint should they remain dissatisfied with the outcome of Stage 1.

If the complaint is about the headteacher, or a member of the governing body (including the Chair or Vice-Chair), a suitably skilled governor will be appointed to complete all the actions at Stage 1.

Complaints about the headteacher or member of the governing body must be made to the Clerk, via the school office.

If the complaint is:

- jointly about the Chair and Vice Chair or
- the entire governing body or
- the majority of the governing body

Stage 1 will be considered by an independent investigator appointed by the governing body or At the conclusion of their investigation, the independent investigator will provide a formal written response.

## Stage 2 – Referring a formal complaint to a Governors’ Panel

### The procedure

Where the complaint considers that the written response at the conclusion of Stage 1 does not resolve the complaint, the complainant may ask the Clerk to convene a Panel of Governors who have had no prior involvement with the complaint (or the issues which led to the complaint) to review the response. The complainant must complete, and submit to the Clerk, a Review Request Form(available at the end of this document. S/he should do this within **10 school days** of the date of issue of the letter giving the decision on the complaint. This form is structured in a way that helps ensure that the reasons for requesting a review can be readily understood, and that contact information is recorded and available to those who might need it.

If emailing, the complainant should take care to ensure that s/he has the official email address for the Clerk and that s/he uses this. It can be obtained from the school office. In the subject field of the email, the complainant should write, ‘**Complaint Review Request**’.If delivering or posting a letter, the complainant must address it to the Clerk at the school address and write ‘Complaint Review Request’ on the envelope’.The Clerk should record the date the request for review is received and acknowledge the request for review within 3 school days.

If the complainant requires assistance in articulating the need for a review then support may be provided by those identified as able to offer help in part 2 of the guidance (page 5 above). Again, it is not for those supporting the complainant to comment on the merits or otherwise of review, but rather to help the complainant articulate their position to the Governors’ Panel through the Review Request Form.

The governors’ panel will only consider requests for review outside the 10 school working days timeframe in exceptional circumstances. These might include:

- the reasons for a review not being known to the complainant within 10 school working days;
- the complainant needing to delay making their request for review because they needed the time to collect evidence that could not have been gathered during the first 10 school working days;
- the complainant not having been able to request a review within 10 school working days because of being abroad or being incapacitated.

The review will be based on the information supplied in the Review Request Form. And will usually consider the following:

- the complainant’s view that not all aspects of the complaint have been addressed;
- the complainant’s view that not all available evidence has been considered;
- the complainant’s view that not all relevant witnesses have been interviewed;

- the complainant's view that the decision has not been adequately justified in the Chair's decision letter;
- the complainant's view that the decision has not been adequately explained.

The review will not review any new complaints at this stage. New complaints must be dealt with from stage 1 of the procedure.

The review process cannot be used to consider cases where the complaint was not dealt with in accordance with published timescales. That would require a fresh complaint to be made.

**The Governing Body has decided that any review should be conducted in writing only because**

- face-to-face hearings can be emotive and stressful for complainants and staff;
- if there is a hearing, there would need to be an opportunity for cross-examination and, to be successful, this might require a level of chairing skills for which few governing bodies are trained;
- while being potentially stressful, there is nothing inherent in a face-to-face hearing that can add value to consideration of the complaint;
- there should be no new evidence in support of the complaint that cannot be aired in writing;
- the only points for consideration will be the complainant's concern about how the complaint had been handled and all such points can be written down and considered without the need for a hearing.

## Composition of Review Panel

The Clerk will convene a Review Panel comprising 3 or 5 members who have had no prior involvement with the complaint or the causes of the complaint. Members of the Review Panel will elect a chair from among themselves and they will use a simple majority vote to do so. If there are fewer than 3 school Governors available, the clerk will source any suitably skilled and independent Governors from another school's Governing Body.

An LA adviser may be invited to the meeting, at the discretion of the governors, to give procedural advice only.

## Convening the Review Meeting

The Clerk will liaise with all the Review Panel members to propose, and to agree, a date, time and venue for the review. This is most likely to be at the school, but the Clerk should ensure that the meeting will be in an appropriate environment i.e.

