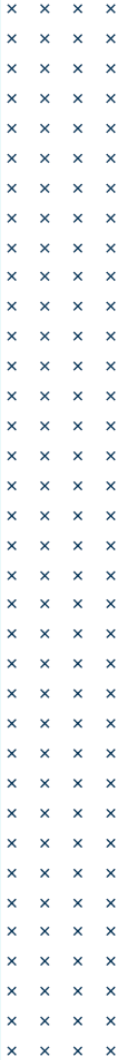




COMPLAINTS POLICY AND PROCEDURE



Policy Name	Complaints Policy and Procedure
Policy Identifier	NASAbuDhabi-001
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Date of Validation	September 2023
Date of Review	September 2025
Nord Anglia International School Abu Dhabi	

1. Policy Statement

At Nord Anglia International School Abu Dhabi, we are committed to handling complaints fairly and transparently to maintain trust with our community. Our approach aims to resolve concerns positively, address any issues that may have arisen, and continuously improve our systems and procedures. We believe that any concern, if not resolved quickly and fairly, can negatively impact relationships and school culture.

Parents, students, and staff should feel confident that raising a concern will not adversely affect them or their opportunities at our school. This policy outlines our process for managing concerns informally and handling formal complaints that require investigation.

2. Aims

This policy aims to:

- Ensure that concerns and complaints are addressed sympathetically, promptly, and at the appropriate level.
- Outline the role and procedures of the School Complaints Committee in handling all complaints regarding the school's operations.

3. Definitions

For this policy:

- The term "*Complainant*" refers to any parent, student, staff member, or other stakeholders who wish to raise a concern or make a formal complaint.
- The School Complaints Committee is a dedicated group responsible for reviewing and resolving formal, written complaints.

4. Practice and Procedure

4.1 Complaints Coordinator

A designated member of the administrative team will act as the Complaints Coordinator, responsible for managing the complaints process. If the Complaints Coordinator is unavailable or is the subject of the complaint, their duties will be undertaken by another senior member of staff. The Complaints Coordinator's responsibilities include:

- Recording and managing all complaints professionally, following this policy and relevant regulations.

- Coordinating the complaints procedure in school.
- Serving as the initial point of contact for unresolved matters.
- Ensuring the confidentiality and proper storage of all complaint records.
- Promptly reporting on complaints to the Principal.

4.2 School Complaints Committee

The School Complaints Committee is responsible for reviewing all formal complaints in line with school policies and ADEK regulations. The Head of Primary or Secondary chairs the committee but may delegate this role if necessary. If a complaint is made against either of the chairs, a designated Governor will chair the committee instead.

School Complaints Committee Members:

Committee Chair: Michael Connor, Head of Primary

Members:

- Stephen Moffatt – Deputy Head of Secondary;
- Gemma Brown – Head of Early Years
- Samantha Eschoe – Head of Inclusion and Assistant Head Teacher
- Julie Jones – Head of Marketing and Admissions
- **BSME Principal (Independent of NAS Abu Dhabi School)**

To ensure a fair and effective process, additional members such as representatives from HR, the Clinic, or Operations could be included depending on the nature of the complaint. This would help bring diverse perspectives and ensure that any issues are addressed thoroughly and impartially.

4.3 Timeframe

We aim to resolve informal complaints within three working days. If unresolved, a formal complaint should be submitted in writing, and all formal complaints will be acknowledged within 24 hours. The committee will review and respond to complaints in writing within five working days. If the complainant remains dissatisfied, they may request a hearing with an independent panel or appeal to ADEK.

Following a request for an independent panel, the panel will be convened within 7 working days.

4.4 Complaint Form

Formal complaints should be submitted in writing using the relevant complaint form available from the Parent App (<https://forms.office.com/r/auB3MW8tWR>). All formal complaints will be documented, and records will be kept securely in line with laws and regulations of the UAE.

