



Granada International School

Complaints Policy and Procedures for Parents

Policy Name	Complaints Policy and Procedures for Parents
School	Granada International School
Applies To	Parents, guardians and carers of current pupils
Approved By	Board / Proprietor / School Leadership
Review Date	_____
Next Review Date	_____

This policy is available on the public area of the school website and on request from the School Office.

Contents

1.	Scope and Application	1
2.	Introduction	2
3.	General Principles	3
4.	Record Keeping.....	4
5.	Recording of Meetings	
6.	Inspection and External Contact	
7.	EYFS / Early Years	
8.	Roles and Responsibilities	
9.	Who to Contact	
10.	Complaints Procedure	
11.	Serial, Persistent and Unreasonable Complaints	
12.	Appendix 1 - Complaints: Whom to Contact	
13.	Appendix 2 - Stage 2 Formal Complaint Form	
14.	Appendix 3 - Stage 3 Panel Hearing Request Form	

1. Scope and Application

- a) Granada International School aims to ensure that parents, guardians and carers can raise concerns or complaints easily, respectfully and without anxiety, in the knowledge that concerns will be taken seriously, considered fairly and handled confidentially except where disclosure is legally required.
- b) This policy applies to parents, guardians and carers of current pupils of Granada International School, including pupils in the Junior School and, where applicable, Early Years provision.
- c) It does not normally apply to prospective pupils or former pupils unless the complaint was first raised while the pupil was still on roll.
- d) Safeguarding matters are not handled under this policy. Any safeguarding concern must be referred immediately to the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) in line with the School's Safeguarding Policy.
- e) Complaints relating to exclusions, examination appeals or other matters governed by separate procedures will be managed under those specific policies.
- f) Anonymous complaints will not normally be investigated, though the Head or Board may decide to investigate in exceptional circumstances.
- g) For the purpose of this policy, 'working day' means a school day during term time.
- h) Time limits in this policy will be followed where reasonably possible, but may be extended where further investigation is required. In such cases the complainant will be informed of the revised timeline and reason for the extension.
- i) A summary of the number of formal complaints received in the preceding school year will be made available on request in accordance with applicable requirements.

2. Introduction

- (a) Granada International School believes that regular, open and respectful communication with families is essential to a strong school community.
- (b) Parents, pupils and staff are encouraged to share feedback, concerns and suggestions so that issues can be addressed early and standards continually improved.
- (c) The school will always seek, where possible, to resolve concerns before they develop into formal complaints. This may include providing clarification, reassurance, further information, an apology where appropriate, or changes to practice.

- (d) The school seeks to provide high-quality academic, pastoral and co-curricular provision and therefore hopes complaints will be rare; however, it recognises that there may be occasions where parents wish to make a complaint.
- (e) For the purpose of this policy, a complaint is any matter about which a parent or guardian is dissatisfied and seeks action by the school.
- (f) The aim of this procedure is to resolve complaints fairly, promptly and, where possible, restore confidence and constructive working relationships.
- (g) The school's complaints procedure has three stages:
 - Stage 1: Informal Resolution
 - Stage 2: Formal Resolution
 - Stage 3: Panel Hearing.

3. General Principles

- (a) Complaints should be raised as soon as possible and preferably within three months of the incident or issue giving rise to the complaint.
- (b) The process is intended to be investigatory rather than adversarial and for an impartial and fair investigation to be undertaken, and judgement reached.
- (c) Any complaint about the Head will be handled by the Chair of the Board or their nominee in accordance with Stage 2.
- (d) Parents should not approach governors or board members individually to pursue a complaint, as this may compromise impartiality if the matter proceeds to a panel hearing.
- (e) All complaints will be handled with due regard to confidentiality. The school also expects complainants to treat all correspondence and documents relating to the complaint as confidential.
- (f) A complaint may be withdrawn at any time, but this should be confirmed in writing.

4. Record Keeping

- (a) Brief records may be kept of concerns resolved informally under Stage 1 so that the school can identify trends and improve practice.
- (b) A written record will be kept of all formal complaints, whether resolved at Stage 2 or proceeding to Stage 3, including the action taken by the school.
- (c) Correspondence, statements and records relating to individual complaints will be kept confidential except where access is required by law, a regulator or an inspectorate.
- (d) The school will retain complaint records for an appropriate period in line with its retention schedule and applicable legal or regulatory requirements.
- (e) The record of a complaint is kept for a minimum of 7 years.

5. Recording of Meetings

- (a) The school will decide whether meetings may be recorded, taking into account privacy, data protection obligations and the purpose of the recording.
- (b) As a reasonable adjustment, the school may permit recording where needed to support a complainant with communication or accessibility needs.
- (c) Any recording must be agreed in advance by all parties and documented beforehand. Unless approved as a reasonable adjustment, meetings and hearings under this policy should not be recorded.

