

Gulf English School Cairo



COMPLAINTS AND GRIEVANCES POLICY

Created by	Senior Leadership Team/Board of Directors
Applies to	All new enrollments
Approved by	Board of Directors
Date adopted	17 September 2026
Review cycle	Annual
Next review	17 September 2027

Safeguarding

GES Cairo is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and young people. We expect all staff, volunteers, and visitors to share this commitment. We maintain a culture of vigilance where the welfare of our students is always paramount. All school policies are underpinned by this principle and operate in full compliance with current statutory safeguarding guidance and global and local procedures.

1. Rationale

Gulf English School (GES) Cairo is committed to maintaining open, respectful, and transparent communication among all community members. This policy outlines clear procedures for students, parents, and staff to raise concerns or express dissatisfaction regarding any aspect of school life.

It is always in the school's and the individual's best interest to resolve concerns informally at the earliest possible stage through dialogue and good communication. However, when informal resolution is unsuccessful or inappropriate, this policy provides a fair, formal framework to ensure all complaints are addressed objectively, confidentially, and promptly.

2. Policy Aims

- **Validation and Empathy:** Acknowledge, listen to, and validate the concerns of involved parties prior to taking formal action.
- **Clear Channels:** Provide well-defined, accessible channels for expressing concerns across all stakeholder groups.
- **Timely and Transparent Resolution:** Handle complaints efficiently with set timeframes and transparent processes.
- **Continuous Improvement:** Treat concerns as constructive feedback to enhance school

- operations and educational quality.
- **Confidentiality and Safeguarding:** Maintain strict confidentiality while prioritising student protection and legal compliance.

3. General Principles

- **Time Limits:** Complaints regarding incidents that occurred **more than three (3) months ago** will generally be considered "out of time" and will not be investigated, unless exceptional circumstances apply.
- **Safeguarding and Child Protection:** Any concern involving suspected abuse, neglect, or immediate risk of harm bypasses standard complaint procedures and is immediately referred to the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) in accordance with the school's Safeguarding Policy.
- **Informal Boundaries:** To preserve professionalism and confidentiality, concerns must **not** be raised during student dismissal, off-campus, or via staff members' personal contact numbers or social media.

Procedures for Students

Student Complaints Escalation Pathway

Stage	Contact / Responsible Person	Action and Resolution	Target Timeframe
Stage 1: Informal Resolution	Classroom Teacher / Counselor / / Wellbeing Coordinator	Informal discussion, Google Classroom message, or Incident Report completion. Refer to Year Leader if unresolved.	Immediate / Informal
Stage 2: Formal Review	Deputy Headteacher / Headteacher	Investigation of Incident Report, gathering evidence, determining actions, and contacting parents if required.	Within 3 working days
Stage 3: Executive Review	Head of School	Review of file, formal meeting with student (and parents if applicable), and final decision issuance.	Within 5 working days

Stage 1: Informal Resolution

1. **Initial Contact:** A student can raise a concern by speaking directly to the relevant classroom teacher during break times or sending an email or a message via **Google Classroom**.
2. **Support and Logging:** The teacher, School Counselor, or Child Protection Coordinator will listen to the concern. Younger students may be assisted by a scribe to complete a brief **Incident Report form**.
3. **Internal Escalation:** If unresolved, the concern will be referred to the Year Leader or Student Welfare Officer for further review.

Stage 2: Formal School Review

1. **SLT Involvement:** If the matter remains unresolved, is about a class teacher, or is urgent, the student may approach the Deputy Headteacher or Headteacher during break times.
2. **Investigation and Action:** The Deputy Headteacher/Headteacher will review the Incident Report, gather statements if necessary, determine the required action, and notify the student's parents if appropriate.
3. **Timeline:** Actions and outcomes will be communicated to the student within **3 working days**.

Stage 3: Executive Review

1. **Executive Escalation:** If the matter remains unresolved or concerns a member of the Senior Leadership Team (SLT), the student may request a meeting with the **Head of School**.
2. **Final Decision:** The **Head of School** will review the file, meet with the student (and parents if applicable), and issue a final decision within **5 working days**.

Procedures for Parents

Parent Complaints Escalation Pathway

Stage	Contact / Channel	Action and Investigation	Target Timeframe
Stage 1: Informal Resolution	Link Book (Up to Y4), Google Classroom/Email (Y5+), Admin Officer (AO), or Head of Admissions	AO logs and conveys details to Deputy Head / Headteacher within 24h. Investigation conducted and parent contacted.	Acknowledged in 2 working days
Stage 2: Formal	Head of School (via	Written complaint	Meeting and

Stage	Contact / Channel	Action and Investigation	Target Timeframe
Complaint	email or Head of School's PA)	submitted. Meeting scheduled, evidence reviewed, and written decision/action plan issued.	Response within 5 working days
Stage 3: Independent Panel Hearing	Managing Director	Hearing convened with a 3-member panel (including at least 1 independent member). Parent may be accompanied. Final decision issued.	Decision within 15 working days

