Policy

Whole School Complaints Policy for Parents

Policy Details	
Last Reviewed	September 2026
Published	September 2023
Owner	Principal
Circulation	Whole School

Safer Recruitment Statement

SES is an equal opportunity employer and as such treats all job applicants and staff with equal respect free from unjustifiable discrimination.

SES is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of all its students. A UK ICPC or equivalent police check is a prerequisite for all appointments.

Tel: +971 (6) 558 9304
PO Box 1600 Sharjah, UAE
www.sharjahenglishschool.org

Rationale

Even in the best institutions, concerns and misunderstandings will occur. And mistakes will be made. It is important that mechanisms exist for parents to voice their concerns and grievances, and that these concerns be addressed promptly and dispassionately.

The school promotes a culture of openness where parents have a right to have their views heard. The school regards such contact and engagement in a positive light and encourages direct communication with the school where there is a concern or a complaint.

The school insists on respectful discourse, and any disagreements between the school and parents are expected to be dealt with objectively, professionally and calmly, however upset or angry a complainant may be.

A complaining parent will normally as a matter of principle be kept informed about what stage a complaint process has reached.

Anonymous complaints, whether against a member of staff or management, cannot be entertained by the school.

A complaint may be found to be unsubstantiated or unwarranted; in this case the complainant has a right to be informed of this, and of the investigation or process that has taken place.

Where a complaint has been found to have substance, it may be appropriate to:

- offer an apology – which may come from the school or an individual
- an explanation as to why the concern / complaint / misunderstanding arose
- an assurance that the event complained of will not recur, and that steps have been taken to ensure that it will not happen again
- an undertaking to review school policies in light of the complaint

A complaint involving a member of staff may lead to disciplinary measures, a letter of warning etc. It would not be appropriate for details of such disciplinary measures to be passed to a complainant or parent. Parents or other complainants will be informed in writing that action has been taken by the school, and will be expected to accept that such is the case; but the school will observe staff confidentiality in all such cases.

A. Parental Complaints

It is important that parents are directed to the appropriate person when making a complaint (by Reception, Admin, other staff etc.) – it should not always be assumed that complaints go directly to the Principal or members of Senior Leadership teams.

1. Stage 1

1.1. Normal minor concerns about homework, routine issues to do with uniform, friendship issues etc. should be directed to the tutor or class-teacher and can normally be dealt with informally.

1.2. There is an expectation that the member of staff dealing with a concern gets back to a parent within 24 hours of a complaint or concern, even if just to acknowledge it and indicate that the issue is being followed up.

1.3. Any issue likely to be referred beyond the tutor or class-teacher, should be subject to a written note/email so that records can be kept and accessed where necessary.

1.4. Minor concerns about teaching can be addressed by the Head of Dept initially – in the interests of transparency, any teacher who is subject to a parental complaint, should be informed of this by the Head of Department or member of the Senior Leadership team

1.5. Many complaints can be addressed and sorted out quite informally, but the strategy needs to be either a) reach a solution or b) refer the issue on to someone higher.

2. Stage 2

2.1. If minor concerns are not addressed to the satisfaction of parents, they may go to the Head of Primary/Secondary as appropriate; all approaches to section Heads should be preceded by an attempt to resolve the issue lower down.

2.2. A written record needs to be maintained of complaints at this level – ideally the complainant should also submit a written report or outline of the concern, before the issue is addressed by the Head. A reasonable timeframe for resolution should be agreed with the parent at this point

2.3. Complaints that are not resolved at this stage may be referred to the Principal, either by the Parent or the respective Headteacher. A reasonable timeframe for resolution should be agreed with the parent at this point

3. Stage 3

3.1. Any complaint not resolved or remedied at the level of Principal, can be referred by a parent and/or Principal to the Board of Governors.

4. Stage 4

4.1. Any complaint to the Board of Governors will be addressed only after all other avenues have been exhausted and have proven unsuccessful. A reasonable timeframe for resolution should be agreed with the parent at this point

4.2. A complaint to the Board must be in writing, addressed either to the parent governor or to the chairman of the Board; the addresses of both are on the school website.

4.3. The Principal must be informed in advance of any such issues which will be raised at a Board meeting.

4.4. The Board may discuss or resolve any such issues at their monthly meeting, with a written response being provided to the complainant.

4.5. The Board may assign members of the Board, usually two selected Governors, to investigate or follow-up a complaint where a resolution is not found, or where further information may be needed.

4.6. When a complaint is assigned to selected Governors to follow-up, they will report back to the Board as a whole, either at the next meeting or in writing, and the Board will make a final deliberation.

4.7. A complainant who is unhappy with a Board decision, may appeal to the chairman in writing, requesting that he reconsider the matter.

4.8. The chairman may seek to meet with parents before a decision on an appeal is made, following which the chairman will report back to the whole Board.

4.9. Once a decision has been considered by the Board and appealed to the chairman, the school's process for complaints is exhausted.

4.10. If the school complaints process has been exhausted, then the complainant may approach the Sharjah Private Education Authority, who have been responsible overall for private schools in Sharjah since January 2019.

5. Complaints regarding the Principal

5.1. Complaints regarding the Principal shall be addressed to the Principal in the first case, either in person or in writing.

5.2. All complaints about the Principal shall be recorded and brought to the attention of the Board of Governors by the Principal.

5.3. Staff or parents who have failed to get resolution or failed to get a response from the Principal, may go to the Board through the parent governors or the Chairman.

5.4. The Board of Governors are responsible for overseeing and evaluating the Principal's performance on an annual basis, and for dealing with competency issues or complaints that arise.

5.5. The Board of Governors are the final arbiters on any unresolved complaint relating to the Principal. Again parents may appeal a decision to the Chairman of the Board, or beyond that to SPEA.

Important email addresses

principal@sharjahenglishschool.org

chairman@sharjahenglishschool.org