

Doha Academy Schools

Policy	Compliments and Complaints Policy			
Date approved	Date	August	Date of	June 2022
Checked Approved by Signature:-	Policy will take effect	2021	Next Review	
Author Responsible	By Whom:			
Supporting documents, procedures & forms of this policy	HRJ TRUMP			
Comments/Amendments for review:-	Date			

COMPLIMENTS, CONCERNS AND COMPLAINTS POLICY

Executive summary

RATIONALE

To ensure that procedures are in place to deal with complaints made against the school.

PURPOSE

The school has a responsibility to ensure that complaints are processed to meet the requirements of fairness and justice. CIS endeavours to provide a quality service to all its stakeholders and aims to deal promptly and professionally with every complaint, always seeking to resolve matters fairly and to the mutual satisfaction of all concerned.

Types of Concerns and Complaints

The majority of concerns/complaints received by the school fall into the following categories:

- **Academic or subject** - course programme, unsatisfactory teaching, too much/too little homework, progress in a particular subject, etc.
- **Child protection** - allegations against staff, handling of sensitive issues.
- **Financial and administrative** - administrative, environmental and financial issues
- **Pastoral care** - discipline/indiscipline, inappropriate sanctions, bullying, overall progress of the child, unhappiness of the child, accommodation, etc.

Initially the issue raised is a concern and only becomes a formal complaint if the issue is not resolved successfully or to the individual's satisfaction. Then it needs to be raised to the Vice Principal or Principal as a potential formal complaint.

GUIDELINES

1. All concerns and complaints will be taken seriously. The following complaints hierarchy is in place to attend to complaints: Teacher/Home Room Teacher, Subject Head, Heads of School, Vice Principal and Principal.
2. All complaints must be submitted in writing or documented if given verbally. The **multi-purpose parent response form** can be used for this documentation – see appendix.
3. Response forms will collated by the Senior Leadership team in each School, who is responsible and will follow up appropriately.
4. Receipt of response forms will be acknowledged in writing, and any action taken recorded and kept in a central file.
5. A regular analysis/summary will be completed by the Marketing Department to assist with strategic planning.
6. If any parent or students have any concerns, they should inform the school straight away. All attempts will be made to make an initial response within 24 hours. The school will seek to work together to resolve the matter as speedily as possible.
7. Confidentiality should be maintained as appropriate.

8. Other relevant policies may need to be referred to.
9. When stakeholders feel that the matter has not been resolved to their satisfaction they may wish to make a formal written complaint which will be referred to the Superintendent at CIS Services. All parties involved will be informed in writing of the outcome.
10. Parents are invited to inform the school when the service provided exceeds expectations. The Principal would particularly like to know about any member of staff who 'goes the extra mile'.

CONCLUSION

Complaints will be dealt with promptly. CIS very much values the opinion of all its stakeholders and encourages them to use the suggestion or complaints boxes in the school lobby. It also invites opinions via questionnaires, through the Parent Association and Student Council.

Summarise Internal Handling Concerns & Identifying Complaints

It is essential that concerns/complaints are dealt with speedily and that communications are kept open between the complainant and the school. Most concerns/complaints can be dealt with quickly in the following way if the channels of communication are kept open at all times.

Please see diagram on next page.

