

Name of Policy:	Parent Complaints Policy
Applicable to:	Whole School
Effective date:	February 2025
Date of next review:	September 2028
Date Amended	Amendment
March 2025	1. Updated Vision, Mission and Values 2. Updated Purpose and Scope of the policy 3. Introduction of a more specific Scope 4. Roles and responsibilities added 5. Timescales added 6.1 Addition of Executive Business Director and Admin managers to ensure that both sides of the school are covered Addition of a paragraph advising Parents from directly approaching Board Members 6.2 and 6.3 Addition of Executive Business Director and Admin managers to ensure that both sides of the school are covered Ability to request formal and Complaint panels now link to google forms that are directed to the Principal/ Executive Business Director PA 7 Record keeping number of complaints received in previous year updated. 8 Unreasonable, repeated, duplicate and complaint campaigns added

Parent Complaints Policy

1. School mission, vision and values

1.1. Vision

In 2027 NCBIS will be the first school of choice in Cairo, providing unrivalled experiences that will enable all students to follow their passions and become successful, caring citizens and leaders in tomorrow's world.

1.2. Mission

To be a caring, internationally-minded learning community guided by the philosophy of High Performance Learning and a commitment to continuous self-improvement and reflection.

1.3. Values

Nurture	Community Minded	Bravery	Integrity	Self-Reflection
School is a safe place where we promote equality and justice and develop empathetic learners to grow emotionally and intellectually.	Take pride in being part of something bigger than yourself. Choose compassion and forgiveness and demonstrate generosity.	Stand up and be counted and stand for others, be risk takers learning from mistakes and showing resilience.	Be responsible for your own actions and behave honestly, respectfully and ethically.	Understand and develop self-awareness and consciousness about behaviour, thoughts, attitudes and motivation and have the courage to change.

Number of formal and panel complaints received in 2023-24: 0

2. Purpose and Scope of the Policy

NCBIS aims to meet its statutory obligations when responding to complaints from parents/carers of pupils at the school.

When responding to complaints, we aim to:

- Be impartial and non-adversarial
- Facilitate a full and fair investigation by an independent person or panel, where necessary
- Address all the points at issue and provide an effective and prompt response
- Respect complainants' desire for confidentiality
- Treat complainants with respect and courtesy
- Make sure that any decisions we make are lawful, rational, reasonable, fair and proportionate, in line with the principles of administrative law
- Keep complainants informed of the progress of the complaints process
- Consider how the complaint can feed into school improvement evaluation processes

We try to resolve complaints by informal means wherever possible. Where this is not possible, formal procedures will be followed.

The school will aim to give the complainant the opportunity to complete the complaints procedure in full. To support this, we will make sure we publicise the existence of this policy and make it available on the school website.

Throughout the process, we will be sensitive to the needs of all parties involved, and make any reasonable adjustments needed to accommodate individuals.

- 2.1. Parents in the Dutch School can also refer their complaint to the School Inspectorate of the Dutch Ministry of Education.

Contact details:

Email: buitenland@onderwijsinspectie.nl General complaints about schools: Telephone number: 0031 77 46 56 767; Special number for confidential issues: 0031 30 67 06 001.

3. Scope

This policy does not cover complaints procedures relating to:

- o Admissions
- o Statutory assessments of special educational needs (SEN)
- o Safeguarding matters
- o Suspension and permanent exclusion
- o Whistle-blowing
- o Staff grievances
- o Staff discipline

Please see our separate policies for procedures relating to these types of complaints.

Complaints about services provided by other providers who use school premises or facilities should be directed to the provider concerned.

4. Roles and responsibilities

4.1. The complainant

The complainant will get a more effective and timely response to their complaint if they:

- Follow these procedures
- Cooperate with the school throughout the process, and respond to deadlines and communication promptly
- Ask for assistance as needed
- Treat all those involved with respect
- Do not approach individual governors about the complaint
- Do not publish details about the complaint on social media

4.2. The investigator

An individual will be appointed to look into the complaint and establish the facts. They will:

- Interview all relevant parties, keeping notes
- Consider records and any written evidence and keep these securely
- Prepare a comprehensive report to the Head of School, Principal or Executive Business Director, which includes the facts and potential solutions

4.3. Assistance for complainant's raising formal or informal complaints

If complainants need assistance raising a formal complaint, they can contact the relevant school office:-

- Primary and Dutch Schools: primaryoffice@ncbis.co.uk
- Secondary School: secondaryoffice@ncbis.co.uk
- Health and Safety: mina.aziz@ncbis.co.uk
- Administration (Transport, Security, Facilities, Finance and purchasing, IT):
nesrine.lotfy@ncbis.co.uk

Complaints via phone to the school receptionist on either:

- +202 256 57115
- +202 256 57120
- +202 256 57121

will be directed to the appropriate office.

5. Timescales

The complainant must raise the complaint within 3 months of the incident. If the complaint is about a series of related incidents, they must raise the complaint within 3 months of the last incident.

We will consider exceptions to this timeframe in circumstances where there were valid reasons for not making a complaint at that time and the complaint can still be investigated in a fair manner for all involved.