6. Inspection and External Contact

- (a) Granada International School may be subject to inspection by the relevant education authorities or inspectorates applicable to its registration and curriculum pathways.
- (b) Parents may contact the relevant external body where appropriate, but will usually be expected to have exhausted the school's formal complaints procedure first.
- (c) The school should insert here the appropriate external contact details for the regulator / inspectorate applicable to its registration status in Kenya and any international curriculum provider where relevant.

7. Early Years

- (a) Where the School operates an Early Years or Foundation Stage provision, any additional legal or regulatory requirements for complaints relating to that provision will apply.
- (b) Complaints relating specifically to Early Years requirements should be investigated promptly and in accordance with the applicable standard or regulatory timeline.

8. Roles and Responsibilities

8.1 Complainant

A satisfactory resolution will be achieved more easily if the complainant:

- report the concern or complaint as early as possible;
- explain the complaint clearly and in full;
- co-operate with the school in seeking a resolution;
- respond promptly to requests for information or meetings;
- treat all those involved with respect;
- respect confidentiality; and
- refrain from publicizing the complaint on social media or other public channels while the procedure is ongoing.

8.2 Investigator (Stage 2)

The investigator is appointed by the Head and is usually a Deputy Head, or the Chief Operating Officer, or the Chief Financial Officer if the matter is a non-educational issue. The role is to establish the facts relevant to the complaint by providing a comprehensive, open, transparent and fair consideration of the complaint through:

- establish the facts through a fair, open and thorough investigation;
- interview relevant staff, pupils or other persons where appropriate;
- review records and evidence;
- maintain notes of meetings and keep documentation secure;
- work within the stated timescales where possible; and
- prepare a written report with findings and, where appropriate, recommendations.

8.3 Complaints Co-ordinator

The complaints co-ordinator will:

- keep the complainant informed at each stage;
- support the administration of the process;
- ensure records are maintained appropriately; and
- assist with arrangements for meetings, hearings and circulation of documents.

8.4 Clerk to the Board / Panel Administrator (Stage 3)

The Clerk is the contact point for the complainant and the panel and will:

- serve as the point of contact for the complainant and panel;
- circulate relevant papers in advance;
- arrange the date, time and venue of the hearing;
- keep an appropriate record of the hearing; and
- communicate the panel's decision.

8.5 Panel Chair (Stage 3)

The panel chair, who is appointed by the Chair of Governors, will ensure that:

- ensure the panel is impartial and that no member had prior involvement;
- ensure the process is fair, respectful and non-adversarial;
- ensure both parties have the opportunity to present their case; and
- lead the panel toward findings and recommendations.

8.6 Panel Members

Panel members (of whom two will usually be School Governors (other than the Chair of Governors) and one an independent member):

- consider the evidence impartially;
- seek to resolve the complaint and, where possible, promote reconciliation;
- recognise that the hearing may be stressful for complainants; and
- reach findings based on the evidence presented.

9. Who to Contact ((see Appendix 1)

- (a) Parents should normally raise concerns first with the most appropriate member of staff, such as the class teacher, form tutor or year leader.
- (b) If the complaint concerns a specific member of staff, or if the issue is serious or sensitive, parents may raise it directly with a relevant senior leader.
- (c) If the complaint concerns a senior member of staff, it should be referred to the Head or, where the complaint is about the Head, to the Chair of the Board / Proprietor via the School office or nominated clerk.

10. Complaints Procedure

10.1 Stage 1 - Informal Resolution

- (a) Most concerns should first be raised informally.
- (b) Parents should normally contact the class teacher, form tutor or relevant pastoral / academic leader in the first instance.
- (c) In many cases the matter can be resolved promptly through discussion, clarification or local action.
- (d) Informal complaints should normally be acknowledged within two working days.
- (e) The school will aim to resolve informal complaints within ten working days where reasonably possible.
- (f) If the issue is not resolved satisfactorily, the complainant may move to Stage 2.

10.2 Stage 2 - Formal Resolution

- (a) If the complainant is dissatisfied after Stage 1, they should set out the complaint in writing using the Stage 2 form in Appendix 2.
- (b) The Head, or another appropriate senior leader where delegated, will acknowledge receipt in writing within five working days.
- (c) The Head may appoint an investigator, usually a senior leader, to investigate the complaint. In some circumstances, an independent investigator may be appointed.
- (d) The investigator may gather documents, meet relevant persons and seek clarification from the complainant.
- (e) The investigator will normally submit a written report within ten working days of appointment, unless an extension is necessary.
- (f) The Head will then issue the School's decision and reasons, normally within a further ten working days.
- (g) In most cases, Stage 2 should be concluded within twenty-five working days of receipt of the formal complaint.
- (h) Where the complaint is about the Head, the complaint should be addressed to the Chair of the Board / Proprietor's nominee, who will arrange the investigation and communicate the decision.
- (i) If the complainant remains dissatisfied, they may request a Stage 3 panel hearing.