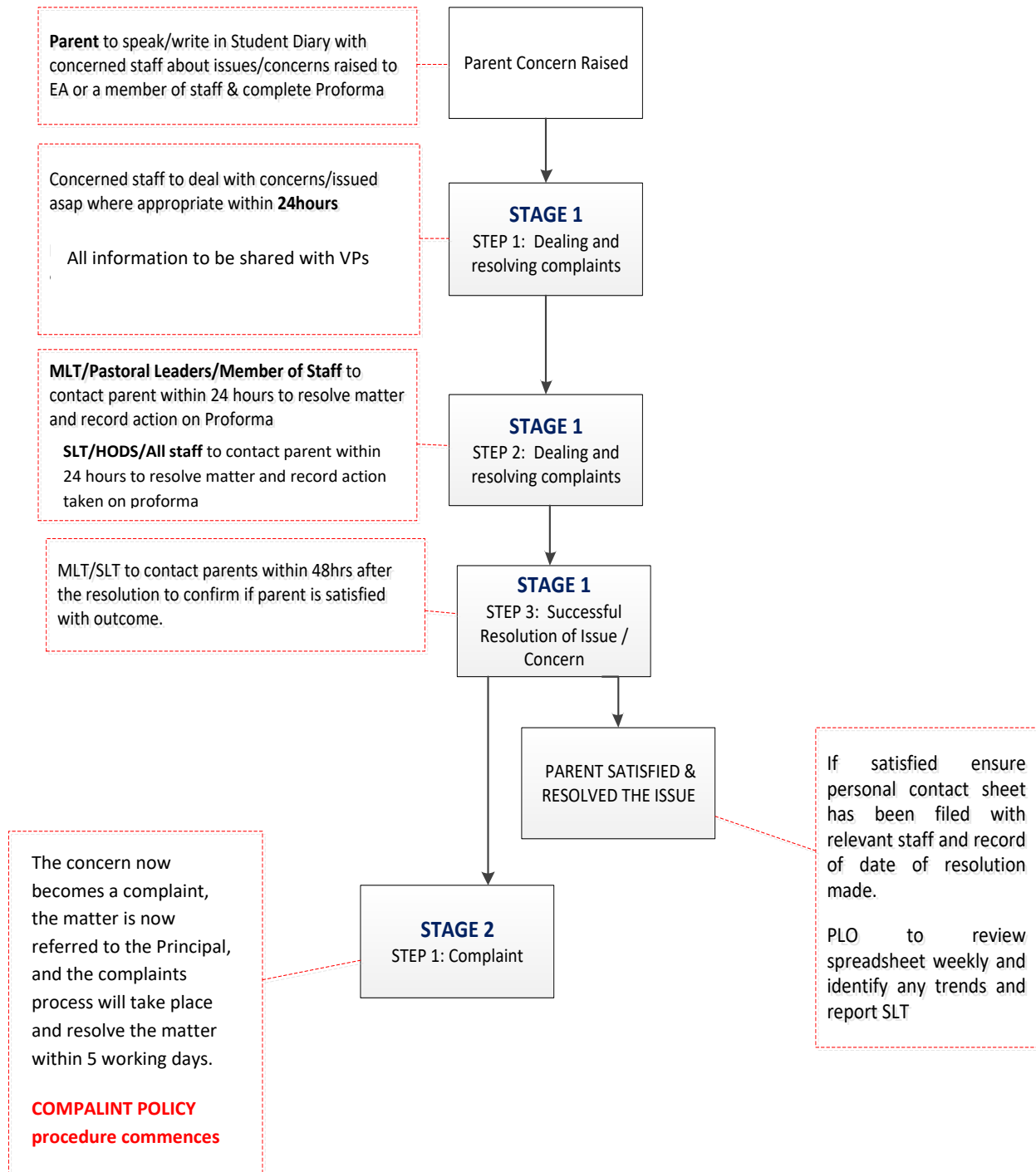
Responsibilities

The Board

- Adopting the policy, procedures and guidelines;
- Appointing where necessary an independent panel to hear complaints; when complainants are not satisfied with the Principal's/SLT's response;
- Receiving reports and findings from the panel, SLT, Parent Liaison Officer
- For the overall internal management of the procedures;
- For ensuring that the procedures are monitored and reviewed and regular reports made to the Board.

Independent Panel: To ensure that:

- The parties understand the procedure;
- The issues are addressed;
- Key findings of fact are established;
- Complainants are put at ease;
- The hearing is conducted as informally as possible;
- The panel is open-minded and acts independently;
- No member of the panel has a vested interest in the outcome, or has been involved in the issues previously;



Responsibilities condit ...

The independent Panel condit..

- Adopting the policy, procedures and guidelines;
- All parties have the chance to be heard;
- Any written material is seen by all parties; and
- Findings are communicated to the parent and school within three days of the hearing.

Senior Leadership Team (SLT): Principal, Vice Principal, Heads of Departments

- Ensures that the written policy and procedures are available to parents, pupils and members of the public on request;
- Hear complaints at the second stage (see below); and
- The efficient operation and management of the policy and procedures;
- Training staff on how to deal appropriately with complaints;
- For ensuring that the procedures are monitored and reviewed and regular reports made to the Directors
- For ensuring that there is both an informal and formal procedure;
- Keeping parents, pupils and others informed of the procedure;

Heads of Department/Subject teacher

- Dealing with and where possible resolving concerns/complaints about academic matters/programmes of study/teaching methods at stage 1 of the procedures.

Pastoral Teams

- Dealing with and where possible resolving complaints concerning overall pupil progress, discipline issues, pastoral care.

Designated Safeguarding Lead Officer or Deputies: for

- Receiving and dealing with any child protection issues.

