



Complaints Policy

Vision and Mission

We are a child-centred, inclusive and diverse family with a shared love of learning. Our mission is to provide a caring, nurturing and empowering environment in which all children can learn and thrive. Our children and team have the skills and mindset to:

- think, explore and grow
- celebrate and respect ourselves and the people around us
- be compassionate and have a positive impact on the world

Values

Respect

Unity

Compassion

Growth

1. Purpose

Nadeen School maintains an Open Door Policy, whereby parents, students, and staff are able to voice concerns to the teaching staff, school administration, and senior leadership at an appropriate time. Concerns and complaints will be dealt with in the strictest of confidence and with the assurance that the concern will be dealt with according to the timeframe below.

This policy should be considered in conjunction with, and with reference to:

- School Vision, Mission and Values
- Nadeel School Philosophy
- Code of Conduct Policy
- Staff and Parent Handbooks

The aim of this policy is:

- To ensure that concerns and complaints are addressed and resolved in a timely and appropriate manner, transparently, and with due process
- Concerns and complaints should be addressed through a clearly structured process.
- Any concern or complaint must be treated sensitively and addressed fairly.
- Decisions of the school are final.

Anonymous complaints regarding pupils, staff, the school administration, or running of the school will not be acknowledged or entertained, as the complaint will have no context.

Parents are encouraged to make an appointment, or speak with teachers before or after class, so as to avoid interrupting teaching time. In rare cases where a meeting is required on an immediate basis, where possible teaching cover will be found for the class so as to not interrupt teaching and learning. If an in-person meeting is not possible then phone calls and virtual meetings will be accommodated.

At all times the Senior Leadership Team (SLT) will listen to pupils, parents, and staff in a fair, open, non-judgemental environment. All complaints and concerns are kept confidential at all times. In the event a complaint or concern has to be forwarded to the Ministry of Education (as may be required as per Ministry regulations in the event of a disciplinary matter) the Ministry has a confidentiality clause in effect.

2. Expectations

2.1 Staff - expectations to:

- follow the vision, mission and values of Nadeen School
- respond with courtesy and respect;
- respond as soon as possible, and within the next school day;
- arrange an appointment with the parent as soon as possible, within reasonable time limits, bearing in mind his/her professional commitments, the needs of the students and the nature of the complaint;
- attempt to resolve problems using reasonable means in line with the procedures set out in this Policy;
- keep the parents informed of progress towards a resolution of the concerns raised;
- make impartial decisions based on the students' best interests and grounded in professional expertise and experience;

- maintain records of concerns and complaints using a summary and action points

2.2 Head of Section - expectations to:

- follow the vision, mission and values of Nadeen School
- respond with courtesy and respect;
- respond as soon as possible, and within the next school day;
- arrange an appointment with the parent as soon as possible, within reasonable time limits, bearing in mind his/her professional commitments, the needs of the students and the nature of the complaint;
- attempt to resolve problems using reasonable means in line with the procedures set out in this Policy;
- keep the parents informed of progress towards a resolution of the concerns raised;
- make impartial decisions based on the students' best interests and grounded in professional expertise and experience;
- maintain records of concerns and complaints using a summary and action points

2.3 Principal - expectations to:

- follow the vision, mission and values of Nadeen School
- respond with courtesy and respect;
- respond as soon as possible, and within the next school day;
- arrange an appointment with the parent as soon as possible, within reasonable time limits, bearing in mind his/her professional commitments, the needs of the students and the nature of the complaint;
- attempt to resolve problems using reasonable means in line with the procedures set out in this Policy;
- keep the parents informed of progress towards a resolution of the concerns raised;
- make impartial decisions based on the students' best interests and grounded in professional expertise and experience;
- maintain records of concerns and complaints using a summary and action points

2.4 Parents- expectations to:

- follow the vision, mission and values of Nadeen School
- treat all school staff with courtesy and respect;
- respect the needs and well-being of students and staff in the school;
- trust in the professionalism and professional experience of educational staff and senior managers;
- understand that teaching staff are unable to meet with parents during teaching or duty commitments;
- recognise the time constraints under which members of staff in schools work and allow the school a reasonable time to respond to their concerns;

- avoid aggression, verbal abuse, or any use (or threatened use) of violence towards people or property;
- not engage in public speculation or lobbying with regard to their complaint;
- accept and follow the procedures laid out in this Policy;
- understand that Terms & Conditions demand the procedures laid out in this Policy are followed when seeking refunds for withdrawal without notice.

3. Dealing with Complaints

The vast majority of concerns can be settled with the minimum of delay by the student or parent simply discussing the matter directly with a relevant member of staff or, if required, with the Head of Phase.

