

# Complaints and Feedback Policy



|                |                |
|----------------|----------------|
| Reviewed by    | David Craggs   |
| Date of review | September 2021 |



## Complaints and Feedback Policy

### Rationale

At GEMS Cambridge International School – Abu Dhabi (CIA), we take seriously our accountability to parents. All staff endeavour to listen to what parents and stakeholders are saying and to work in partnership to resolve any problems or concerns. GEMS Cambridge International School – Abu Dhabi (CIA) recognises that a student's education will be enhanced by the wholehearted support of parents and appropriate accessibility to its staffing body, Phase Leadership Teams and the Executive Leadership Team. Many worries or concerns can be managed without the need for formal procedures, providing that the concern is taken seriously and addressed at an early stage. In many cases, the class teacher will receive the first approach and the issue is resolved immediately. However, formal procedures will need to be invoked when initial attempts to resolve the issue remain unsuccessful and the person raising the concern remains dissatisfied and wishes to take the matter further.

### Aim

It is inevitable in any institution that there are occasions when parents or other stakeholders are dissatisfied with the service provided. This Policy advises all persons on how to direct a complaint and the potential escalation procedures around this.

### Feedback procedure

It is important for us to understand what our parents and visitors perceive as our strengths and likewise what recommendations for improvement to our service they would like to see take place. This can be achieved in the following ways:

- Email or verbal conversation with our Parent Relations Executive.
- Email or verbal conversation with the relevant class or departmental representative.
- Feedback via the generic school email address found on our website.

When it is felt that an issue is more pressing than simple feedback and an informal or formal complaint is deemed necessary, then the Complaints Procedure outlined in this policy should be followed.

### Complaints procedure

As an educational establishment, there are different categories of service which may warrant complaints. To ensure that the right person deals with the right complaint it is important to outline the different categories as per the list below. Complaints can be received formally in writing addressed to the relevant person. All complaints should be dealt with within 5 working days. Where a complaint is considered more complex and requires additional time for investigation, the lead investigator should inform the complainant in writing (either via email or letter) with a realistic timeline.



Students' learning and teaching, behaviour, emotional wellbeing or Support

**Stage 1** - Initial complaint directed to the class teacher or tutor to be resolved and feedback provided. The class teacher or tutor should copy in the relevant Head of Year and Senior Leader at this stage.

**Stage 2** - Initial complaint directed to the Head of Department or Head of Year to be resolved and feedback provided. Head of Department or Head of Year should copy in the relevant Senior Leader at this stage.

**Stage 3** - Forwarded to the Assistant Head Teacher responsible for Phase for investigation and feedback. Head of School should be copied in at this stage.

**Stage 4** - Forwarded to the Head of School - Primary Phase or Secondary Phase - for investigation and feedback. Head of School should copy in the Principal/CEO.

**Stage 5** - Forwarded to the Principal/CEO for final resolution

Operations/Facilities/External Services

**Stage 1** - Initial complaint directed to the PRE to be resolved and feedback provided.

**Stage 2** - Initial complaint directed to the Manager of School Operations to be resolved and feedback provided.

**Stage 3** - Forwarded to the Principal/CEO for final resolution.

A member of Staff

**Stage 1** - Forwarded to the Head of School - Primary Phase or Secondary Phase for investigation and feedback.

**Stage 2** - Forwarded to the Principal/CEO for final resolution.

A Member of the Executive Leadership Team

To be directed to the Principal/CEO for investigation feedback and final resolution

The Principal/CEO

To be directed to the Education Department at GEMS Corporate Office



#### **Responsibilities - Staff**

- To understand the importance of handling and resolving the initial complaint and ensuring a resolution is found to satisfy the complainant and to avoid further escalation.
- To ensure the recording of complaints, implemented actions and those relevant line managers are involved in any escalation of complaints.
- To ensure the relevant member of the Executive Leadership Team is involved immediately where a complaint escalates beyond their ability to offer an acceptable resolution.

#### **Monitoring and recording**

- The number of formal complaints per term should be an indicator of how the school is meeting the needs of its students and addressing customer satisfaction.
- Patterns and trends should be highlighted by the Executive Leadership Team and proactive actions should take place to prevent re-occurrence.
- Recording of complaints will be kept by the Principal/CEO for review by GEMS Corporate Office should an escalation be required.

#### **Evaluation**

- Each member of the Executive Leadership Team will be responsible for investigating the process of an unresolved complaint relating to their team in order to evaluate the effectiveness of the process in handling the complaint in accordance with this policy
- Feedback should be given for improvements in process to the Principal/CEO.



## Independent Complaints Procedure

It is recognised that on occasions the complainant may not be satisfied with the result of a complaint at school level. Where this is the case, and only following the complaints procedure as outlined above, there is an option to put in writing a complaint in relation to either:

- a) The initial complaint
- b) The complaints procedure

All complaints relating to the above will be dealt with at GEMS Corporate Office here an independent investigation will be conducted.

Where recommendations are suggested, the Principal and Executive Leadership Team will review policy and procedure and make changes where appropriate.

If, having followed the complaints procedure above and having written formally to GEMS Corporate Office, <https://www.gemseducation.com › talk-to-us> ( 600-567771 ), a satisfactory solution has still not been found, then the parent has the right thereafter to refer the matter to ADEK by contacting the Private Schools and Quality Assurance Sector Office (0615 0000):

ADEK  
Private Schools and Quality Assurance Sector  
P.O. Box 36005  
Abu Dhabi  
UAE