



EMMAUS

CATHOLIC ACADEMY TRUST

Managing Serial and Unreasonable Complaints Policy

September 2022



POLICY DOCUMENT	Managing Serial and Unreasonable Complaints
Legislation/Category: Academy Schools	REQUIRED
Lead Member of Staff:	CSEL
Approved by:	Emmaus Trust Board
Author:	Safeguarding Support Limited
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EMMAUS CATHOLIC ACADEMY TRUST

ACADEMY MISSION STATEMENT

Rebuilding the Church to ensure we have great schools, strong in faith and serving society

Emmaus Catholic Academy Trust Mission;

To assist in making Christ known to all people

To assist parents, who are the primary educators of their children, in the education and religious formation of their children

To be of service to the Local Church, Diocese, Parish and Christian home

To be of service to society

Emmaus Catholic Academy Trust Vision;

To promote a distinctive Catholic mission and culture to ensure Emmaus CAT continues to be strong in faith

To ensure Emmaus CAT provides great schools

To be a strong and sustainable infrastructure making effective use of resources, enabling Emmaus CAT schools to serve society

We are creating a healthy catholic organisation, where our schools are aligned in our mission and share our philosophy of working collegially to develop meaningful relationships between schools, parishes, families, communities, and the Diocese of Salford, continually supporting school improvement, faith formation and serving society

Emmaus CAT is rooted in the Catholic mission to educate our pupils to the highest academic standards, contributing to the creation of a society that is highly educated, skilled and cultured.



At Emmaus CAT we believe talent is key and that our talented people are our most significant resource. We are committed to working together to provide the highest standards for our young people

Emmaus Catholic Academy Trust is 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 schools. 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.

This policy statement sets out the approach of The Emmaus Catholic Academy Trust and all our schools to dealing with concerns and complaints. All references to 'headteacher' in this policy include executive headteacher and head of school depending on the leadership structure in place at the time of the complaint.

The Trust defines unreasonable behaviour as that which hinders our consideration of complaints because of the frequency or nature of the complainants contact with the individual school, 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 complaint's investigation process
- refuses to accept that certain issues are not within the scope of the complaint's 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 school's complaint procedure has been fully and properly implemented and completed including referral to the Education and Skills Funding Agency
- 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.

Complainants should try to limit their communication with the school 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.

Whenever possible, the headteacher or Chair of Governors will discuss any concerns with the complainant informally before applying an '*unreasonable*' marking.

If the behaviour continues, the headteacher will write to the complainant explaining that their behaviour is unreasonable and ask them to change it. For complainants who excessively contact one or more of our schools 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.

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 one or more Trust schools.