Time taken to resolve any concern or complaint at the informal stage will be well spent, particularly if it means avoiding formal procedures. Every effort should be made to ensure that, wherever possible, concerns or complaints are resolved within the informal procedure, as following the formal procedures is, inevitably, a slower process which may cause further dissatisfaction.

4. Complaints Procedure Stages

STAGE ONE	informally with member of staff	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● The parent raises the concern with the teacher. This is almost always the best and quickest way of resolving issues. ● acknowledged day 1 or first thing the next working day if received outside of working hours ● The parent and teacher agree to a meeting as soon as possible to discuss the concern in an appropriate and informed manner and without being interrupted. It is important to recognise that schools are busy organisations and that the Teachers' first commitment must be delivering their lessons to their students, so it may not be possible for a Teacher to see a parent immediately. ● The purpose of this meeting will be to establish the nature of the concern and to seek or plan a realistic resolution to the problem; ● A brief summary of the meeting of the meeting will be recorded and including any actions agreed between the teacher and the parent ● If the concern is beyond the Teacher to resolve or the parent is dissatisfied with the outcome of the discussions with the Teacher, s/he should arrange an appointment with the Head of Phase. ● To escalate to Stage 2, this needs to be confirmed in writing/email by either the teacher or the parent by
------------------	---------------------------------	---

		referring to the complaints policy.
STAGE TWO	formally with SLT	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> acknowledged day 1 or first thing the next working day if received outside of working hours addressed within three working days The purpose of this meeting will be to establish the nature of the ongoing concern, what has been discussed with the Teacher so far and any actions arising from the initial meeting(s). The Head of Section may need to investigate what has happened since the initial meeting before s/he can assess how the concern might be resolved. In this case, it will be agreed how and within what timescale s/he will contact the parent to let him/her know the outcome of enquiries and the actions taken or planned; A brief summary of the meeting of the meeting will be recorded and what actions have been agreed The Phase Leader will email the parent with a summary, what has been agreed and the next steps The Head of Phase will follow up the complaint to either resolve the complaint or to set in motion the steps to reach a resolution. This may involve consultation with another member of staff (Teachers, Principal etc.) To escalate to Stage 3, this needs to be confirmed in writing/email by either the staff member or the parent by referring to the complaints policy as set out below in 3.1 Initiate formal procedures)
STAGE THREE	formally with Principal	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> acknowledged day 1 or first thing the next working day if received outside of working hours addressed within three working days This formal stage will include 4 steps with the Principal (4.3.1 Initiate formal procedure, 4.3.2 Investigation, 4.3.3 Decision-making and 4.3.4 Feedback). <p>4.3.1 Initiate formal procedures, to start stage 3, the parent should put their concerns in writing to the Principal. This may be as an email or letter, delivered to the school and clearly marked 'For the attention of the Principal', or as an e-mail to p.walton@nadeenschool.com.</p>

		<p>The letter should set out clearly:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> the concern which has previously been discussed; <input type="checkbox"/> why the parent considers that the issue is still unresolved; <input type="checkbox"/> an indication of what outcome the parent is seeking or expecting. <p>4.3.2 Investigation - The Principal should immediately acknowledge receipt of the complaint but, before responding to it, must ensure that s/he understands the circumstances surrounding the matter. To do this, s/he will:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> establish what has happened so far, and who has been involved, including requesting details of previous meetings in stage 1 and 2. <input type="checkbox"/> clarify the nature of the complaint; <input type="checkbox"/> identify what remains unresolved. <p>If the complaint involves criticism of a staff member, no action will be taken until a written statement has been obtained from him/her.</p> <p>In addition to written evidence, the Principal will convene a meeting with the member of staff and the parent who has raised the complaint, in order to clarify outstanding points. This may include calling witnesses. The Principal will convene a similar meeting with staff members involved in the complaint. It may be helpful, with the agreement of all parties, for the Principal to call a joint meeting, with all parties being given the opportunity to present their case, call witnesses and ask questions.</p> <p>In these meetings, the Principal will: probe to elucidate further information about the concern, actions taken and actions proposed;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> clarify what the various parties would consider as appropriate to resolve the situation; <input type="checkbox"/> explore potential resolutions; <input type="checkbox"/> maintain an open mind and be prepared to persist in the questioning; <input type="checkbox"/> not express any judgements unless agreed by all parties together;
--	--	---

