

## Parents' Complaint Procedure

Bredon School welcomes suggestions and comments from parents, and takes seriously complaints and concerns they may raise. A complaint will be treated as an expression of genuine dissatisfaction which needs a response. It is essential that all complaints are dealt with in a reasonable time, that it is dealt with courteously, that it is dealt with efficiently, the complaint is taken seriously and that there will be follow up action.

The following procedures should be adhered to:

Record in writing the date and complaint being made and by whom.

Record in writing what you have told the complainant about follow-up action, including the time frame for this.

Decide whether the complaint can be followed up by your self. In the case of potentially more serious complaints these should be passed on to the appropriate Head of School and where they are of a Child Protection nature these should be passed on to The Child Protection Officer . In more serious cases, which are not involving Child Protection, the Vice Principal or Principal will need to be informed.

If the matter is dealt with by yourself you will need to record in writing your follow-up action and the time frame for this. A copy of this will need to be given to the Head of School for filing.

In all cases the complainant will need to be kept informed either in writing, e-mail or telephone.

A parental information leaflet, shown below, will let parents know how to use the complaints system.

A complaint will be treated as an expression of genuine dissatisfaction which needs a response.

We wish to ensure that:

parents wishing to make a complaint know how to do so  
we respond to complaints within a reasonable time and in a courteous and efficient way

parents realise that we listen and take complaints seriously  
we take action where appropriate

"How should I complain?"

You can talk directly to a member of staff, write a letter, or telephone or e-mail. Be as clear as possible about what is troubling you. Any member of staff will be happy to help. It may be best to start with the person most closely concerned with the issue - for example, to raise house matters with the Houseparent, sports concerns with the Head of PE. They may be able to sort things out quickly, with the minimum of fuss. However, you may prefer to take the matter to a more senior member of staff, for example, the Director of Studies, Vice Principal or Principal.

"I don't want to complain as such, but there is something bothering me"

The school is here for you and your child, and we want to hear your views and your ideas. Contact a member of staff, as described above.

"I am not sure whether to complain or not"

If as parents you have concerns, you are entitled to complain. If in doubt, you should contact the school as we are here to help.

"What will happen next?"

If you raise something face-to-face or by telephone, it may be possible to resolve the matter immediately and to your satisfaction.

If you have made a complaint or suggestion in writing, we will contact you within five working days, to respond to your concerns and explain how we propose to proceed.

In many circumstances, the person you contact will need to discuss the matter with a colleague and consider it further before responding. You will be given a date by which time you will receive a response. If a detailed exploration of the issues is needed, a letter or report will be sent to you as quickly as possible. This will tell you of the outcome of your complaint. It will explain the conclusion, the reasons for it, and any action taken or proposed.

"What happens about confidentiality?"

Your complaint or concern will be treated in a confidential manner and with respect. Knowledge of it will be limited to the Principal and those directly involved. It is the school's policy that complaints made by parents should not rebound adversely on their children.

We cannot entirely rule out the need to make third parties outside the school aware of the complaint and possibly also the identity of those involved. This would only be likely to happen where, for example, a child's safety was at risk or it became necessary to refer matters to the police. You will be fully informed.

While information relating to specific complaints will be kept confidentially on file, we would point out that anonymous complaints may not be pursued.

Action which needed to be taken under staff disciplinary procedures as a result of complaints would be handled confidentially within the school.

"What if I am not satisfied with the outcome?"

We hope that you will feel satisfied with the outcome, or at least that your concerns have been fully and fairly considered.

If you are not satisfied, the Principal will offer to refer the matter to the Chair of the School's Advisory Board. Three members of the Board (not including the Chairman) will be nominated to look at the issues in an impartial and confidential manner.

The Advisory Board will invite you to a meeting. You will be asked if there are any papers you would like to have circulated beforehand. You will be invited to bring a friend with you. If the friend is your legal representative, and as the Board members have no legal and financial liability, the Panel has the right to adjourn the meeting until they are able to call upon the school's legal representative to be present.

We hope that we will be able to satisfy your concerns. If we do not, you may wish to seek independent legal advice. There are certain circumstances, in which the Secretary of State has an interest, and you could contact him directly or through your lawyer; he would then ask the Registrar of Independent Schools to investigate, usually through HM Inspectors of Schools.

*The school recognises and acknowledges your entitlement to complain and we hope to work with you in the best interests of the children and young people in our care.*