



## **Complaints Policy**

Date: October 2021  
Author: Senior Deputy Head  
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Bredon School is owned and operated by Cavendish Education; the Proprietary Body also known as the Governing Body. Any reference to Governor's means any Director of Cavendish Education.

This Policy document is one of a series of Bredon Policies that, taken together, are designed to form a comprehensive, formal Statement of Bredon's aspiration to provide an outstanding education for each and every one of its students and of the mechanisms and procedures in place to achieve this. Accordingly, this Policy needs to be read alongside all of these Policies in order to get the full picture; in particular it should be read in conjunction with the ***Equality Policy, The Health and Safety Policy and the Safeguarding Children and Child Protection Policy***.

All of these Policies have been written, not simply to meet statutory and other requirements, but to evidence the work that the whole School is undertaking to ensure the implementation of its core values:

'To be a small, family school that genuinely focuses on the individual; ensuring each pupil reaches his or her personal potential and destination by way of a rich and diverse journey based on breadth of opportunity, support and continuously striving towards excellence.'

In all Bredon Policies, unless the specific context requires otherwise, the word "parent" imports the meaning parent, guardian, carer or any person in whom is vested the legal duties and responsibilities of a child's primary caregiver.

**Bredon employs the services of the following consulting companies to ensure compliance is met and the best practice is implemented:**

**Peninsula HR Online  
Peninsula Business Safe (Health and Safety)  
Atlantic Data DBS  
Educare (online CPD)**

## **Introduction**

Bredon School ('the School') is very proud of the quality of teaching and pastoral care provided to its pupils. However, if parents are unhappy and have a concern, they can expect it to be treated by the School in accordance with the following procedure. The School does not distinguish between complaints and concerns; both will be treated with equal importance to resolve any matters raised.

This policy does not apply to prospective parents. This policy does not apply to parents of past pupils *unless* the initial complaint was raised when the pupil was still a registered pupil of the School.

This policy is available on the School website and can be made available upon request to the Headmaster's office. This policy can also be made available in larger print or more accessible format if required. If parents require assistance raising their concern or complaint at any stage in the procedure, for example because of a disability, they should contact the Headmaster's officer who will be happy to make appropriate arrangements.

The procedures set out below may be adapted as appropriate to meet the policy aims and circumstances of each case.

## **Aims of this Policy**

In any school, students, parents and others will have queries and concerns from time to time. These are not the subject of "complaint" in any meaningful sense but are part of the everyday dialogue of school life. It is our expectation that queries and concerns of this kind will be resolved quickly by raising matters in question with a pupil's classroom teacher.

By complaint, we understand "expressions of genuine dissatisfaction".

## **Informal and Formal Stages**

The School will always try to resolve complaints informally and in an amicable fashion. The School's Complaints Procedure is divided into Informal and Formal Stages and it is expected that the majority of complaints will be resolved quickly at the Informal Stage.

## **Confidentiality**

Complaints will be dealt with on as confidential a basis as possible, but it may be necessary for the person who first receives a complaint to discuss it with those who can resolve it, so anonymity and total confidentiality cannot be guaranteed.

No one will receive adverse treatment as a result of having raised a complaint, or because someone else has raised a complaint on their behalf.

The aim of this policy is to ensure that concerns and/or complaints are managed efficiently, at the appropriate level and in accordance with this procedure. Therefore, the School needs to know as soon as possible if parents have any cause for concern and/or make a complaint.

### **Stage 1 – Informal Complaint**

It is hoped that most complaints and concerns will be resolved quickly and informally.

If parents have a complaint they should initially contact the pupil's teacher or Housemaster. In many cases, the matter will be resolved by this means to everyone's satisfaction. If the relevant teacher or Housemaster cannot resolve the matter alone, he or she may need to consult the relevant member of the Senior Management Team (SMT').

Complaints made directly to the Headmaster will usually be referred to the appropriate member of staff *unless* the Headmaster deems it appropriate to deal with the matter personally.

The relevant member of SMT will make a written record of all complaints and the date on which they were received.

The written record will be passed to the Headmaster's Personal Assistant to be kept as part of the School's complaints and concerns file.

It is hoped that the matter will be resolved at this stage. However, should the matter not be resolved within 7 working days (or as soon as reasonably practicable but normally within 15 working days during school holidays) or in the event that the member of staff and parent fail to reach a satisfactory resolution, parents will be advised that they may proceed with their complaint in accordance with Stage 2 of this procedure.

### **Stage 2 – Formal Complaint**

If the complaint cannot be resolved on an informal basis, then the parents should put their complaint in writing to the Headmaster, Mr Nick Oldham. Parents should give details of their complaint, such as dates and times of events and any relevant documents so that the complaint can be properly investigated. Parents should also indicate what they envisage as the desired outcome.

The Headmaster will acknowledge receipt of the complaint within 3 working days (or as soon as reasonably practicable during school holidays) and will decide, after considering the complaint, the appropriate course of action to take.