All staff: for

- Hearing any concerns brought to them by parents and pupils and reassuring them that they will be dealt with as soon as possible by the appropriate member of staff,
- Informing the relevant staff of the concerns.
- Passing any complaints received from other people who are not parents to the Deputy Principal or the Parent Liaison Officer

Stages of Formal Complaint

General

We operate an open door policy and we endeavour to address all issues and concerns before moving to formal stages. There are three possible stages.

Stage 1 Informal Resolution

Concerns expressed by parents or pupils to any member of staff or the Parent Liaison Officer should be dealt with by that member of staff if he/she is able to do so. If the member of staff considers the issue to be beyond his/her competence the concern should be passed to the Form Teacher /Pastoral Leader/Head of Department.

Concerns/complaints which come to a member of staff from other sources should be passed immediately to the MLT/SLT and finally to the Vice Principal/Principal who will inform the complainant of the action he/she proposes to take.

Stage 2 Formal Procedure

Complaint heard by Vice Principal / a member of SLT / Principal

Stage 3 Independent Panel Hearing

Complaint heard by the independent panel appointed by the **Vice Principal** or **Principal**; the panel will consist of 3 people not directly involved in the matter.

Detailed Guidance

All staff should be conversant with the procedures.

Stage 1: Informal Resolution

All staff should listen carefully and patiently to parents' and pupils' concerns and/or complaints, recognising that however ill-founded the complaint might be, it is a matter of great concern to the parent or pupil. If unsure, please complete the relevant pro-forma and discuss it with a member of SLT. All concerns will be followed up by a courtesy call by the Complaints Co-ordinator within 72 hours, whenever possible and the outcome recorded.

Two Day Working Service

If the matter is within the competence of the member of staff to resolve quickly, this should be done. Otherwise the complainant should be reassured that the complaint will be passed to the relevant member of staff, and the relevant person should be informed by the member of staff as soon as possible. The complainant should be told that it is the school's policy to respond to the verbal complaint within 2 working days, even if the issue cannot be entirely resolved in 2 working days.

If a trivial/simple verbal concern/complaint is made it might be possible to resolve it immediately (*see Appendix 1*). In more serious cases, or where a member of staff is uncertain, parents should always be asked to put their complaint in writing and

move to Stage 2 Formal Procedure (*see Appendix 2*). This is to ensure that there is no conflict in determining what the complaint consists of and the action taken by the members of the school staff.

Student's Complaint Procedure

If a serious complaint is made by a pupil, the member of staff should immediately inform the Complaints Co-ordinator who will discuss the issue with the relevant members of staff in order to determine what the course of action should be.

Members of staff receiving a concern/complaint must use the school's Complaints Form to inform the relevant senior member of staff/Complaints Co-ordinator. But this does not prevent the member of staff also speaking to the relevant senior colleague about the matter at the earliest opportunity.

If the senior member of staff considers the issue to be serious, he/she should inform the Head/Complaints Co-ordinator via the school's Complaints Form, and inform the complainant of the action taken. If the complainant is not satisfied with the informal response, he/she should be informed that they must make a formal complaint in writing to the Head/Complaints Co-ordinator.

In any cases of doubt members of staff should seek the advice of the Complaints Co-ordinator **or a member of SLT/Deputy Head** who have the responsibility for mentoring colleagues. Informal resolution should normally take no more than three working days. If a longer period is necessary to complete investigations, the complainant should be informed within three working days of the reasons and the new date for resolution.

Stage 2: Formal Procedure

When a written formal complaint is received, the Head in consultation with the Complaints Co-ordinator will decide on the appropriate action and deploy a relevant member of senior staff to consult the relevant staff, make appropriate investigations, and attempt to resolve the issue within three working days. If a resolution cannot be found the Head/Complaints Co-ordinator should inform the complainant of his/her right of appeal to an independent panel.

If the complaint concerns a child protection issue or involves an allegation of abuse by a member of the school staff the named person responsible for child protection complaints should be informed by the Complaints Co-ordinator.

No complaint should normally be left unresolved at this stage after THREE days of receipt of the complaint. Where more time is necessary to complete the investigations, the complainant will be informed and another date set.

Stage 3: Hearings by an Independent Panel

Complainants who are not satisfied by the school's decision regarding the complaint can request a hearing by a panel of three members, one of whom will be independent of the school management.

The complainant must be advised by the Head/Complaints Co-ordinator to write to the **CEO** giving details of the complaint. The School Executive will nominate the panel.

The hearing must be within 10 working days of the **Principal/The Board** receiving notice of the complaint.

The complainant must be told of his/her right to be accompanied by a friend, and where relevant, translations / interpreters must be arranged by the **PLO** in consultation with the parties.

The nominated panel will make its own procedures, and will agree these with the **Principal**, who will report them to the next meeting of the **Board**.