When complaints are made out of term time, we will consider them to have been received on the first school day after the holiday period.

If at any point we cannot meet the timescales we have set out in this policy, we will:

- Set new time limits with the complainant
- Send the complainant details of the new deadline and explain the delay

6. Three Stages for complaints:

6.1. Informal Resolution:

- 6.1.1. It is hoped that most complaints and concerns will be resolved quickly and informally.
- 6.1.2. If parents have a complaint or concern they should, in the first instance, contact their son(s)/daughter(s) teacher. In most cases, the matter will be resolved. If the teacher cannot resolve the matter alone, it may be necessary for them to contact the Head of Department / Phase Leader/Head of House or Deputy / Head of School or relevant Administration Department

Manager (e.g. Transport, Finance). Teachers and Managers should keep their own record of any such communications as it may be needed if the issue is not resolved at this stage.

- 6.1.3. Any complaints made directly to the Principal, Executive Business Director or Heads of School will normally be referred to the relevant teacher or relevant Administration Department Manager.
- 6.1.4. After receiving the informal complaint, it should not take longer than 24 hours (one working day) for an acknowledgement to be sent back to the parents and no longer than a further 3 working school days to solve the issue.
- 6.1.5. Complainants should not approach individual governors to raise concerns or complaints. They have no power to act on an individual basis and it may also prevent them from considering complaints at Stage 3 of the procedures.

6.2. Formal Resolution:

- 6.2.1. Only if the complaint cannot be resolved on an informal basis, then the parents should escalate to a formal complaint. Formal complaints must be completed in writing by completing the official form ([Please click here for the form](#)). The complaint will automatically be directed to the PA to the Principal/Executive Business Director for record keeping and tracking. They will then distribute the complaint to the relevant school section to initiate the appropriate action.
- 6.2.2. The PA to the Principal/Executive Business Director will acknowledge the formal complaint within 24 working hours of receiving it and set a date for a meeting which should be no more than 3 working days ahead if possible.
- 6.2.3. The PA to the Principal/Executive Business Director will speak to the parents concerned. He/she will normally contact relevant people to get background facts before replying to the parents.
- 6.2.4. The appointed Leader/ Manager may need to carry out further investigations, but we aim to complete any investigation and reach a resolution no longer than 7 working days after meeting with the parents.
- 6.2.5. Parents will be informed of this decision in writing or in a face-to-face discussion if more suitable. The Leader/ Manager will also give reasons for the decision and any relevant actions.
- 6.2.6. The PA to the Principal/Executive Business Director keeps records of all formal complaints, with a summary at the front of each complaint.
- 6.2.7. If parents are still not satisfied with the decision, they should proceed to address the School Principal and request a formal Panel hearing (Appendix A).
- 6.2.8. If parents are still not satisfied with the decision, they should proceed to requesting a

formal Panel hearing ([Please click here for a link to the Complaints Panel Request form](#)).

6.3. Complaints Panel:

- 6.3.1. If parents seek to involve a panel (following a failure to reach an earlier resolution) they should complete the "Request Formal Complaint Panel form" ([Please click here to access the form](#)) The Principal/Executive Business Director has been appointed by the Board to call hearings of the Complaints Panel.
- 6.3.2. The matter will then be referred to the Complaints Panel for consideration. The Panel will consist of two members of the Board of Directors and one person who is independent of the governance and management of the school. The panel will be appointed by the Chair of the Board of Directors.
- 6.3.3. Stage three is a full-merits hearing of the complaint and not a review that process was followed in stages 1 and 2.
- 6.3.4. If the Panel deems it necessary, it may require that further particulars of the complaint or any related matter be supplied in advance of the hearing.
- 6.3.5. The hearing should be arranged within 15 working days of the letter being sent to the Principal requesting a panel hearing. Copies of any papers shall be supplied to all parties no later than four days prior to the hearing.
- 6.3.6. The parents may be accompanied to the hearing by one other person. This may be a relative, teacher or friend. Legal representation will not normally be appropriate.
- 6.3.7. If possible, the Panel will resolve the parents' complaint immediately, without the need for further investigation.
- 6.3.8. Where the investigation is required, the Panel will decide how it should be carried out. After due consideration of all the facts they consider relevant, the Panel will reach a decision and may make recommendations which it shall complete within five working days after the hearing takes place.
- 6.3.9. The Panel will write to the parents informing them of its decision and the reasons for it. The decisions of the Panel will be final. The Panel's findings and, if any, recommendations will be sent in writing to the parents, the Principal, the relevant Head of School, the Chairperson and where relevant the person complained of. i) The PA to the Principal/Executive Business Director keeps records of all Panel hearings, with a summary at the front of each complaint (Appendix A).

7. Record-keeping

- 7.1. A written record of all complaints that reach the formal stage / panel hearing should be kept, including if the complaint was resolved and any action taken by the school as a result of those complaints.
- 7.2. Parents can be assured that all concerns and complaints will be treated seriously and confidentially. Correspondence, statements and records will be kept confidential except where any other legal obligation prevails.
- 7.3. The number of formal complaints or panel hearings for the academic year is made available to those current or prospective parents who wish to know. Simply email nesrine.lotfy@ncbis.co.uk for information on this. This information is also displayed on our school website under the tab 'Policies in NCBIS'.
- 7.4.

