



**Dubai English Speaking College**

# **Complaints Policy**

**2023 - 24**

<b>Written by:</b>	CVI	<b>Reviewed:</b>	October 2023
<b>Approved by:</b>	SLT	<b>Next Review:</b>	October 2024

## Policy Statement

1. Complaints made to the College will be listened to and acted upon.
2. Complaints will be investigated thoroughly, fairly and promptly.
3. A member of staff will acknowledge any complaint made by parents within 2 days.
4. The staff member dealing with the complaint should be prepared to give a decision/report to the parents within 7 days of the complaint.
5. Complaints made by students will be dealt with by:
  - i) Form Tutor or Head of House for pastoral complaints
  - ii) Class teacher or Head of Department for academic complaints
  - iii) However, some matters may be directed to the Senior Leader who is linked to the student's House or to the Senior Deputy Headteacher.
6. When the complaint is directed at a senior member of staff, the Headteacher or Senior Deputy Headteacher will deal with the matter.
7. When the complaint is made against the Headteacher, the Chairperson of the Executive Board will be informed and the parents will be asked to send their complaint to the Chairperson in writing.
8. Complainants will not suffer as a result of a complaint.

## Complaints Procedure

### Stage 1. Informal

Most complaints are easily resolved through discussion and dialogue with staff at the school; more difficult or complex concerns may take more than one discussion.

Procedure for staff following the initial complaint:

1. Listen to, and record, in writing, basic details of complaint.
2. Decide upon the appropriate person to pass the information to or deal with the complaint.
3. Once informed, the appropriate member of staff should:
  - i) Acknowledge receipt of the complaint within 2 days of the complaint being made
  - ii) Interview the complainant by setting up a meeting or making telephone contact with them.
  - iii) Listen to and record details of the complaint.
  - iv) Speak to witnesses and take written statements if required
  - v) If possible, collect sufficient evidence to make an objective decision about the complaint.
4. Once all information has been gathered, the staff member dealing with the complaint should decide upon:
  - i) The next steps to be taken and the timeline that will be followed
  - ii) Who needs to be informed and/or spoken to
  - iii) What additional information is required, if any
5. A verbal or written report, summarising the items in point 4, should be given to the complainant within 1 week of the initial complaint.
6. The staff member should determine if the process is concluded:
  - i) If yes, confirm agreed actions and communicate these to the complainant and any other affected parties
  - ii) If not, refer the complaint to a higher authority or repeat the procedure as deemed necessary.
  - iii) If the complaint is still not resolved after these steps have been taken, the complainant should be advised that the complaint should now move on to the formal stage of the complaints procedure. At this stage the complainant should be informed that they should now make a written complaint to the Headteacher.

7. Informal complaints are recorded by those who receive them and the Headteacher is informed.
8. Complaints are kept confidential except in cases where local legal requirements permit access or enable restriction by local authorities.

## **Stage 2. Formal**

All Formal complaints are recorded by the Headteacher.

1. The Headteacher or Senior Deputy Headteacher will carry out an investigation and respond to the complainant as follows:
  - i) The complaint will be acknowledged within 2 days of receipt of the formal complaint.
  - ii) A target date for providing a response will be given, this will normally be within 7 days of receipt of the formal complaint.
  - iii) The Headteacher or Senior Deputy Headteacher may request to meet with the complainant to gain further information relevant to the complaint.
  - iv) Written and/or verbal statements from witnesses will be collected where necessary.
  - v) When all the relevant facts have been established, the Headteacher should produce a written response to the complainant.
2. If the complaint is not resolved, the complainant will be given the option to move to Stage 3.

## **Stage 3. Board of Trustees**

The complaint should be issued in writing to the Board of Trustees by the complainant. The complaint will be heard at an Executive Board Meeting within 14 days of receipt of the complaint to the Executive Board.

1. The complainant will be informed that they may attend this meeting with a person accompanying them. If the accompanying person is a lawyer, the College would require its own lawyer to be present.
2. The Headteacher will invite an independent person to this Board Meeting (such as the College lawyer), who is not involved in the operations and management of the College.
3. A final decision will be made and communicated to the complainant and the Headteacher within an agreed and reasonable time frame.

## **Complaints against Trustees**

A formal complaint against a Trustee other than the Chairperson should be referred to the Chairperson, who will investigate and then decide on any appropriate action. In extreme cases, this might include making a recommendation to the Board of Trustees about possible suspension.

1. In the event of a formal complaint being made against the Chair of Trustees, the complaint will be reviewed by the Hearings Committee of the Board of Trustees.
2. The Committee will decide if the complaint has merit by reviewing the written information and will make any recommendations it feels appropriate to enable resolution of the matter.
3. The outcomes will be communicated in writing within 14 working days to both sides by the Chair of the Committee. This written correspondence will include reasons for outcomes given.

Under this complaints procedure, there is no further stage for a complaint against the Chair of Trustees.