10.3 Stage 3 - Panel Hearing

- (a) A panel hearing may normally only be requested after Stage 2 has been completed.
- (b) The complainant must write to the Clerk to the Board / nominated panel administrator requesting a panel hearing, ideally using the Stage 3 form in Appendix 3.
- (c) The request should explain the complaint and why the complainant remains dissatisfied with the Stage 2 outcome or procedure.
- (d) The request should be made as soon as possible and normally within five working days of the Stage 2 decision.
- (e) The panel will usually consist of at least three persons who were not directly involved in the matters complained of, including at least one independent person where required.
- (f) The panel may dismiss the complaint in whole or in part, uphold it in whole or in part, recommend action to resolve the complaint, or recommend changes to systems or procedures to avoid recurrence.
- (g) The panel is not ordinarily empowered to make a financial award or impose sanctions, though it may recommend action to the school leadership or Board.

10.4 Panel Procedure

- (a) The Clerk / panel administrator will circulate the relevant papers to the panel and the parties in advance.
- (b) The panel will normally meet within five to fifteen working days of receiving the final papers, subject to availability and complexity.
- (c) The hearing will be private and conducted in a fair, respectful and non-adversarial manner.
- (d) The complainant may be accompanied by one adult supporter. Legal representation will not usually be appropriate unless the panel chair agrees otherwise.
- (e) If necessary, the panel may request further investigation before reaching its findings.
- (f) The panel's decision and recommendations will normally be issued in writing within ten working days of the hearing or panel review.
- (g) The panel's decision is final within the school's internal procedure.

11. Serial, Persistent and Unreasonable Complaints

- (a) The school recognizes that, very occasionally, a complainant may remain dissatisfied even after all stages of the procedure have been followed.
- (b) If the same issue is repeatedly raised after the procedure has been exhausted, the school may inform the complainant in writing that the matter is closed.
- (c) Repeated complaints about the same matter, or complaints pursued in a way that is abusive, offensive, threatening or unreasonable, may be treated as vexatious or outside the scope of this procedure.

Appendix 1 - Complaints: Whom to Contact

This appendix is drafted for Granada International School and should be updated with final staff names, email addresses and phone contacts before issue.

Area of responsibility	Role / post	Name / email
Classroom matters / day-to-day concerns	Class Teacher / Form Tutor	_____
Pastoral concerns / pupil wellbeing	Head of Year / Pastoral Lead	_____
Academic matters / teaching and learning	Deputy Head Academic / Curriculum Lead	_____
Boarding matters (if applicable)	Head of Boarding	_____
Co-curricular activities / educational visits	Co-curricular Lead	_____
Admissions / administration / records	Admissions & Administration Office	_____
Finance / fees / bursaries	Finance Office / Bursar	_____
Facilities / health and safety	Operations / Facilities Manager	_____
Safeguarding concerns	Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL)	_____
General issues not covered above	Head of School	_____
Complaint about the Head	Chair of Board / Proprietor's nominee	_____

Appendix 2 - Stage 2 Formal Complaint Form

This form is used to invoke Stage 2 of Granada International School's complaints procedure. Please complete and return it to the Head's Office or the designated complaints contact.

Your name: _____

Pupil's name (if relevant): _____

Your relationship to the pupil: _____

Address: _____

Postcode: _____

Daytime telephone number: _____

Evening telephone number: _____

Email: _____

Please give concise details of your complaint, including relevant dates, events and key evidence. You may attach numbered documents if necessary.

What action have you already taken to try to resolve your complaint? Please state who you spoke to or wrote to, and what the outcome was.

What action do you feel might resolve the issue at this stage?

If you are attaching additional documents, please list them below by number and description.

Signature: _____

Date: _____

For School Use Only

Date complaint form received: _____

Date acknowledgement sent: _____

Complaint referred to: _____

Date complaint referred: _____

Appendix 3 - Stage 3 Panel Hearing Request Form

Following an unsuccessful Stage 2 outcome, this form is used to request a Stage 3 panel hearing.

Your name: _____

Pupil's name (if relevant): _____

Your relationship to the pupil: _____

Address: _____

Postcode: _____

Daytime telephone number: _____

Evening telephone number: _____

Email: _____

Please provide the following details

I submitted a formal complaint to the School on _____ and received a Stage 2 response on _____.

Please state any additional documentation that was not submitted at Stage 2 but which you want the panel to consider.

I am dissatisfied with the way in which the procedure was carried out because:

I am dissatisfied with the outcome because:

What actions do you feel might resolve the issue at this stage?

I would like the Panel to review this matter: [☐] On the papers [☐] At a hearing

Signature: _____

Date: _____

For Use by the Clerk / Panel Administrator Only

Date review form received: _____

Date acknowledgement sent: _____

Review referred to: _____

Date review referred: _____