- there will be enough tables and chairs and that these will be suitable for use by adults;
- the meeting will not be disturbed;
- the confidentiality of proceedings can be protected.
- the meeting may be held virtually if necessary

The Governing Body is mindful of the challenges that volunteer governors can encounter in finding time to prepare for a review and in finding a date and time when all members are available. The Governing Body has decided that it is preferable to allow sufficient time for the process than it is to set a deadline that may be all too easy to miss. The Governing Body therefore has decided that a Review Panel should meet within, what the Governing Body considers to be, **the reasonable time**

**frame of 20 school working days**, starting from the day when the request for a review was received, or the next school day if that was not a school day. If there are exceptional reasons why there is slippage to the timescales laid down, the clerk will explain the reasons for this to the complainant in writing.

## **Further Written Representations to the Review Panel**

Prior to the meeting of the Written Review Panel, the Clerk will seek any further written representations from the complainant concerning the reasons why the matter should be reviewed. The complainant will have 5 school working days to provide this information. The Clerk will supply this information to the Chair of Governors who will have 5 school days to submit any comments to the Panel. The Panel should have 3-5 clear school working days to consider all the information in advance of the meeting. The information to be sent by the Clerk to the Review Panel should comprise the following:

- The original completed complaints form;
- The response to the complaint from the Headteacher and/or the Chair of Governors;
- The completed Review Request Form;
- Any additional written representations from the Chair of Governors or the complainant

## **The Review Panel meeting**

The Review Panel meeting will normally be clerked by the Clerk to the Governing Body. Where this is not possible the Chair of Governors will ensure that an alternative suitable person is responsible for the clerking function. The meeting will be held in private.

At the start of the meeting the Panel will elect a chair who will be responsible for the conduct of the meeting and for liaising with the Clerk subsequently to ensure that all parties receive timely notification of the outcome within 5 school working days of the date of the review meeting.

The panel will consider objectively the complaint, the Headteacher's and/or Chair's response, the reasons set out in the Review Request Form, and any further written representations from the Chair or complainant. It will then decide whether the response to the complainant has been fair and reasonable in the circumstances. The Review Panel must take care to ensure that it does not favour one side or the other for any reasons other than those arrived at through an objective assessment of all the evidence.

The committee will consider the complaint and all the evidence presented. The committee can:

- uphold the complaint in whole or in part
- dismiss the complaint in whole or in part.

If the complaint is upheld in whole or in part, the committee will:

- decide on the appropriate action to be taken to resolve the complaint
- where appropriate, recommend changes to the school's systems or procedures to prevent similar issues in the future.

## Communicating the Outcome

The Chair of the Committee will provide the complainant and Cottenham Primary School with a full explanation of their decision and the reason(s) for it, in writing, within 10 school days.

The letter to the complainant will include details of how to contact the Department for Education if they are dissatisfied with the way their complaint has been handled by Cottenham Primary School

If the complaint is:

- jointly about the Chair and Vice Chair or
- the entire governing body or
- the majority of the governing body

Stage 2 will be heard by a committee of independent governors.

The response will detail any actions taken to investigate the complaint and provide a full explanation of the decision made and the reason(s) for it. Where appropriate, it will include details of actions Cottenham Primary School will take to resolve the complaint.

The response will also advise the complainant of how to escalate their complaint should they remain dissatisfied.

The matter should remain confidential. The Clerk will promptly communicate the outcome, and set out the reasons for it, in a letter to the complainant, the outline of which will have been formulated by the Review Panel in the meeting. The final version will be agreed and signed by the Chair of the Panel.

**It is essential that the review decision letter is sent to the complainant and where relevant the person complained about and the Chair at the same time.** This will be in the form of an email or letter. Whilst the letter should avoid unnecessary detail, there should be enough information to demonstrate that the review was considered in full, provide an explanation of the decisions taken and include details or any actions or recommendations that will be taken to resolve the complaint.

A written record will be kept of the complaint. Correspondence, statements and records relating to the complaint will be filed confidentially. The actions taken as a result of the complaint will be recorded (regardless of whether they are upheld).

The issue of the review decision letter concludes the school complaints process and the school will not enter into any further correspondence with the complainant.

**The information below in ‘ Next Steps ’ must be included in the panel response letter.**

## 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 Stage 2.

The Department for Education will not normally reinvestigate the substance of complaints or overturn any decisions made by [Cottenham Primary School](#). They will consider whether Cottenham Primary 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](http://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.

