



The Anglican International School Jerusalem

COMPLAINTS POLICY

Approved by:

Date approved: January 2024

Next review due by:

INTRODUCTION

To support our student learning and development, AISJ recognise the value of consistent interaction and communication between faculty and parents. We aim to meet the needs of all students and parents within our school community. There are however occasions when parents raise complaints and it is the intention of this policy to provide a transparent and clear process to deal with complaints in a satisfactory manner.

This policy takes into account the requirements as specified in the Education Regulations (2014) for Independent School Standards. Complaints are dealt with in consultation and all stages and actions are recorded. A timescale is set for dealing with the complaint in a confidential manner and the rights and feelings of those involved are respected.

On occasion the individual dealing with a complaint needs to consider whether anyone else within the school needs to know about the complaint or whether the consent of another individual is required.

Parents, school staff and students are informed of the complaints procedures available should it become necessary and can familiarise themselves with the school's process of dealing with complaints to ensure they can be of the most assistance when an issue is brought to their attention. It is also on our school website.

This Policy intends to explain the process and should be referred to and followed by all parties should an issue arise that causes them concern. This Policy is available in hard copy from the administrator upon request.

For the purpose of this Policy, the term "parent" shall refer to anyone who has legal custody over a student enrolled at AISJ. In certain instances, a complaint may raise issues that have to be dealt with in another way (other than under this Policy), in which case we will explain to the parent why this is so and will inform them what steps will be taken. Complaints that are made anonymously will be handled at the discretion of AISJ Director and Management and may be considered using other procedures, depending on the nature of the complaint. For example, anonymous complaints appearing to relate to a child protection matter or alleged criminal activity may be referred as appropriate to the relevant authorities.

This policy is available, on request from the School Office, to parents of all pupils. It is also given to the Staff at the School.

RATIONALE AND PRINCIPLES

Rationale

As key stakeholders in the education of their children, parents have a right to voice any concerns they might have about their children's education. It is the school's duty and in its best interest to provide a channel for and be responsive to parents' complaints.

GUIDING PRINCIPLES

- Parents naturally consider the education of their children of the utmost importance and so it is to be expected that parents will from time-to-time voice concerns about some aspect of the education provided by the school.
- If parents' concerns can be addressed promptly and with care, it will minimize any sense of anger or frustration.
- Some concerns may be valid and justified and others may be beyond the scope of what the school can offer. The process of dealing with complaints must distinguish whether something can be done and then prompt action should be taken where it can and parental expectations should be managed where it can't.
- Whilst complaints will most likely come from parents, it shouldn't be ruled out that they might come from staff or pupils.

MEASURES

Establish Clear Channels and Procedures for Complaints

The first port of call for any concern parents might have regarding their child's education must be through the class teacher/homeroom teacher.

The first port of call for any concern regarding administrative matters must be through the Office Manager.

Complaints about a teacher should be directed to the Head teacher. Complaints about the Head teacher should be directed to the Director.

Every reasonable effort should be made to ensure that parents are aware that these channels exist for queries or concerns.

A log will be kept of complaints and will be confidential, except in cases where local legal requirements permit access or enable restriction by local authorities.

It is the responsibility of the Director and the SLT to ensure that the procedures for dealing with complaints are understood by all staff and that any complaints do not remain unresolved.

PARENTAL VIEWS AND WAYS OF RAISING GENERAL CONCERNS

The heads of school will hold parent drop-in sessions, Parent Forums and other meetings, where parents can raise concerns that are common to several parents, and these can be addressed by school leadership at the earliest possible opportunity. Parents are also actively encouraged to come in and meet with us individually, or contact us by email, if they have any concern about their child.

GUIDELINES AND PROCEDURES

Guidelines

It is good practice when dealing with a complaint or a concern to ensure the person feels they are being acknowledged, before taking any kind of action. Useful tips include:

- If the complaint or concern is verbal, allow the person to speak without interruption.
- Before responding in any way repeat back to the person their complaint or concern so that they are in no doubt that you have listened to and understood their concern.
- Do not be afraid to ask questions and if need be, take time to think about the complaint before giving a response.

PROCEDURES

Stage 1: Informal

Most complaints are easily resolved informally by discussion with staff at the school. More difficult or complex concerns may require further discussion or action.

Procedure for initial contact by office staff or a member of staff:

1. Listen to, and record, in writing the basic details of complaint. The complaint should be acknowledged within 2 working days and a target date for a response set: this should normally be within 5 working days of acknowledgement.
2. Decide upon the appropriate person to deal with the complaint.
3. Appropriate member of staff interviews complainant or makes telephone contact.
4. Complaint listened to and details recorded.
5. Collect sufficient evidence to make an objective decision about the complaint. (Speak to those involved, speak to witnesses and take written statements if required.)
6. Member of staff decides upon action to be taken.
7. Communicate with complainant and other affected parties.
8. If the matter remains unresolved then invite complainant to make formal complaint, in writing, to Head teacher.
9. Should the complaint be about the Head teacher, the complainant should approach the Director who is obliged to investigate it.

Stage 2: Formal

The Head Teacher will carry out an investigation and respond to the complainant. The complaint will be acknowledged within 2 working days of receipt, and a target date for providing a response will be given. This will normally be within 10 working days. The Head Teacher may request to meet with the complainant to gain further information relevant to the complaint. Statements from witnesses will be collected where necessary. When all the relevant facts have been established, the Head Teacher should produce a written response to the complainant.

If the complaint is not resolved, the complainant will be given the option to move to Stage 3. The Head Teacher should refer the complaint to the Director.

Stage 3: Director

The Director will meet to discuss the complaint directly with the complainant and will aim to resolve the issue with the complainant in writing, in conversations or face-to-face.

Following this, if the complaint is not resolved, the complainant may request a hearing with the Board or a panel appointed by the Board of three people who have not been directly involved in the complaint.

Parents may choose to be accompanied by a person of their choosing at a panel hearing.

The Board will endeavour to ensure that one of the persons appointed to the panel is independent of the running and management of the school.

The complainant is entitled to be accompanied to the hearing. The hearing will be scheduled at the earliest possible convenience for both parties.

A final decision will be made and communicated to the complainant in writing.

Recording Complaints

An informal complaint is recorded by the teacher and the Head teacher is informed. A formal complaint is recorded by the Head teacher and the Director is informed.

A stage 3 complaint is recorded by the Director and the Board is informed. All complaints will be kept on file in the complaint log for reference purposes.

Where relevant, any judgement made, will be sent to the complainant, the person the complaint was about and the Director.

