



INTERNATIONAL BRITISH PRIMARY SCHOOL

COMPLAINTS POLICY

Our Objective

The Academy International British Primary School (AIBPS) is committed to ensuring the delivery of high quality education and care to all its students. Working in partnership with parents to resolve any concerns and complaints that they may have about their child's schooling, is a key part of how we deliver on this commitment. The purpose of this policy is to provide clear and transparent information to parents, the community and staff on how concerns and complaints will be managed, and resolutions found. It is also the intent of this policy to ensure that parents have access to support and advice when attempting to resolve a concern or complaint. When staff work with parents to resolve a concern or complaint they will follow a process that is founded on fairness, impartiality, accessibility, respect and responsiveness. The process has three stages. The first stage is to attempt at an informal resolution between the parties concerned. In the event this cannot be done, a formal complaint can be made and failing to resolve at this stage the matter can be escalated to the AIPBS Board.

Aim

As it is essential that the school community, parents and teachers and associates, work closely together, AIBPS encourages communication throughout all areas of the school community. Teachers work in partnership with parents and willingly listen to them. The staff aims to be responsive to the needs and wishes of all members of the school community, but recognises that there may be instances when there is dissatisfaction with some element of the school's activities. We will strive to be fair, open and honest when dealing with any complaint and will always put the interests of our children above all else. We will give careful consideration to all complaints and make every effort to resolve any complaint through dialogue and mutual understanding.

Resolving complaints

It is in the best interests of all parties that concerns are raised as soon as they occur. The majority of parental concerns/complaints can be resolved informally and quickly. There is a difference between "concerns" which can be dealt with informally and "complaints" which are subject to a formal procedure. The formal procedures will need to be invoked only when initial attempts to resolve the issue are unsuccessful and the person raising the concern remains dissatisfied and wishes to take the matter further.

Our complaints procedure principles:

- Encourage resolving problems by informal means whenever possible
- Respect confidentiality
- Give and expect both courtesy and consideration
- Communication is key to solving disputes and disagreements



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- Concerns/complaints are dealt with fairly and as swiftly as possible
- Complainants are to be kept informed of the progress

Throughout the process, the goal of all parties should be not only to resolve the problem, but also to fix permanently the source of the issue, maintaining good relationships between all members of the school community. The school will keep in mind ways a complaint can be resolved. It might be sufficient to acknowledge that the complaint is valid in whole or in part. In addition, the school will be willing:

- To listen and learn
- To offer an explanation
- To admit mistakes or that a situation could have been handled differently
- To apologise if appropriate
- To address any issues raised
- To review school practice and change if appropriate

It would be helpful if complainants are encouraged to state what they feel might help resolve the problem at this stage.

Note: An admission that the school could have handled the situation better is not an admission of negligence.

Every complaint will be investigated with due urgency and thoroughness. Whenever a complaint is upheld, every effort will be made to correct the problem and, if necessary, action will be taken to prevent a recurrence of the issue. The school will not investigate anonymous complaints or allegations, but confidentiality will be respected.

Stages of Complaints – Stage 1

It is the objective of the school to correct concerns quickly and informally.

- If parents have a concern, they should firstly organize a meeting through their child's communication book with their child's teacher as soon as possible. In many cases, the matter will be resolved right away to both the parents and teacher's satisfaction (*it may be that the teacher is unaware of the issue or there may have been a misunderstanding*).
- If the teacher is unable to resolve the issue alone, it may be necessary to consult the Principle.
- Concerns made directly to the Principle will usually be referred back to the relevant class teacher unless the Principle deems it appropriate to deal with the matter personally.
- Concerns which come to a member of staff from other sources should be passed immediately to the Principle who will direct the matter to the relevant member of staff. The staff member will deal with the complaint directly in an attempt to resolve the matter swiftly and informally.



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- The class teacher will keep a complete record of all concerns in the school data system.
- If the concern involves the Principle, the issue will be escalated to the GM.
- If the concern is with the GM, the issue will be taken to the school Board.
- If there is dissatisfaction with the outcome and felt the matter cannot be resolved in an informal way, or if the parent still feels so strongly about their concern and wishes to take the matter further, they then have the opportunity to make a formal written complaint.

Formal Complaints – Stage 2

Formal complaints must be in writing by filling out the AIBPS Complaint Form.

- Formal Complaints will be addressed to the Principle. The Principle will decide, after considering the complaint, the appropriate course of action.
- If formal complaints are given directly to the GM or school Board, these complaints will be passed back to the Principle, who will consult with the GM and a decision will be made on who will respond to the complainant. If the complainant is against the Principle, then the GM will automatically deal with the complaint.
- In most cases, the Principle will contact the complainant within 5 working days of receipt of the complaint to discuss the matter. If possible, a resolution will be reached at this stage.
- The Principle will keep written records of all meetings and interviews held in relation to the complaint on the school's data base.
- Once the Principle is satisfied that all of the relevant facts have been established, a decision will be made and the complainant will be notified in writing.
- If the complainant is still not satisfied with the decision, they can proceed with a Formal Complaint to the school Board.

Note: at any time, the complainant can withdraw the complaint or ask for it to become an informal complaint/concern. This must be done by the complainant in writing and will be acknowledged in writing by the Head Teacher or Director of Education.

Formal Complaint to the school Board – Stage 3

Complaints rarely reach this level, but AIBPS is prepared to handle it, should the situation arise. Following a failure to reach an earlier resolution, the complainant may wish to proceed to Stage 3.



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- The matter will then be referred to the school Board, a panel consisting of three members, one of whom is independent of the management and running of the school.
- The Principle, on behalf of the panel, will then acknowledge the complaint and schedule a meeting to take place at a time that is convenient for all parties. A date should be set within five working days and the meeting should take place within 15 working days if possible.
- If the panel deems necessary, it may require that further particulars of the complainant and any related matter be supplied in advance of the meeting. Copies of all such materials will be supplied to all parties no later than four working days prior to the meeting.
- The complainant may be accompanied to the meeting 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 issue immediately without the need for further investigation.
- When further investigation is necessary, the panel will decide how it should be carried out. After consideration of all the facts they consider relevant, the panel will reach a decision and may make recommendations, which it will complete within five working days of the meeting. The panel will write to the complainant informing them of its decision and the reason for it. The decision of the panel is final. The panel's findings and, if any, recommendations will be sent in writing to the complainant, the Principle, the GM and, where relevant, the person complained of.

Monitoring Complaints

The Principle is responsible for monitoring complaints. Complaints should be recorded from Stage 2, with the outcome listed as whether they were resolved at a preliminary stage or were advanced to a panel hearing. A copy will be kept on the school premises, available for inspection.

Responsibilities

Class Teachers

Responsible for dealing with and where possible resolving concerns/complaints concerning any children in their class.

All Staff



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Responsible for hearing concerns brought to them by parents and students and reassuring them that they will be dealt with as soon as possible by the appropriate staff member; informing the relevant staff member of the concerns. Forwarding any complaints received from other people who are not parents or students to the Head Teacher.

Note:

- 1. Complaints will not normally be considered if the event complained about was more than three months ago.*
- 2. This policy relates to all those who may have a legitimate complaint relating to the school. It is anticipated that complaints will most likely be brought by parents and those with parental responsibility.*
- 3. This procedure does not cover complaints against the curriculum, admissions process or staff grievances, as those are the subject of a separate policy.*

Date of Policy: July 2017

Date of Review: July 2019