The Complaints Process

- **Stage 1: Informal Resolution**

We expect most concerns to be resolved informally. Concerns should be raised with the relevant staff member (such as a class teacher or head of department) or the Complaints Coordinator. Acknowledgement will be provided within 24 hours, and the matter should be resolved within three working days. If unresolved, the matter will proceed to Stage 2. Complaints that are resolved in stage 1 are not necessarily logged on the school's complaints register.

- **Stage 2: Formal Complaint**

If a concern cannot be resolved informally, it can be escalated as a formal complaint. This should be submitted in writing, providing all relevant details. The Complaints Coordinator will facilitate the process and keep the Principal informed. The committee will investigate and aim to provide a written response within five working days. Complaints that move to stage 2 or beyond are logged on the school's complaints register.

- **Stage 3: Appeal**

If the complainant is dissatisfied with the committee's decision, they may request a hearing with Rob Walls, Head of Middle East for Nord Anglia and School Governance Chair, (Robert.Walls@nordanglia.com) or escalate the matter to ADEK.

- **Time between Stages in the Complaints Process**

In our complaints process, each stage is designed to progress promptly to ensure a timely resolution. If any stage in the complaints process remains unresolved, we aim for the next stage to commence within 48 hours.

- **Mediation:** If, at any stage during the complaints process, any of the parties believe it would be beneficial, mediation can be offered to help resolve the issue.

4.5 Requesting a Hearing

The complainant may request a hearing by contacting the Complaints Coordinator within 5 working days of receiving the decision from Stage 2. The request should include:

- All grounds for the request.
- Copies of all relevant documents, including those the complainant wishes the panel to consider.
- The desired outcome.

The Complaints Coordinator will acknowledge the request in writing within 24 hours and will convene a hearing panel consisting of at least three individuals who have no prior knowledge of the complaint and are not directly involved in the matters related to it. One member of the panel will be independent of the school's leadership and education team.

The complainant will be informed of the hearing date, time, and panel members within two working days of the request. The complainant may ask who has been appointed to the panel.

4.6 Procedures at the Hearing

- The complainant may attend the hearing with a representative or a supporter, and, if desired, a legally qualified person. This must be communicated to the school at least 5 days before the hearing.
- Additional documents the complainant wishes the panel to consider should be sent to the Principal's PA at least 3 days prior to the hearing.
- The Head of Primary, unless the subject of the complaint, will chair the panel. The Principal's PA will take minutes of the meeting.
- The hearing will be conducted with courtesy and restraint, ensuring all parties can present their views without interruption.
- The panel may request further investigation or adjourn the hearing if necessary, including seeking legal advice.
- The panel's decision, findings, and recommendations will be communicated to the complainant and any relevant parties within 3 working days of the hearing.

Findings and Recommendations

Following the hearing, the panel's findings and recommendations will be communicated with the complainant and where appropriate the person complained about.

4.7 Contacting ADEK

If the complainant is dissatisfied with the outcome of the previous steps, they have the right to contact the Abu Dhabi Department of Education and Knowledge (ADEK). ADEK will generally expect that the school's complaints procedure has been followed before a complaint is escalated to them. To report concerns to ADEK, call +971 615 0000 or write to the ADEK Private Schools and Quality Assurance Sector Office.

4.9. Records and Confidentiality

A written record will be maintained for all complaints, noting whether they were resolved informally or formally. All records, statements, and correspondence related to complaints will be kept confidential, except where disclosure is required by law or regulation. The complainant may request a copy of the complaints record pertaining their complaint, via the Complaints Coordinator.

5.1 Concerns over Child Safety

Separate procedures apply for concerns regarding child safety. Any concern about a child's safety should be immediately reported to the safeguarding team and confirmed in writing to the Principal. Any safeguarding concern will be dealt with according to the school's Safeguarding Policy.

5.2 Monitoring and Review

This policy will be reviewed annually or as needed and approved by the School's Senior Leadership Team.

Approved by:

Date:

Liam Cullinan
Principal

01.08.2024

Revision History

<u>Revision Date</u>	<u>Version Number</u>	<u>Revised By</u>	<u>Change Summary</u>
August 2023	V1.0	Liam Cullinan	New Document
August 2024	V1.1	Liam Cullinan	Pending