# APPENDIX 1- Roles and Responsibilities

## Complainant

The complainant will receive a more effective response to the complaint if they:

- explain the complaint in full as early as possible
- co-operate with the school in seeking a solution to the complaint
- respond promptly to requests for information or meetings or in agreeing the details of the complaint
- ask for assistance as needed
- treat all those involved in the complaint with respect
- refrain from publicising the details of their complaint on social media and respect confidentiality.

## Investigator

The investigator's role is to establish the facts relevant to the complaint by:

- providing a comprehensive, open, transparent and fair consideration of the complaint through:
  - sensitive and thorough interviewing of the complainant to establish what has happened and who has been involved
  - interviewing staff and children/young people and other people relevant to the complaint
  - consideration of records and other relevant information
  - analysing information
- liaising with the complainant and the complaints co-ordinator as appropriate to clarify what the complainant feels would put things right.

The investigator should:

- conduct interviews with an open mind and be prepared to persist in the questioning
- keep notes of interviews or arrange for an independent note taker to record minutes of the meeting
- ensure that any papers produced during the investigation are kept securely pending any appeal
- be mindful of the timescales to respond
- prepare a comprehensive report for the headteacher or complaints committee that sets out the facts, identifies solutions and recommends courses of action to resolve problems.

The headteacher or complaints committee will then determine whether to uphold or dismiss the complaint and communicate that decision to the complainant, providing the appropriate escalation details.

## **Complaints Co-ordinator** (this could be the headteacher / designated complaints governor or other staff member providing administrative support)

The complaints co-ordinator should:

- ensure that the complainant is fully updated at each stage of the procedure
- liaise with staff members, headteacher, Chair of Governors, Clerk and LAs (if appropriate) to ensure the smooth running of the complaints procedure
- be aware of issues regarding:
  - sharing third party information
  - additional support. This may be needed by complainants when making a complaint including interpretation support or where the complainant is a child or young person
- keep records.

## **Clerk to the Governing Body**

The Clerk is the contact point for the complainant and the committee and should:

- ensure that all people involved in the complaint procedure are aware of their legal rights and duties, including any under legislation relating to school complaints, education law, the Equality Act 2010, the Freedom of Information Act 2000, the Data Protection Act (DPA) 2018 and the General Data Protection Regulations (GDPR)
- set the date, time and venue of the meeting, ensuring that the dates are convenient to all parties (if they are invited to attend) and that the venue and proceedings are accessible
- collate any written material relevant to the complaint (for example; stage 1 paperwork, school and complainant submissions) and send it to the parties in advance of the meeting within an agreed timescale
- record the proceedings
- circulate the minutes of the meeting
- notify all parties of the committee's decision.

## **Committee Chair**

The committee's chair, who is nominated in advance of the complaint meeting, should ensure that: both parties are asked (via the Clerk) to provide any additional information relating to the complaint by a specified date in advance of the meeting

- the meeting is conducted in an informal manner, is not adversarial, and that, if all parties are invited to attend, everyone is treated with respect and courtesy
- complainants who may not be used to speaking at such a meeting are put at ease. This is particularly important if the complainant is a child/young person
- the remit of the committee is explained to the complainant
- written material is seen by everyone in attendance, provided it does not breach confidentiality or any individual's rights to privacy under the DPA 2018 or GDPR.

If a new issue arises it would be useful to give everyone the opportunity to consider and comment upon it; this may require a short adjournment of the meeting

- both the complainant and the school are given the opportunity to make their case and seek clarity, either through written submissions ahead of the meeting or verbally in the meeting itself
- the issues are addressed
- key findings of fact are made
- the committee is open-minded and acts independently
- no member of the committee has an external interest in the outcome of the proceedings or any involvement in an earlier stage of the procedure
- the meeting is minuted
- they liaise with the Clerk (and complaints co-ordinator, if the school has one).

## Committee Member

Committee members should be aware that:

- the meeting must be independent and impartial, and should be seen to be so  
No governor may sit on the committee if they have had a prior involvement in the complaint or in the circumstances surrounding it.
- the aim of the meeting should be to resolve the complaint and achieve reconciliation between the school and the complainant

We recognise that the complainant might not be satisfied with the outcome if the meeting does not find in their favour. It may only be possible to establish the facts and make recommendations.

- many complainants will feel nervous and inhibited in a formal setting  
Parents/carers often feel emotional when discussing an issue that affects their child.
- extra care needs to be taken when the complainant is a child/young person and present during all or part of the meeting

Careful consideration of the atmosphere and proceedings should ensure that the child/young person does not feel intimidated.