Where the complaint concerns the Headmaster, the complaint will be directed to Mr Stephen Aiano, for and on behalf of the School Proprietor, who will manage the complaint in accordance with Stage 2 of this procedure.

In most cases the Headmaster will meet with the parents concerned, normally within

seven working days of receiving the formal complaint, to discuss the matter (or as soon as reasonably practicable but normally within 7 working days during school holidays). If possible, a resolution will be reached at this stage.

It may be necessary for the Headmaster to carry out further investigations, which may be delegated to a Deputy Head.

Written records will be kept of all meetings and interviews held in relation to the complaints.

Once the Headmaster is satisfied that, so far as is practicable, all of the relevant facts have been established, a decision will be made and parents will be informed of the decision (together with reasons) in writing as soon as reasonably practicable. Only in exceptional circumstances or with complex cases will this take longer and parents will be informed of the likely time frame for a response.

If parents are still not satisfied with the decision, they may proceed to Stage 3 of this procedure.

### **Stage 3 – Panel Hearing**

If parents wish to invoke Stage 3 (following a failure to reach an earlier resolution), they will be referred to a Director of Cavendish Education to call hearings of the Complaints Panel. Parents should write to the Chair of Cavendish Education giving full details of the complaint including the outcome they desire and enclose all relevant supporting documents. Parents should note that the Panel will not consider any new areas of complaints which have not been previously raised as part of the complaints procedure.

The Chair of the Cavendish Education will acknowledge receipt of the complaint within four working days (or as soon as reasonably practicable but normally within seven days during school holidays).

The matter will then be referred to the Complaints Panel for consideration.

Each of the Panel members shall be appointed by the Chair and will consist of at least three persons not directly involved in the matters detailed in the complaint, **one of whom shall be independent of the management and running of the School.**

The Chair, on behalf of the Panel, will schedule a hearing to take place as soon as practicable and normally within 10 working days (or as soon as reasonably practicable but normally within 15 working days during school holidays) of receipt of the parents request for a panel hearing.

If the Panel deems it necessary, it may require that further particulars of the complaint be supplied in advance of the hearing. Copies of such particulars shall be supplied to all parties not later than two working days prior to the hearing.

The parents may be accompanied to the hearing by one other person. This may be a relative, teacher or friend. Legal representation will not normally be appropriate.

If possible, the Panel will resolve the parents' complaint immediately without the need

for further investigation.

Where further investigation is required, the Panel will decide how it should be carried out and by whom.

The Panel's task is to establish the facts surrounding the complaint(s) by considering the documents provided by both parties and consideration of any representations made by parents and the School. After due consideration of all facts they consider relevant, the Panel will reach a decision on the balance of probabilities as to whether or not the complaint is substantiated (in whole or in part). If the complaint is not substantiated, the Panel will dismiss the complaint. If the complaint is substantiated (in whole or in part), the Panel will uphold the complaint (in whole or in part) and may make recommendations if they deem it appropriate.

The decision of the Panel will be final.

The Panel will, within seven working days of the hearing, write and/or send by electronic mail to all participants informing them of the decision and the reasons for it. The Panel's findings and any recommendations will be sent in writing to the complainant, the Headmaster and where relevant, the person complained about. The Panel's findings and any recommendations will also be available for inspection on the School premises by the Headmaster and the School Proprietor.

### **Handling of Complaints**

Parents can be assured that all concerns and complaints will be treated seriously and confidentially by the School.

In the event of a complaint being received during a school holiday period, it will be dealt with as soon as reasonably practicable and normally within the timescales set out throughout this policy. Where there are delays in collecting information, for example, caused by staff absence, parents will be informed of the reasons why and a likely time frame for a response.

If parents remain dissatisfied with the School's response and/or feel that intervention at a higher level is appropriate, they may lodge a complaint to external agencies as follows:

#### **Independent Schools Inspectorate (ISI)**

CAP House,  
9-12 Long Lane,  
London  
EC1A 9HA  
Tel: 020 7600 0100  
Email: [concerns@isi.net](mailto:concerns@isi.net)

Ofsted ask that complaints be registered through their contact form on their website <http://live.ofsted.gov.uk/onlinecomplaints/> (or email [enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk](mailto:enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk)).

### **Records**

The School keeps a written record of all complaints including the date, the circumstances of the complaint, the action taken by the School as a result of the complaint and whether these concerns were resolved at the preliminary stage, following a formal procedure or whether they proceeded to a panel hearing. The School's written record of complaints will also identify those complaints relating to boarding provision, and the action taken by the School as a result of those complaints (regardless of whether or not they are upheld).

The outcome of all complaints are recorded in the complaints records situated in the Headmaster's Office which are available for parents, ISI and OFSTED inspectors on request.

All records of complaints will be retained by the School in accordance with the School's obligations under the Data Protection Act.

All correspondence, statements and records relating to individual complaints are to be kept confidential except where the Secretary of State or a body conducting an inspection under section 162A of the 2002 Act requests access to them.

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Mr A Hassan  
Chair of Cavendish Education



Mr Nick Oldham  
Headmaster