		<p><input type="checkbox"/> make detailed written notes of each meeting.</p> <p>4.3.3 Decision-making - After meeting with all parties, the Principal will</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> from his/her notes, add further comments to the original Complaint OR (if the parent had raised the concern to him/her directly) will complete a summary of the incident;</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> consider the evidence and desired outcomes;</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> consider the various means by which the concern could be resolved</p> <p>and formulate a final solution to the concern or complaint.</p> <p>4.3.4 Feedback - The Principal will inform all parties of the decided outcome in writing within three working days.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Principal will acknowledge if the complaint is valid in whole or in part, or if the complaint has not been substantiated and is therefore considered to be unfounded. S/he may offer one or more of the following: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> an explanation; <input type="checkbox"/> an apology; <input type="checkbox"/> an admission that the situation could have been handled differently or better [NOTE: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> this is not an admission of negligence]; <input type="checkbox"/> an assurance that the event complained of will not recur (with an explanation of any steps that have been taken to ensure that it will not happen again); <input type="checkbox"/> an undertaking to review policies in light of the complaint. • To escalate to Stage 4, this needs to be confirmed in writing/email by the Principal only by referring to the complaints policy.
--	--	--

STAGE FOUR	formally with Board to Principal	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> acknowledged day 1 or first thing the next working day if received outside of working hours addressed within three working days with a communication in connection with the 4.4.1 formal decision of the school. The board will follow the same investigation, decision-making, and feedback steps as the prior stage. If a parent would like to appeal against the outcome, please see Section 10 'Appeals' below. For the Principal to escalate to the board, stages 1-3 should be followed and referenced. The Principal has the right to directly escalate to the board (without following stages 1-3) if the complaint meets any of the criteria in section 8 below 'unreasonable or consistent complainants'. To escalate to Stage 5, this needs to be confirmed in writing/email by either the Principal or the board by referring to the complaints policy.
STAGE FIVE	formally with Ministry of Education	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> any party reserves the right to escalate directly to stage 5 as per MoE guidelines if required; in all cases the Chair of the School Governing Board will be informed

STAGE ONE: Initial concern

Staff are to be aware of the difference between a concern and a complaint.

Taking informally-voiced concerns seriously at the earliest stage will reduce the number that develop into formal complaints. Resolution of problems is encouraged wherever possible, within the school day or first thing the next working morning if the concern/complaint is received out of hours.

- **If the matter of concern involves a child**, the staff member approached with the concern must refer to the class teacher of that child within the same day. Where possible, the class teacher will resolve the issue by discussing the matter, clarifying for the parent, or apologising for miscommunication where necessary. This can be done without the need for formal procedure.
- **If the matter of concern involves a facet of the school administration**, the staff member approached must refer to the school's administration team. If it is a matter concerning accounts, refer to the school accounts office; a matter concerning health and safety, refer to the Principal; a matter concerning admissions or enrollment, refer to the Admissions department; and for general inquiries to the front office team who may refer as necessary.

In both instances above, the staff member involved in discussing the concern must inform the Principal of the discussion and provide written details by the end of the working day. This is to ensure an ongoing record of the matter should it be brought up again in the future.

- **If the matter of concern involves a staff member**, the staff member with the concern or approached with the concern must inform the Principal directly.

In either case of concern or complaint, the parent, child, or staff member may submit their issue in writing, via email, or in person.

Dealing with Complaints

STAGE TWO - FIVE: Formal procedures

STAGE TWO: Formal procedures will need to be invoked when initial attempts to resolve the concern are unsuccessful and the person raising the concern remains dissatisfied and wishes to take the matter further. This is when a concern evolves into a formal complaint and is passed to a member of the Senior Leadership Team. Please see the table above **Complaints Procedure Stages**

5. Complaints procedure

The main goal of the complaints procedure is to resolve the complaint as efficiently as possible. At all times the interests of the children will remain at the forefront of decision making to ensure their safety, happiness, and wellbeing.

Once a complaint has been passed forward from the staff member to the SLT the following process will be followed:

SLT will investigate in order to:

- establish **what** has happened so far, and **who** has been involved
- obtain any records pertaining to the student or incident
- clarify the nature of the complaint and what remains unresolved
- meet with the complainant or contact them (if unsure or further information is necessary) within three working days
- clarify what the complainant feels would put things right
- interview those involved in the matter and/or those complained of, allowing them to be accompanied if they wish
- conduct the interview with an open mind and be prepared to persist in the questioning
- keep notes of all discussions and interviews

STAGE THREE: If the complaint is still not resolved after discussion with the SLT parents will be directed to the Principal, to whom they may complain in writing or in person. Please see the table above **Complaints Procedure Stages**

STAGE FOUR: In cases where the SLT and Principal combined are unable to reach resolution with the parent, the school will meet with parents in the company of a member of the School Board. Please see the table above **Complaints Procedure Stages**

STAGE FIVE: If the problem remains unresolved the parent will be directed to the Ministry of Education - Private Education Directorate for further discussion. Typically, the parents and school directors will be included in discussion with the panel but will not be able to influence the outcome of the discussion once the initial evidence has been presented. The Ministry will issue their outcome in writing and present it to the school and to the parents involved. Please see the table above

Complaints Procedure Stages

Findings and recommendations from any and all parties will be shared transparently for the benefit of the process.