The panel will ensure that the complainant is heard in private, is welcomed, and as far as possible, is put at ease.

Careful consideration must be taken when the complainant is a pupil.

The panel will hear the appeal(s), consider all the views expressed and decide the outcome.

The panel can make such findings and recommendations to the **Principal/the Board** as it wishes. Reports from the Panel will be sent to the Board, Principal, Vice Principal, the Head of Departments and the complainant and, where relevant, the person complained about, within three working days of the hearing. This timescale also ensures all complaints dealt with are within the time-frame of 28 days.

Note: *for the purposes of the complaints procedure, 'working days' means term time days. If a complaint is received at the end of a term, a resolution will be reached within a maximum of 10 weeks from the date of the complaint being lodged.*

Principal's Action

The **Principal**, after consultation with the **Senior Leadership Team**, will consider the panel's findings and recommendations and make such decisions as it feels are necessary in the circumstances.

In general, the **Principal** will take one of the following courses of action:

- Dismiss the complaint in whole or in part;
- Uphold the complaint in whole or in part;
- Decide on appropriate action to resolve the complaint; or
- Recommend changes to the school's systems or procedures.

- Inform the Board.

The Principal and the Board's decision is binding.

Reporting and Recording

In all cases it is important for staff to use the school's Complaints Form so that records of the complaint and the action taken can be recorded and traced. Supporting documents should be attached to the form.

The School Executive will ensure that all correspondence, statements and records pertaining to the complaint are kept confidential and secure. A written record of all complaints will be kept for at least 3 years and of whether they are resolved at the preliminary stage or proceed to a panel hearing.

The Head of Phase will review the handling of complaints with the Parent Liaison Officer on a termly, and will discuss issues with staff where appropriate.

The Principal/Deputy Principal will report to staff from time to time and to the **Board** on a monthly basis regarding the number and type of complaints received and their outcomes.

You can contact the Ministry of Education (MoE) if you think you can show that the school has broken the law, or acted unreasonably. Unreasonableness in the strict legal sense means acting in a way in which no reasonable authority could act. You should include copies of any refusal letters you have received, a copy of the appeal panel's decision, copies of any further correspondence with the school and any relevant supporting evidence.

Parent's Complaint Procedure

Our core purpose is that every young person should gain as much as possible from our school, based on our belief that all learners can, need and want to achieve.

Complaints Procedure

As part of our commitment to be an institution with the highest standards across all areas of the school, we acknowledge that parents, teachers and pupils may, on occasion, have concerns that need to be acknowledged and resolved. We believe that all stakeholders have a right to voice their concerns and that it is the responsibility of the school to ensure that concerns are dealt with effectively before they become complaints. Where there are genuine complaints the following procedure will apply:

	STAGE 1	STAGE 2	STAGE 3
Completion Timeframe	Within 2 working days	Within 3 working days	7 working days of the complaint being lodged
Involved	Involved Staff Head of Department /Subject	Senior Leadership Team	School Executives (Board/Superintendent/Deputy Superintendent) / Independent Panel
Action(s) Taken	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Complaint heard by any member of staff who must ensure that his/her immediate line manager (HOD or SLT) has been informed both of the complaint and of the outcome. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Vice Principal acknowledges receipt of the complaint; Writes to complainant with outcome of the investigation; Ensures that all interested parties are informed; Offer escalation to stage 3 if complainant is still dissatisfied. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Principal acknowledges receipt of complaint; Principal/VP writes to complainant with outcome of the investigation; Principal/VP ensures that all interested parties are informed of outcome; Principal offers escalation to stage 4 if dissatisfied.

Note: for the purposes of the complaints procedure, 'working days' means term time days. If a complaint is received at the end of a term, a resolution will be reached within a maximum of 10 weeks from the date of the complaint being lodged



CONCERN/COMPLAINT FORM

CATEGORY: COMPLAINT or CONCERN

Name of Parent:

Name of Pupil(s):

Year/Grade:

 Academic or Subject

 Pastoral Care

 Child Protection

 Financial & Administrative

DATE & TIME OF COMPLAINT
NAME OF STAFF INVOLVED:
COMPLAINT/CONCERN:
SUBMITTED BY & DATE:

Tick if Student

Tick if Parent

RECEIVED BY & DATE:



SCHOOL OFFICE USE ONLY	
ISSUED PASSED TO, DATE & TIME:	SEEN BY: Name, Post, Date & Time
ACTION TAKEN:	
1.	
2.	
3.	
4.	
5.	
6.	
7.	
8.	
9.	
10.	
OUTCOME:	