



Complaints Procedures for Parents

AY 2023/24

AIM: (final result we are aiming to achieve)

Our aim is to provide a secure, calm and welcoming environment for students and staff. We recognise that these aspirations can only be achieved by the wholehearted commitment and support of the whole school community. Occasionally, situations will occur which prevent the fulfillment of those aims and give cause for complaint. In order to bring any such occurrences to a speedy and satisfactory conclusion, the school has adopted a Complaints Procedure, based on best practice - UK and international.

RATIONALE: (The reason for which this policy has been written)

The English College has long prided itself on the quality of teaching and pastoral care provided to its students. However, if parents do have a complaint, they can expect it to be treated with due respect by the School and in accordance with this procedure. This policy is designed to ensure that any concerns are dealt with quickly, fairly and transparently.

GUIDELINES: (The principles/instructions/steps of the policy)

The English College Dubai welcomes suggestions and comments from parents and takes very seriously any complaints and concerns that they may arise. We encourage parents to bring these to our attention as early as possible in order that we have the opportunity to rectify a problem or explain the school's position before a concern becomes more serious.

A complaint will be treated as an expression of genuine dissatisfaction, to which we will respond. We

will to ensure that:

- Parents who wish to make a complaint know how to do so
- We respond to complaints within a reasonable time and in a courteous and efficient way
- Parents realise that we will listen and take all complaints seriously
- We take appropriate action where necessary.

How should I complain?

Parents who have any concerns or complaints, should normally raise these in the first instance with their child's Class Teacher (Primary) / Form Tutor (Secondary) by letter, email, telephone or by verbally requesting a meeting.

If the parent is not satisfied with the response of the Class Teacher (Primary) / Form Tutor (Secondary) or feels that the matter is sufficiently sensitive or serious, they could contact the relevant Year Group Leader in Primary and in Secondary, the Head of Year for pastoral issues or the Head of Faculty for curriculum issues. They will then be able to liaise with relevant staff, put the parent in contact with the appropriate member of the Senior Management Team or refer the parent directly to the Head of School. Parents may feel that they should contact the Head of School directly, especially on a matter of great importance or sensitivity, however, matters will usually be referred back to the Deputy Heads or Assistant Head Teachers/Year Group Leaders.

Parents can also write directly to the Principal if the matter is of serious concern although the issue would still have to be referred back to and discussed with appropriate members of the School Management Team.

See flow chart in Appendices

What will happen next?

If a parent raises an issue face to face or by telephone or email, it will hopefully be possible to resolve the matter immediately and to their satisfaction.

If the parent has made a complaint or suggestion in writing, they will receive a response within 24 hours on working days, acknowledging their letter and explaining how they/the school propose to proceed.

In many circumstances, the person contacted may need to discuss the issue with one or more colleagues and consider further before a response can be made. The parent will be given a date by which they will receive a further response. If a detailed explanation of the issues is needed, a letter or report will be sent to the parent as quickly as possible informing them of the outcome of their complaint and will explain any action taken or proposed. Alternatively, the parent may be invited to a meeting at the school.

The Principal's PA will keep a written record of all significant parental complaints and their outcome.

Confidentiality

Parental complaints or concerns will be treated in a confidential manner and with respect. Knowledge of the complaint or concern will be limited to the Head of School and those directly involved. It is the school's policy that complaints made by parents will not rebound adversely on their

children in any way.

We cannot, however, entirely rule out the need to make relevant third parties outside the school aware of the complaint and the identity of those involved. This would only be likely to happen where, for example, a child's safety was at risk or it became necessary to refer matters to the police or other organisations. Before this happens, the parent making the complaint would be fully informed.

Anonymous complaints

Anonymous complaints will not be pursued.

Staff disciplinary procedures

Any action taken under staff disciplinary procedures, following parental complaints would normally be handled confidentially within the school. Parents would be informed that appropriate action had been taken.

What happens if a parent is dissatisfied with the outcome?

We will endeavor to ensure that all parents feel satisfied with the outcome and feel that their concerns have been fully addressed.

If a parent is dissatisfied with the outcome then they should take the following action:

- At teacher level, contact the Head of Year in Secondary or the Year Group Leader in Primary
- At Head of Year level in Secondary, contact the Assistant Head for the key stage
- At Assistant Head level or Year Group Leader contact the Deputy Head
- At Deputy Head level, contact the relevant Head of School
- At Head of School level, refer the matter to the Principal
- At Principal level, write directly to the Chair of The English College Board. Please contact the Personal Assistant of the Chair, Lisa Denham: ldenham@englishcollege.ac.ae.

Complaints to the Chair of The Board

The Chair or his/her delegated representative will request a full report from the Principal along with all relevant documents. On the basis of these, the Chair or his/her representative may decide to call for a briefing from individual members of staff. As the Chair or his/her representative starts to investigate the case he/she will write to the parent to inform them of the action being taken and will ask the parent if they wish to add what they have already said and will give a date by which the parent may expect a full response. The Chair or his/her representative may be able to offer a new approach to the matter which may satisfactorily conclude the matter for the parent. The Chair's response will be clear and detailed but, if the parent remains dissatisfied the Chair will also offer a meeting.

If a meeting is requested those involved will be:

- The Chair of the Board or his/her representative
- The Principal
- The relevant member of staff (if deemed necessary)

- The parents
- One person independent of the management and running of the school

The Chair or his/her representative, after questioning and listening to the parents and the Principal, will hopefully be able to find a solution within 2 weeks of receiving the formal complaint.

Our philosophy towards complaints

The English College Dubai recognises and acknowledges the parental entitlement to complain or air a grievance and will endeavor to work with parents in the best interest of the students in our care. The culture of the School is open and complaints are received in a positive manner. We want to encourage parental views and ideas. If a parent is in doubt about whether or not to raise a concern, we would encourage them to contact the School, as we are here to help. We would ask, however, that together the school and parents present a united front in order to avoid any child receiving potentially confusing or damaging mixed messages.

Student complaints, concerns and counselling procedures

The principles which apply to parental complaints also apply to complaints and concerns from students. However, there are differences in approach. We believe that it is important that our students should be able to raise concerns with any member of staff with whom they feel comfortable. Students may also use the EC email system to make a member of staff aware of their concerns in a confidential manner. As with parental complaints, anonymous complaints will not be pursued.

Students may also raise general concerns via tutor group meetings and School Council meetings. At the start of each year, the Form Tutor and Class Teachers will explain these procedures to their students in a manner appropriate to their age. The school is determined to ensure that all students know to whom they can turn to with a problem and to whom they can make a formal or informal complaint.

APPENDICES (Relevant links to other policies or documents)

[Complaints flowchart](#)

POLICY REVIEW HISTORY:

This policy will be monitored, evaluated and reviewed by the Senior Leadership Team, approved by the Principal

HISTORICAL RECORD

Revision No.	Date	Brief Description of Change	Approved by	Next Review:
0	3/3/2021	New Policy	Principal	June 2022
1	17/04/2022	Updated	Principal	April 2023
2	April 2023	Updated	Principal	April 2024