Stage 1: Informal Resolution

- **Classroom Concerns:** Parents may contact the class teacher via the **Link Book** (up to Year 2) or **Google Classroom / Email** (Year 3 and above).
- **Administrative Concerns:** Parents may contact the relevant Key Stage Administrative Officer (AO) or Head of Admissions via telephone or official email.
- **Process and Timeline:**
 1. The AO logs the details on a formal log of the concern and forwards them to the Key Stage Deputy Headteacher / Headteacher within **24 hours**.
 2. The Key Stage Deputy Headteacher / Headteacher acknowledges receipt within **2 working days**.
 3. The Deputy Headteacher / Headteacher investigates (interviews relevant parties, collects written statements) and contacts the parent via phone or in-person meeting.
 4. Outcome and actions taken are communicated to the parent.

Stage 2: Formal Complaint to Head of School

- **Trigger:** Unresolved Stage 1 concerns or complaints of a severe nature.
- **Process:**
 1. The parent submits a written complaint and formal meeting request to the **Head of School** via email or through the Head of School's Personal Assistant.
 2. The Personal Assistant acknowledges receipt and schedules an appointment within **5 working days**.
 3. The **Head of School** reviews all prior evidence, conducts further enquiries if necessary, and issues a written response/action plan within **5 working days** following the meeting.

Stage 3: Independent Panel Hearing (Managing Director)

- **Trigger:** Unresolved Stage 2 concerns.
- **Process:**
 1. The parent submits a written request for a Panel Review to the Managing Director.
 2. The Managing Director convenes a hearing panel consisting of **at least three people** who are not directly involved in the matter, including **at least one member who is independent** of the management and running of the school.
 3. The parent is entitled to be accompanied to the meeting by a friend or colleague.
 4. **Timeline and Final Decision:** The panel's findings and recommendations will be formally issued to the parent, the subject of the complaint, the Managing Director, and the Headteacher within **15 working days** of the hearing. The decision of the Panel is final.

Procedures for Staff

Staff Complaints Escalation Pathway

Stage	Contact / Line Management	Action and Resolution	Target Timeframe
Stage 1: Informal and Line Management	Line Manager / Headteacher / Head of Admissions	Private discussion. Concern logged, receipt acknowledged in 2 days. Staff member interviewed, evidence gathered, written outcome provided.	Acknowledged in 2 days / Outcome in 5 working days
Stage 2: Formal Review	Head of School (via PA)	Written submission to Head of School. Meeting scheduled in 5 days. Investigation conducted and written determination issued.	Decision within 5 working days of meeting
Stage 3: Independent Panel	Managing Director	Appeal submitted to Managing Director.	Final decision within 15 working days

Stage	Contact / Line Management	Action and Resolution	Target Timeframe
Hearing		3-member panel (with independent member) convened. Staff accompanied by colleague/representative.	

Stage 1: Informal Resolution and Line Management

- **Academic Concerns:** Discussed directly with the Line Manager or Headteacher in a private, professional setting.
- **Administrative Concerns:** Directed to the Head of Admissions or relevant Department Head.
- **Process and Timeline:**
 1. The concern is logged by the Headteacher/Line Manager, and receipt is acknowledged within **2 working days**.
 2. The Headteacher interviews the staff member and gathers relevant statements or documentation objectively.
 3. The Headteacher decides on appropriate action and communicates the decision to the staff member in writing within **5 working days**.

Stage 2: Formal Review by Head of School

- **Trigger:** Unresolved Stage 1 concerns or issues involving a direct Line Manager.
- **Process:**
 1. The staff member submits a written complaint to the **Head of School** via email or the Personal Assistant.
 2. Receipt is acknowledged and a meeting is scheduled within **5 working days**.
 3. The **Head of School** investigates and issues a written determination and action plan within **5 working days** of the meeting.

Stage 3: Independent Panel Hearing

- **Trigger:** Unresolved Stage 2 concerns or complaints regarding Executive Leadership.
- **Process:**
 1. The staff member submits a written appeal to the Managing Director.
 2. A panel hearing is convened comprising **three members** (including one independent member not involved in the management of the school).
 3. The staff member may be accompanied by a workplace colleague or professional representative.
 4. **Final Decision:** Written findings and recommendations are issued within **15 working days** of the hearing.

7. Confidentiality and Record Keeping

All written records, statements, and correspondence relating to individual formal complaints are strictly confidential. Records will be securely maintained by the **Head of School's Office** and accessed only by authorized personnel or as required by local legal and regulatory bodies.

8. Unreasonable, Vexatious, or Persistent Complaints

GES Cairo is committed to dealing with all complaints fairly and impartially. However, the school will not tolerate abusive, obsessive, or repetitive behavior.

Where a complaint has been fully investigated through all applicable stages of this policy and a final response has been delivered, the matter will be deemed **closed**. If the complainant continues to raise the same issue without introducing new evidence, the school will formally notify them that the investigation is complete and that further communication regarding the matter will be logged and filed without acknowledgment or reply.