

Broadoaks British School



Complaints Procedure

Broadoaks British School is dedicated to providing the best possible education and support for all its pupils. This means having a clear, fair, and efficient procedure for dealing with any complaints from parents of registered pupils to or against the school, so that any issues that arise can be dealt with as swiftly and effectively as possible.

This policy only fully applies to parents of registered pupils at the school. If complaints are raised by persons other than parents, they will be dealt with under stages 1 and 2 of the formal policy.

All school staff will be made aware of complaints procedures and expected to review this document regularly in order that they are familiar with our process of dealing with complaints and can be of the most assistance when an issue is brought to their attention.

This document explains that procedure, and the steps that it outlines should be referred to and followed by all pupils and their parents whenever an issue arises that causes them concern. If it becomes necessary to alter the time limits and deadlines set out within this procedure, you will be advised accordingly, given an explanation and provided with revised timescales.

1. When an issue or concern first arises

If you have a concern that you would like to take up with the school you should initially inform a member of staff either in person, over the telephone or in writing. You may then be invited to an informal meeting with the member of staff most appropriate for dealing with your concern.

You may wish to approach your child's class teacher first as they will be best placed to help you either directly or by figuring out which other member of staff you should be speaking to.

Alternatively, please contact the Headteacher directly with your concern.

If your complaint is about a member of staff, you should first raise this with the Headteacher either in person or in writing, and a meeting can be arranged with the Headteacher to discuss the issue at hand.

If your complaint is about the Headteacher, you should raise your concern in writing with the Chair of Governors.

1.2 Initial informal meeting

Once a concern has been raised you may be invited to attend an informal meeting with a member of staff or the Headteacher/Chair of Governors to discuss your concerns.

You are welcome to bring a friend, partner or, in the case of a pupil who has raised a concern, a parent to this meeting. It may be appropriate for a pupil to attend the meeting if their parent has raised a concern, depending on the nature of the issue.

Staff have a responsibility to ensure that you understand any future points of action that have been agreed upon in this meeting and should make a record of what has been discussed, as well as any outcomes and a plan of action, if one has been agreed.

All staff will do their best to ensure that your concerns are dealt with appropriately and efficiently but if you cannot come to an agreement, or are dissatisfied with the outcome of your meeting, you can make a formal complaint in writing to the Headteacher.

There is no suggested time-scale for resolution at this stage given the importance of dialogue through informal discussion although it would be expected that most issues would be resolved within 5 school days.

2. Formal complaints

In order to ensure that complaints are processed efficiently and effectively, Broadoaks British School deals with formal complaints in three stages:

Stage 1

If you do not feel that your concern has been dealt with as you would like, are unhappy with the outcome of your informal meeting or feel that the issue is serious enough that it warrants it, you can make a formal complaint in writing to the Headteacher. If your complaint is about the Headteacher you should go straight to Stage 2 of this procedure. Your written complaint should provide sufficient detail of the issues to allow the Headteacher to investigate and respond to the complaint. You should also set out what you feel would resolve the complaint.

The Headteacher should acknowledge your complaint in writing within 2 school days. They may already be aware of the situation. They will outline their decision if there is one to be made, and any action to be taken as a result of your complaint.

The Headteacher may call you in for a meeting to discuss the issue outcome, possible solutions, or to explain what has or will happen as a result of your complaint. The Headteacher will keep a record of all interactions with you and other staff, meetings and decisions made in reference to your complaint.

If the complaint is against a member of staff, the Headteacher will talk to that employee.

The Headteacher will respond to you in writing within 2 school days outlining their response to your concern, and any action that has or will be taken. If they have decided not to take any further action on the issue, they will explain what they have decided, how they have reached this decision, and will outline your right to take the matter further and the steps to be taken.

Stage 2

If, having spoken to the Headteacher, you are dissatisfied with the outcome of your complaint or your complaint is about the Headteacher, you may lodge your complaint with the Chair of Governors. The complaint must be in writing and it should explain your concern in sufficient detail and the steps that have led up to you taking this course of action. You should also set out the actions you feel would be necessary to resolve the complaint.

If the complaint is against a member of staff, that employee will be given the opportunity to write a response, which will be sent to the Chair of Governors within 2 school days of the complaint being lodged with them.

The Chair of Governors will respond to you in writing within 2 school days outlining their response to your concern, and any action that has or will be taken. If they have decided not to take any further action on the issue, they will explain what they have decided, how they have reached this decision, and will outline your right of appeal and how you can start your appeal.

3. Vexatious/persistent complaints

Whilst it is hoped that this document will reduce any dissatisfaction with the school, it is acknowledged that there may be rare occasions where a complainant continues to be dissatisfied with the school and the outcomes achieved under the complaints procedure.

Where a complainant attempts to re-open an issue which has already been dealt with under the complaints procedure, the Chair of Governors will contact them to inform them that the matter has already been dealt with and that either that stage of the policy has been exhausted or that the complaints procedure has been exhausted and the matter is considered closed. Where further correspondence is received on the same matter, this may be considered vexatious and the school will be under no obligation to respond to that correspondence.

If the complainant subsequently contacts the school again about the same issue, the school can choose not to respond. The normal circumstance in which we will not respond is if:

- the school has taken every reasonable step to address the complainant's needs, and the school's position has been clearly set out in writing together with the complainant's options

- the complainant is contacting the school repeatedly but making substantially the same points each time
- the school reasonably believes the aim of the contact is to cause disruption or inconvenience
- that the complainant acts or communicates in an inappropriate way towards school staff.

This is in line with the Code of Conduct outlined in the Parents' Agreement.

Once the school has decided that it is appropriate to stop responding, the complainant will be informed in writing.

4. Records, review and monitoring of complaints

The school will record the progress of all complaints, including information about actions taken at all stages, the stage at which the complaint was resolved, and the final outcome. The records will also include copies of letters and emails, and notes relating to meetings and phone calls. This material will be treated as confidential and held centrally and will be viewed only by those involved in investigating the complaint or on the review panel.

Records of complaints will be kept securely, only for as long as necessary and in line with data protection law.

Broadoaks British School will review and evaluate all complaints no matter how far they are taken or what the outcome to ensure that similar problems are avoided in the future or to see if they could have been managed any more effectively. All records of any complaints will be kept confidential but may be inspected where appropriate by any inspection body.

The School Management will review the complaints procedure every 2 year(s).

6. Staff complaints

Staff who have a concern about a colleague or a volunteer member of staff should refer to our Staff Complaints policy.

This is available in the Staff Handbook and School Policies document.

Adopted: 1st August 2019

Review date: 1st August 2023