

Bradford Grammar School

Complaints Policy

This policy applies to the Whole School and is published to parents of pupils.

Introduction

Bradford Grammar School (the "School") aims to provide the highest level of teaching and pastoral care.

This policy is designed to ensure that any 'concerns' (Stage 1 informal resolutions) or 'formal complaints' (Stage 2 and 3 formal resolutions) are dealt with quickly, fairly and transparently. This policy is available and downloadable from the School website; a copy of the policy is also available in school and may be sent to parents on request.

Concerns / complaints raised about members of staff will ordinarily be shared with them at a very early stage in any investigation unless it is clear that doing so would be detrimental to the investigation or potentially impact negatively upon the welfare of a pupil/s. Disclosures regarding Child Protection issues are covered in detail in the Child Protection (Safeguarding) Policy.

Stage 1 – Informal resolution

- Most concerns are resolved informally and normally within five working days of the concern being received in writing.
- If parents have a concern, they should first contact their child's Form Tutor, Head of Year or the appropriate Head of Department.
- Concerns raised directly with a member of the Senior Leadership Team will usually be referred to the relevant Form Tutor, Head of Year or Head of Department.
- The School will keep a dated written record of the concern and the action taken. The School's hope is that the matter will be resolved at this stage. If this is not possible, parents will be advised to proceed by lodging a complaint in accordance with Stage 2 of this policy.
- Concerns raised with us out of term time will be acknowledged and acted upon as soon as is practicable.

Stage 2 – Formal resolution

- If the matter cannot be resolved informally, parents are asked to write to the Headmaster of the Senior School clearly indicating that they wish to make a 'formal Stage 2 complaint' with details of the issue. The Headmaster may ask another member of the Senior Leadership Team (SLT) to deal with the issue.
- The Headmaster or a delegated member of the SLT will be briefed by those who have already investigated the matter.

- The Headmaster or a delegated member of the SLT will meet or speak to the parents, normally within 10 working days of receiving the written formal complaint, to discuss the matter. If possible, a resolution will be reached at this stage.
- The Headmaster or a delegated member of the SLT will keep written records of all meetings and interviews held in relation to the complaint.
- Once the Headmaster or a delegated member of the SLT is satisfied that all of the relevant facts have been considered, a decision will be made. The Headmaster or a delegated member of the SLT will write to the parents explaining the decision. Communication will be via headed letter; additionally, a scanned copy of the letter will also be sent via an attachment to an email.
- If the complaint is about the Headmaster, parents are asked to write to the Chairman of the Board of Governors. The Clerk to the Governors will acknowledge the receipt of the formal complaint and arrange for a meeting to take place with a Governor, normally within 10 working days of receiving the written complaint. If possible, a resolution will be reached at this stage.
- If parents remain dissatisfied, they should proceed to Stage 3 of this policy.

Stage 3 – Formal resolution: Panel hearing

- If the matter cannot be resolved formally at Stage 2, parents are asked to write to the Headmaster of the Senior School clearly indicating that they wish to make a 'formal Stage 3 complaint' with details of the issue. The Headmaster will refer the matter to the Clerk to the Governors who is authorised to call hearings of the Complaints Panel.
- If the complaint is about the Headmaster, parents are asked to write to the Chairman of the Board of Governors who will refer the matter to the Clerk to the Governors.
- The Clerk to the Governors will acknowledge the formal complaint and arrange for a hearing to take place, normally within 15 working days of receipt in writing of the parent's wish to proceed to a panel hearing.
- The Governors will appoint a panel comprising two Governors and a person who is independent of the management and running of the School. No panel member will be directly involved in the matters forming the formal complaint.
- The panel may require further particulars of the formal complaint or any related matter to be supplied in advance of the hearing. Copies of such particulars shall be supplied to all parties not later than five 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' formal complaint immediately without the need for further investigation.
- Where further investigation is required, the panel will decide how it should be carried out.
- After consideration of all relevant facts, the panel will reach a decision within five working days of the hearing.
- The panel shall make any necessary findings and recommendations based on the information provided to them.
- The Clerk to the Governors will write to the parents informing them of any findings made by the panel together with the decision, which will be final. A copy of the letter will be made available for inspection on the School premises to the Headmaster of the Senior School, the Governors and, where relevant, the person who is the subject of the formal complaint. Communication will be via headed letter, possibly with a report included alongside; additionally, a scanned copy of the letter and any associated report will also be sent via an attachment to an email.
- If necessary, the regulation allows the panel to consider the parents' complaint in his / her / their absence and issue findings on the substance of the formal complaint, thereby bringing the matter to a conclusion.

The School shall maintain a written record of all formal complaints that are made to the School, irrespective of whether they are resolved following a formal Stage 2 procedure or proceed to a Stage 3 panel hearing, together with a record of any action taken by the School as a result of any such complaint, regardless of whether it is upheld or not.

Parents can be assured that all concerns (Stage 1 resolution) or formal complaints (Stage 2 and 3 resolutions) will be treated seriously. Correspondence, statements and records will be kept confidential except where disclosure is required by the Secretary of State or the Independent Schools Inspectorate (ISI) under section 108 or 109 of the 2008 Education and Skills Act.

One formal complaint (Stage 2 and 3 formal resolutions) was registered under the procedure during the School's academic year 2016 - 2017.

Four formal complaints (Stage 2 and 3 formal resolutions) were registered under the procedure during the School's academic year 2017 – 2018.

To date, one formal complaint (Stage 2 and 3 formal resolutions) was registered under the procedure during the School's academic year 2018 - 2019.

Annual Summary

An annual summary of registered complaints will be submitted to December Board meetings.

Policy reviewed by: Dr S Hinchliffe, Headmaster

Last policy review date: 08 May 2019

Next policy review date: Summer term 2020