



# The Leys Primary & Nursery School

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## Vexatious Parent Policy

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## 1. Introduction

At The Leys, we are committed to working in partnership with parents and carers to support our pupils' education, well-being, and development. We recognise that parents/carers may, at times, have concerns and we encourage open and respectful communication to resolve any issues.

However, in a small number of cases, individuals may behave in a manner that is unreasonable or vexatious. This can have a detrimental impact on staff well-being, school operations, and the wider school community. This policy outlines how The Leys will manage such behaviour fairly and consistently while ensuring that staff, pupils, and other parents are safeguarded from harassment or abuse.

## 2. Definition of a Vexatious Parent/Carer

A **vexatious parent/carer** is someone who acts in an unreasonable, disruptive, or aggressive manner when dealing with the school. Their behaviour may include, but is not limited to:

- **Repeatedly raising issues or complaints** with no intention of reaching a resolution.
- **Making unfounded, exaggerated, or malicious allegations** against the school or staff.
- **Refusing to accept decisions made by the school** and continuously seeking alternative outcomes.
- **Using aggressive, threatening, or abusive language** in person, over the phone, in emails, or on social media.
- **Harassing or intimidating school staff**, including excessive or repeated communications.
- **Mobilising other parents** or external bodies (e.g., MPs, local authorities, social media campaigns) in an attempt to disrupt school operations.
- **Misusing formal procedures**, such as making **frequent and unjustified complaints** to governing bodies, Ofsted, or other agencies.



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### 3. Managing Vexatious Behaviour

If a parent/carer's behaviour is deemed **vexatious** or **unreasonable**, the following steps will be taken:

#### Step 1: Initial Warning

- The Headteacher will contact the parent/carer to discuss concerns regarding their behaviour and remind them of appropriate conduct.
- A clear explanation will be given about the school's expectations for communication and engagement.
- A record of the conversation will be kept on file.

#### Step 2: Formal Written Warning

- If the behaviour persists, a formal **written warning** will be issued by the Headteacher.
- This letter will outline the specific concerns, request that the behaviour ceases, and explain the next steps if the behaviour continues.

#### Step 3: Restriction of Contact

- If behaviour remains unacceptable, the school may restrict the parent/carer's contact with staff. This may include:
  - Requiring all communication to go through a designated staff member.
  - Restricting contact via one email address (this will be reviewed and responded to in accordance with our communication guidelines for parents/carers within 48 hours).
  - Banning direct contact (in-person meetings or phone calls).
- The parent/carer will be notified of any restrictions in writing, including the duration of these measures.

#### Step 4: Further Action

- If the parent/carer continues to act in a vexatious manner, further steps may be taken, including:
  - **Exclusion from the school site**, issued under Section 547 of the Education Act 1996.
  - **Police involvement** if the behaviour includes threats, harassment, or



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defamation.

- Legal action if necessary, to protect staff and the school community.

## 4. Social Media and Online Conduct

- Parents/carers are expected to use social media responsibly when discussing school matters.
- Any online harassment, false accusations, or defamation of the school or staff will be taken seriously.
- The school reserves the right to report online abuse to social media platforms, legal authorities, or the police if necessary.

## 5. Right to Appeal

Parents/carers who feel they have been treated unfairly may submit an appeal in writing to the Chair of Governors. The appeal must be made within 10 working days of the decision and will be reviewed within 20 working days from the appeal date.

## 6. Monitoring and Review

This policy will be reviewed annually or sooner if required. All staff will be made aware of the policy and trained to implement it consistently.

## 7. Conclusion

The Leys value positive relationships with parents/carers. While we aim to resolve concerns collaboratively, we will not tolerate behaviour that is abusive, harassing, or vexatious. This policy ensures a safe and respectful environment for all members of the school community.