8. Unreasonable and persistent complaints

8.1 Unreasonable complaints

Most complaints raised will be valid, and therefore we will treat them seriously. However, a complaint may become unreasonable if the person:

- Refuses to articulate their complaint or specify the grounds of a complaint or the outcomes sought by raising the complaint, despite offers of assistance
- Refuses to cooperate with the complaint's investigation process

- Refuses to accept that certain issues are not within the scope of the complaint's procedure
- Insists on the complaint being dealt with in ways which are incompatible with the complaint's procedure or with good practice
- Introduces trivial or irrelevant information which they expect to be taken into account and commented on
- Raises large numbers of detailed but unimportant questions, and insists they are fully answered, often immediately and to their own timescales
- Makes unjustified complaints about staff who are trying to deal with the issues, and seeks to have them replaced
- Changes the basis of the complaint as the investigation proceeds
- Repeatedly makes the same complaint (despite previous investigations or responses concluding that the complaint is groundless or has been addressed)
- Refuses to accept the findings of the investigation into that complaint where the school's complaint procedure has been fully and properly implemented and completed
- Seeks an unrealistic outcome
- Makes excessive demands on school time by frequent, lengthy and complicated contact with staff regarding the complaint in person, in writing, by email and by telephone while the complaint is being dealt with
- Uses threats to intimidate
- Uses abusive, offensive or discriminatory language or violence
- Knowingly provides falsified information
- Publishes unacceptable information on social media or other public forums

Please note: the above list is not intended to be exhaustive and is for guidance purposes only. Where the school management view a to be unreasonable it will be reported to the relevant Board Subcommittee to review, with the decisions being recorded?

Complainants should try to limit their communication with the school while the complaint is being progressed. It is not helpful if repeated correspondence is sent (either by letter, phone, email or text), as it could delay the outcome being reached.

8.2 Steps we will take

We will take every reasonable step to address the complainant's comments and give them a clear statement of our position and their options. We will maintain our role as an objective arbiter throughout the process, including when we meet with individuals. We will follow our complaints procedure as normal (as outlined above) wherever possible.

Whenever possible, the Principal, Executive Business Director or Chair of Governors will discuss any concerns with the complainant informally before applying an 'unreasonable' marking. If the behaviour continues, the Principal/Executive Business Director will write to the complainant explaining that their behaviour is unreasonable, refer them to this policy and remind them to act in accordance with it. For complainants who excessively contact the school causing a significant level of disruption, we may:

- Give the complainant a single point of contact via an email address
- Limit the number of times the complainant can make contact, such as a fixed number per term
- Ask the complainant to engage a third party to act on their behalf
- Put any other strategy in place as necessary

In response to any serious incident of aggression or violence, we will immediately inform the police and communicate our actions in writing. This may include barring an individual from school premises and ensuring appropriate measures of support are provided to staff where they are the subject of aggression and/or violence.

8.3 Serial/persistent complaints

If the complainant contacts the school again on the same issue, the correspondence may then be viewed as 'serial' or 'persistent'. We may stop responding to the complainant when the following conditions are met:

- We have taken every reasonable step to address the complainant's concerns
- The complainant has been given a clear statement of our position and their options
- The complainant contacts the school repeatedly, making substantially the same points each time

The case to stop responding is stronger if:

- The complainant's communications are often or always abusive or aggressive
- The complainant makes insulting personal comments about or threats towards staff
- We have reason to believe the individual is contacting the school with the intention of causing disruption or inconvenience

Where we decide to stop responding, we will inform the individual that we intend to do so. We will also explain that we will consider any new complaints they make provided the concerns raised are materially different to those raised previously and/or are unconnected to the previous concern

8.4 Duplicate complaints

If we have resolved a complaint under this procedure and receive a duplicate complaint on the same subject from a partner, family member or other individual, we will assess whether there are aspects that we hadn't previously considered, or any new information we need to take into account.

If we are satisfied that there are no new aspects, we will:

- Tell the new complainant that we have already investigated and responded to this issue, and that the local process is complete

8.5 Complaint campaigns

Where the school receives a large volume of complaints about the same topic or subject, especially if these come from complainants unconnected with the school, the school may respond to these complaints by:

- Publishing a single response on the school website
- Sending a template response to all of the complainants

If complainants are not satisfied with the school's response, or wish to pursue the complaint further, the normal procedures will apply.

(Appendix A)

Complaint Summary Sheet (for formal / panel complaints)

Date formal / panel complaint received:	
Received by (full name):	
Acknowledgement of receipt of complaint sent: (name of person, date and method of communication):	
Name of person sending the complainant:	
Type of complaint (formal/panel if panel please state the names of the panel members):	
Subject of complaint:	
Name and class/tutor group of students involved in complaint:	
Date of resolution:	
If unresolved- dates of communications:	
Summary of complaint:	
Summary of resolution (can attach extra sheets)	
Action taken and by whom (including any changes needed to school policy and procedures):	

Date _____

Signed _____