The committee should respect the views of the child/young person and give them equal consideration to those of adults.

If the child/young person is the complainant, the committee should ask in advance if any support is needed to help them present their complaint. Where the child/young person's parent is the complainant, the committee should give the parent the opportunity to say which parts of the meeting, if any, the child/young person needs to attend.

However, the parent should be advised that agreement might not always be possible if the parent wishes the child/young person to attend a part of the meeting that the committee considers is not in the child/young person's best interests.

- the welfare of the child/young person is paramount.

## Appendix 2: Vexatious, serial and unreasonable complaints

In cases where the complainant persists unreasonably with complaints, or deliberately seeks to make life difficult for school leaders/governors, rather than genuinely trying to resolve the complaint, the Chair should refer to the **Managing Serial and Unreasonable Complaints Policy**. This is a difficult area, particularly where harassment might be disguised as complaint, and it is recommended that the Chair discuss this with the LA's Leadership Adviser before taking an action.

If a duplicate complaint is received at the end of the complaints procedure from a spouse, a partner, a child or a grandparent for example and the complaint is on the same subject, the new complainant will be informed that the complaint and the local school process is concluded. If any new aspects are introduced, these will be investigated.

If the school becomes the focus of a complaint campaign and receives large volumes of complaints based on the same subject or from complainants unconnected with the school, the school will either send a template response to all complainants or publish a single response on the school website that is signposted in writing to all complainants involved.

### Serial and unreasonable complaints

The school is committed to dealing with all complaints and requests for information fairly and impartially, and to providing a high-quality service to those who complain. We will not normally limit the contact complainants have with our school. However, we do not expect our staff to tolerate unacceptable behaviour and will take action to protect staff from that behaviour, including that which is abusive, offensive and threatening.

If, despite all stages of the complaint procedure having been followed, the complainant remains dissatisfied and attempts to reopen the same issue, they will be informed that the procedure has been completed and that the matter is now closed. Correspondence about a complaint will not be viewed as 'serial' or 'persistent' until the complaint process has concluded, unless our published serial complaint criteria applies.

The school has adopted the model DFE policy for Managing Serial and Unreasonable Complaints. This is published on our website and is available on request from the school office.

The school will never take the decision to stop responding lightly and will only do so in any of the following circumstances:

- Every reasonable step has been taken to address the complaint;
- The complainant has been given a clear statement of the school's position and aims;
- The complainant contacts us repeatedly, making substantially the same points each time;
- The complainant's emails, letters or telephone calls are often or always abusive or aggressive;
- They make insulting personal comments about or threats towards staff;
- The school has reason to believe the individual is contacting the school with the intention of causing disruption or inconvenience.

The school will not stop responding just because the complainant is difficult to deal with or asks complex questions. The school will act reasonably and consider any new complaint and we recognise that anybody has the right to raise a new complaint at any time.

### **Barring from school premises**

In additional exceptional circumstances the Headteacher may make the decision to bar an individual from entering school premises. In such circumstances advice from the Local Authority will be taken before implementing a ban.

## APPENDIX 3

# Cottenham Primary School Complaint form

### Section A – Your Details

Title – Mr/Mrs/Ms/Other	<input type="text"/>
Surname	<input type="text"/>
Forename	<input type="text"/>
Home Tel No	<input type="text"/>
Mobile Tel No	<input type="text"/>
Email Address	<input type="text"/>
Address and Postcode	<input type="text"/>

How would you prefer us to contact you?

### Section B

Please give details of your complaint, including whether you have spoken to anybody at the school about it (please use a continuation sheet if necessary)

**Date of Complaint:**

What would constitute a satisfactory resolution of your complaint?

# Cottenham Primary School Complaint Review request form

## Section A – Your Details

Title – Mr/Mrs/Ms/Other	<input type="text"/>
Surname	<input type="text"/>
Forename	<input type="text"/>
Home Tel No	<input type="text"/>
Mobile Tel No	<input type="text"/>
Email Address	<input type="text"/>
Address and Postcode	<input type="text"/>

How would you prefer us to contact you?

## Section B

Please give reasons why you consider the response to your complaint from the Chair of Governors should be reviewed.

**Date:**

Please use a continuation sheet if required

What would constitute a satisfactory outcome by way of resolution of your complaint