6. Resolving Complaints

Review, reflection, open communication, and a flexible approach to problem solving are at the forefront of the process. At all times, all concerns and complaints are dealt with in the strictest of confidence, and with a mutually agreeable swift resolution the goal. It might be sufficient to acknowledge that the complaint is valid in whole or in part. In addition, it may be appropriate to offer one or more of the following:

- an apology
- an explanation or clarification
- an admission that the situation could have been handled differently or better
- an assurance that the event complained of will not recur
- an explanation of the steps that have been taken to ensure that it will not happen again
- an undertaking to review school policies in light of the complaint
- an undertaking to review staff training and processes

Where applicable, a review will take place within a mutually agreed timeframe to review the outcome of the resolution and feedback provided to the concerned parties.

7. Throughout the process

In all cases parent and staff are entitled to:

- assurance that their concern or complaint will be treated confidentially
- partnership with the school to resolve the matter
- an empathetic, supportive approach to the issue at hand
- a written account of the meetings and discussions that take place
- bring support with them to meetings (for example, a translator, family member, or friend)
- appeal the school's finding by requesting further review
- a translator in meetings if required

8. Unreasonable or persistent complainants

Unfortunately, some parents appear to believe they will achieve a specific outcome if they behave in an unreasonable manner when raising and/or pursuing their concerns. Such behaviours or actions will not alter the process or decisions but is upsetting for staff and will not be tolerated. Parents will be asked to refer to the expectations section above and may have to interact only through the Head of Section or Principal, which will slow down the process.

A persistent complainant is a parent who complains about issues, either formally or informally, or raises issues that they wrongly consider to be within the remit of the school with excessive frequency. Such behaviour is unreasonable and may be characterised by:

- actions which are repetitious, obsessive or harassing;

- excessive correspondence, e-mail or telephone contact about a concern;
- an insistence upon pursuing insubstantial complaints and/or unrealistic/unreasonable outcomes;
- an insistence upon pursuing complaints in an unreasonable manner;
- lobbying or participating in public speculation amongst other parents and the wider community;
- continuing to pursue a complaint when the outcome, even after Appeal, is not satisfactory to the parent;
- posting harmful and defamatory material on social media or in publication or press;
- continuing to pursue a complaint when the outcome is beyond the remit of the school.

9. Confidentiality

In all cases all matters pertaining to a concern or complaint remain confidential between the people involved in the discussion. In cases where other people need to become involved (ie: another member of staff needs to be informed of the situation or additional information needs to be sought) this will be disclosed to the parent or staff member.

In some matters the information will be shared directly with the parties who have had the complaint made against them, especially if it relates to health and safety or possible disciplinary action.

In the event the matter needs to be escalated to an outside party (ex: the Ministry of Education) the parent and/or staff member will be informed in advance. In the event the matter becomes a safeguarding concern the process will follow that outlined in the school's Safeguarding Policy.

See **Safeguarding Policy**

10. Appeals

If a parent or member of staff is unsatisfied with the outcome of the formal Complaints procedure, s/he has the right of appeal to complaintsandappeals@nadeenschool.com

Appeals must be submitted in writing and in the form of an email. The decision is final and will be communicated to the parent or staff member who raised the complaint, to the Principal and, if relevant, to any staff member against whom the initial complaint was made, in writing within five working days.

Unless there is significant new information, if the parent tries to reopen the same issue, the Principal and the board will jointly write to inform the parent that all stages of the procedure have been exhausted and the matter is considered to be closed.

11. Specific Concerns

Concerns about, or allegations of, abuse

Allegations of abuse against a member of staff must be reported to the Safeguarding team and the Principal immediately.

Full details about how allegations of abuse will be managed are laid out in the Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy and in the Staff Behaviour & Code of Conduct Policy, which can be found on the school's website.

Should a parent have a complaint about the Principal, please email:
complaintsandappeals@nadeenschool.com

Should a parent have a complaint about the Parent Association or Nadeen Community Association, it should be addressed in writing directly to the Principal.

Review:

Written by:	SP
Reviewed by:	PW
Reviewed on:	September 2023
Indicative Review Date:	September 2024

All policies will be reviewed as above or as and when needed.