

Complaints Policy and Procedure

Scope of Complaints Policy

The Senior Management Team are committed to working with parents in the best interests of their children's education. The purpose of the Complaints Policy is to address complaints raised by parents. The policy covers all matters relating to the actions of staff employed in the school and the application of school procedures, where they affect individual pupils.

Where it becomes evident at an early stage that a matter should be dealt with according to other established procedures or appeals mechanisms, this complaints procedure will be set aside in favour of the agreed procedure for example under the Admissions Procedure.

The school will not deal with anonymous complaints (except those concerning child protection/safeguarding matters). The process is non-adversarial and does not provide a role for any other organisations.

Aims of Complaints Procedure

In operating this complaints procedure we aim to:

- encourage resolution of problems by informal means wherever possible;
- allow swift handling of a complaint within established time-limits for action, keeping people informed of progress;
- ensure a full and fair consideration of the complaint;
- have due regard for the rights and responsibilities of all parties involved;
- respect confidentiality;
- address all the points at issue and provide an effective response and appropriate redress, where necessary; and
- provide information to the school's Management Team so that services can be improved.

The procedure is designed to be:

- easily accessible and publicised.
- simple to understand and use;
- impartial; and
- non-adversarial.

Rights of the Complainant

In dealing with your complaint we will ensure that you receive:

- fair treatment;
- courtesy;
- a timely response;
- accurate advice;
- respect for your privacy – complaints will be treated as confidentially as possible however we may have to consult with other appropriate parties about the complaint;
- reasons for our decisions.
- where the complaint is upheld we will acknowledge this and address the complaint you have raised.
- If, after consideration, it is judged there are no grounds for your complaint, you will be advised of this formally.

Responsibilities of Complainant

In making your complaint we would expect that you:

- raise issues in a timely manner;
- treat our staff with respect and courtesy;
- provide accurate and concise information in relation to the issues you raise; and
- use these procedures fully and engage in them at the appropriate levels.

Representation of Persons Making a Complaint

- The complainant may be accompanied by another person where it is accepted, by the Principal, that this will assist the consideration and resolution of the complaint.
- A member of staff who is directly referred to in a complaint will be provided with a written copy of the complaint and details of any information brought by the parent before being required to respond to the matters raised.
- Staff may seek advice and support from their professional body and may also be accompanied by another person.
- Legal representation or representation by person(s) acting in a professional capacity is not permitted within this procedure.
- This procedure does not take away from the legal rights of any of the participants.
- Where the person making the complaint or is the subject of the complaint, that person will play no part in the management or appeal of the complaint.

Who will deal with your complaint?

The school aims to deal with concerns at the earliest point, in the first instance at the ***informal stage*** your complaint should be raised and dealt with by and in order of:

- The class teacher
- The KG Academic Director/Levels Academic Director

If the complaint does not relate to a teacher in the school, but to a member of the non-teaching staff, it should be referred to the appropriate line manager.

If you proceed to the ***formal stage*** of the process

- The Principal will assume responsibility for the process, unless she is the subject of the complaint, in which case
- The Owner of the School will assume responsibility.

Timescales

All parties should try to resolve complaints in a timely manner. The entire procedure, from step 1 to step 4, should be dealt with in 40 working days, where possible.

Procedure for Making a Complaint

Informal Stage: Step 1

Initial complaints should normally be raised verbally with the teacher concerned so that she may have an opportunity to address the issue(s).

Please observe the school's existing protocols for arranging and conducting such meetings and follow the school's policy with respect to access to members of teaching staff.

This approach would not prevent you from choosing to enter the formal process at a later stage, if you believe that to be an appropriate course of action.

Informal Stage: Step 2

If your complaint concerns a member of the non-teaching staff or if the complaint is unresolved following Step 1 you should arrange a meeting with the Academic Director to discuss the issue(s).

If it is not possible to resolved your complaint through the informal processes in Steps 1 or 2 you may wish to make a formal complaint as set out in Step 3.

Formal Stage: Step 3

All formal complaints must be submitted in writing to the school Principal.

- You should state the grounds for your complaint as concisely as possible, addressing specifically the issue(s) that are of concern to you.

- You will then receive a written acknowledgement of your letter from the Principal. This will confirm that your letter has been received, and either:
- Provide a response to the issue(s) you raised, or state who is considering your complaint and indicate when you can expect a response to be issued.
- If your complaint is against the Principal or you remain dissatisfied with the response from the Principal you should follow step 4.

Formal Stage: Step 4

Making a formal written complaint to the Owner, about the Principal or appealing against the Principal's decision in step 3.

- You should state the grounds for your complaint as concisely as possible, addressing specifically the issue(s) that are of concern to you.
- You will then receive a written acknowledgement of your letter from the Owner. This will confirm that your letter has been received, and either:
- Provide a response to the issue(s) you raised, or state who is considering your complaint and indicate when you can expect a response to be issued.
- The decision of the Owner is final. At the end of the process the Owner will inform you of his decision in writing, and that the matter is considered closed.
- Any complaint against the Owner should be directed to the Ministry of Education.

Record Keeping

The Principal will maintain a record of all correspondence, conversations and meetings about your complaint. The records will be held confidentially in the school, separate from student records. Records will be destroyed 3 years after the last contact on the issue.

Malicious or Vexatious Complaints

Where the Governing Body considers the actions of a parent/group of parents to constitute frivolous or vexatious behaviour, they will seek further legal advice.