



# Policy for Managing Serial and Unreasonable Complaints

## Review Summary

<b>Adopted:</b>	<b>March 2019</b>
<b>Review Cycle:</b>	<b>2 years</b>
<b>Last Review:</b>	<b>March 2021</b>
<b>Next Review:</b>	<b>March 2023</b>

## The Ted Wragg Multi Academy Trust

1. The Ted Wragg Trust and its academies are committed to dealing with all complaints 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 academies. 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 or threatening.
2. The Ted Wragg Trust defines unreasonable behaviour as that which hinders our consideration of complaints because of the frequency or nature of the complainant's contact with the academy, such as, if the complainant:
  - refuses to articulate their complaint or specify the grounds of a complaint or the outcomes sought by raising the complaint, despite offers of assistance
  - refuses to co-operate with the complaints investigation process
  - refuses to accept that certain issues are not within the scope of the complaints procedure
  - insists on the complaint being dealt with in ways which are incompatible with the complaints procedure or with good practice
  - introduces trivial or irrelevant information which they expect to be taken into account and commented on
  - raises large numbers of detailed but unimportant questions, and insists they are fully answered, often immediately and to their own timescales
  - makes unjustified complaints about staff who are trying to deal with the issues, and seeks to have them replaced
  - changes the basis of the complaint as the investigation proceeds
  - repeatedly makes the same complaint (despite previous investigations or responses concluding that the complaint is groundless or has been addressed)
  - refuses to accept the findings of the investigation into that complaint where the Trust's complaint procedure has been fully and properly implemented and completed including referral to the Department for Education
  - seeks an unrealistic outcome
  - makes excessive demands on school time by frequent, lengthy and complicated contact with staff regarding the complaint in person, in writing, by email and by telephone while the complaint is being dealt with
  - uses threats to intimidate
  - uses abusive, offensive or discriminatory language or violence
  - knowingly provides falsified information
  - publishes unacceptable information on social media or other public forums.
3. Complainants should try to limit their communication with the academy that relates to their complaint, while the complaint is being progressed. It is not helpful if repeated

correspondence is sent (either by letter, phone, email or text), as it could delay the outcome being reached.

4. Whenever possible, the headteacher or Chair of Governors or, in the case of complaints handled by the Trust, the Chief Executive Officer or other nominated Senior Executive, will discuss any concerns with the complainant informally before applying an '*unreasonable*' marking.
5. If the behaviour continues, the headteacher or Senior Executive will write to the complainant explaining that their behaviour is unreasonable and ask them to change it. For complainants who excessively contact a Trust academy causing a significant level of disruption, we may specify methods of communication and limit the number of contacts in a communication plan. This will be reviewed after six months.
6. In response to any serious incident of aggression or violence, we will immediately inform the police and communicate our actions in writing. This may include barring an individual from a Trust academy.
7. Policy Circulation
  - 7.1 This Policy will be published on the Trust's website, on the individual academy websites and included in the Trust's Policy Monitoring Schedule
  - 7.2 This Policy will be circulated to Trustees, Local Governing Bodies and Senior Employees by sending an email to the link on the Trust's website on an annual basis.
  - 7.3 The Trustees, in consultation with the Local Governing Bodies, are responsible for overseeing, reviewing and organising the revision of the Complaints Policy

## **Adoption of the Policy**

This Policy has been adopted by the Trustees of the Ted Wragg Multi Academy Trust.

**Signed**

**(Chair of Trust)**



**Date** 17.03.21