

Kuwait National English School

Parents Complaint Procedure and Policy

1. Introduction

At Kuwait National English School (KNES), we aim to address concerns and complaints swiftly and effectively. Any individual with parental responsibility for a student may raise a concern / complaint if they are dissatisfied with any aspect of the school's service.

This procedure seeks to resolve issues informally whenever possible, ensuring an investigatory rather than adversarial approach at all stages.

2. Aims and purposes

KNES is committed to addressing all concerns promptly, reducing the likelihood of them escalating into formal complaints.

- **Academic Complaints:** Concerns related to academics should be discussed with the relevant subject teacher, form teacher, or Key Stage Coordinator
- **Non-Academic Complaints:** Non-academic concerns should be directed to the School Social Worker or Designated Safeguarding Lead if appropriate.

The goal at this stage is to resolve issues quickly and at their source, limiting unnecessary involvement from additional parties.

All complaints that require further action will be recorded, including the steps taken in response. The aim at this stage is to resolve the complaint at source.

- It is likely that a problem will become more difficult to solve when more people become involved.
- All staff will hope to be able to resolve issues on the spot or if that is not possible through mediation. This should include advice, information, discussion and explanation.
- If concerns are taken directly to the General Director or to other senior leaders, a parent may be asked if they have discussed their concerns with the relevant teacher and/or Key Stage Coordinator, and should want to arrange a meeting to do that.
- The main priority is to resolve the matter quickly and calmly, involving just the people needed to help solve the problem.
- All complaints requiring action will be recorded and the action, taken in response, will also be recorded by the School Social Worker

3. Roles and responsibilities

The responsibility for handling complaints lies with the school. Anonymous complaints will not be investigated unless they involve exceptional circumstances, such as serious child protection concerns or allegations of bullying, where external agencies may be involved.

4. Complaints process

PART A: Complaining about the actions of a member of staff

Informal Stage:

The complainant should first communicate directly with the relevant staff member by email or in person. Most issues can be resolved through simple clarification or information sharing at this stage.

If the issue is not resolved, the complainant should then meet with the Key Stage Coordinator (*for academic issues*) or the Social Worker (*for non-academic issues*). Refusal to attempt informal resolution may lead to termination of the complaint process.

Formal Stage:

If unresolved at the informal stage, the complaint must be submitted in writing to the Key Stage Coordinator or School Social Worker. A formal investigation will be conducted, and all formal complaints will be recorded in the School's Complaints Log.

The investigation will be completed within 10 school days. Upon conclusion, the complainant and staff member involved will be notified in writing of the outcome, which may include:

- Insufficient evidence to uphold the complaint.
- The concern is not substantiated by evidence.
- The concern is substantiated in part or in full, with appropriate actions taken (note that details of actions taken against individuals will remain confidential).
- The complainant will be told that consideration of their complaint by the school is now concluded.

If the complainant is not satisfied with the manner in which the process has been followed by the Key Stage Coordinator or Social Worker, they may request a review by School General Director. Any such request should be made in writing and specifically state any perceived failures to follow the procedure.

If the complainant is not satisfied with the manner in which the process has been followed by the School General Director, they may request a review by the School Governing Body.

When it has been concluded, the complainant and member of staff will be informed in writing of the outcome.

Part B: Complaints regarding Senior Leadership

Informal Stage:

For concerns related to a Key Stage Coordinator, Social Worker, Designated Safeguarding Lead, School Principal, the complainant is encouraged to speak directly with the individual. Should the issue persist, mediation may be arranged, provided both parties agree.

Formal Stage:

If unresolved, the complaint should be submitted in writing to the School General Director, who will lead the investigation. Both the complainant and the staff member will be invited to present their evidence. Once the investigation is complete, both parties will be informed in writing of the outcome.

Complaints unresolved at this stage may be escalated to the Governing Body

Part C: Complaining regarding the School Director or School Principal

Informal Stage:

Any complainant is usually expected to arrange to speak directly with the School Director or School Principal. Many concerns can be resolved by simple clarification of the provision of information.

If the matter is not resolved, if both parties agree, then a third party may be invited to act as a mediator at a further meeting, normally a member of the School Governing Body. A refusal, unreasonably, to attempt an informal resolution may result in the procedure being terminated forthwith.

Formal Stage:

If the complaint is not resolved at the informal stage the complainant must put the complaint in writing to the School Governing Body.

The written complaint should include all details that might assist the investigation. The complainant will be invited to meet with the Governing Body to present oral evidence or to clarify the complaint.

The Governing body will collect such other evidence as is deemed necessary. This may include the interviewing of witnesses and others.

The School Director or School Principal will then be invited to meet with the Governing Body, separately, to present any written or oral evidence in response. When the investigation has been concluded then the School Director or School Principal will be advised and the complainant will be informed in writing of the outcome.

Details of individual action taken in respect of a member of staff will not be given.

The complainant will be told that consideration of their complaint by the Governing Body is now concluded.

If the complainant is not satisfied with the manner in which the process has been followed, finds the decision perverse or believes that the Governing Body has acted unreasonably then a request for a review can be made to the Chairman of the Governing Body, in writing, within 10 days of notice and include a statement specifying any perceived failures.

When it has been concluded, the complainant and member of staff will be informed in writing of the outcome.

The outcome will be one of the following:

- There is insufficient evidence to reach a conclusion, so that the complaint cannot be upheld.
- The concern is not substantiated by the evidence.
- The concern was substantiated in part or in full. Details will then be given of any action the School may be taking in response to the complaint. Details of individual actions taken in respect of a member of staff or other student/parent will not be given.
- The matter has been fully investigated and appropriate procedures are being followed, which are strictly confidential.

Part E: Review Process

A panel of three members of the Governing Body shall conduct any review of the process.

The review will normally be conducted through the consideration of written submissions.

- The panel will be sympathetic to oral representations.
- The panel will first receive written evidence from the complainant.
- The panel will then write to the Chair of the Governing Body, as appropriate, to make a response to the complainant.
- The panel will have access to the records kept of the process followed.
- The complainant, the General Director, as appropriate, will be informed in writing of the outcome. This may be to the effect that:
 - *There is insufficient evidence to reach a conclusion, so the complaint cannot be upheld.*
 - *The concern is not substantiated by the evidence.*
 - *The concern was substantiated in part or in full but the procedural failure did not affect the outcome significantly so the matter is now closed.*
 - *The concern was substantiated in part or in full and the Governing Body will take steps to prevent a recurrence or to rectify the situation, where this is practicable.*

Note: The complainant is not allowed access to any details of the investigation. Any disciplinary procedures are strictly confidential.

An advisory note will be produced by the General Director and concurred by the Governing Body for all colleagues and employees who might find themselves recipients of concerns/complaints.

5. Formal lines of communication.

KNES considers that any complaint should be made in a formal way via telephone, email or in person by appointment. We respectfully request that online platforms and the KNES WhatsApp number not be used as a domain to make any kind of complaint.

KNES maintains Social Media accounts on Facebook and Instagram to promote the work of our wider community. We ask our parents to respect these as places where we celebrate our students' efforts and not considered as an avenue to raise any complaints. Parents must also keep in mind that information shared on Social Media about other persons or children is a violation of their privacy rights and could lead to legal ramifications.

6. Safeguarding Complaints

The school safeguarding team will be informed of any complaints that raise safeguarding concerns, these will be recorded on **My Concern** and addressed by the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) or a Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead (DDSL). Any safeguarding-related allegations against adults should be reported to the DSL and will be addressed by members of the SLT and / or the safeguarding team.