



## Thomas Telford School Policy for dealing with unreasonably persistent, harassing or abusive complaints or behaviours

The Headmaster and Governors are committed to the improvement of the School and welcome feedback from parents with the aim of resolving concerns in a timely manner. There is a procedure to follow when making a formal complaint.

Occasionally, parents or visitors may pursue complaints or other issues in an unacceptable manner and whilst it is recognised that some complaints may relate to serious or distressing incidents, the School does not accept abusive or threatening behaviour.

### **Abusive and unreasonable behaviour may include:**

- Actions which are:
  - out of proportion to the nature of the complaint
  - persistent even when the complaints procedure has been exhausted
  - personally harassing the Headmaster or other members of staff
  - unjustifiably repetitious
- An insistence on:
  - pursuing unjustifiable complaints
  - unrealistic outcomes to a justified complaint
  - pursuing justifiable complaints in an unreasonable manner e.g. using abusive/threatening language, making complaints in the public domain, refusing to attend appointments to discuss the complaint

### **Anyone who raises an informal or formal complaint can expect the School to:**

- Share the School complaints procedure
- Respond within a reasonable time
- Be available for consultation within a reasonable time limit, putting the needs of students first
- Respond with courtesy and respect
- Keep those involved informed of progress

### **What the School expects of you:**

- To follow the School complaints procedure, which is available on the School website
- Treat all staff with courtesy and respect
- Respect the needs of students and staff within the School
- Recognise time constraints under which members of staff in schools work and allow a reasonable amount of time to respond
- Refrain from using abusive or threatening behaviour

If parents or visitors to the School display unacceptable behaviour, the below will be implemented.



At Thomas Telford School we value the positive relationships we forge with parents and visitors to the School. We strive to make the School a place where we model the behaviour we teach and expect of our students. We promote respect for all and place high importance on good manners and positive communication, founded on mutual respect.

The School is clear on actions that will be taken if instances of unacceptable behaviours occur, including verbal or physical threats.

In cases of unacceptable behaviour, verbal abuse or harassment, a judgement will be made as to the appropriate level of action required. In most instances, if a student or member of staff is upset by the unacceptable behaviour of others, the situation can be resolved satisfactorily through mediation without need for further action.

### **Implications for serious incidents**

Section 547 of the Education Act 1996 makes it an offence for any person to be on school premises to cause or permit a nuisance or disturbance and allows for the removal and prosecution of any persons believed to have committed an offence.

A parent of a child attending school has implied permission to be on school premises at certain times and for certain purposes, however if the parent's behaviour is unreasonable, this permission may be withdrawn and they would become a trespasser on site. The same applies to a visitor or contractor on site.

The Governing Body, in conjunction with the Headmaster, will take the lead in authorising the removal of a person believed to be causing a nuisance or disturbance. If it is felt that the individual is likely to cause further threat or harm, an immediate temporary ban would be imposed, with an opportunity to explain their actions, after which a decision would be taken whether to remove or extend the ban.

In other circumstances, the individual would be advised in writing that a ban is being considered and they would be given an opportunity to explain their actions, after which a decision would be made about imposing a ban. If a ban is imposed and the individual comes onto the School premises again, the Police would immediately be called.

### **Telephone conversations**

(Please note all telephone calls are recorded)

In the event of receiving abusive, rude, threatening or harassing telephone calls from parents or members of the public, the School reserves the right to terminate a conversation at any time. The recording of the conversation will then be reviewed by the Headmaster or a senior member of staff, who will make a decision based on the telephone recording as to whether or not the individual has behaved in an unacceptable manner, and will communicate this to them. Failure to respond reasonably may result in future telephone calls being terminated. The individual may be asked to refrain from calling the School again, on either a temporary or permanent basis. Persistent harassment will be reported to the Police.