

GEMS Cambridge International Private School Sharjah **Complaints and Written Appeals Policy**

Last Amendment: September 2023
Policy Review Date: September 2024

Rationale

The GEMS Cambridge International Private School (GCS) constantly aims to provide a quality service to their stakeholders. At GCS, we acknowledge that, from time to time, stakeholders may wish to lodge a complaint about school, or the work undertaken. Such complaints will be investigated by the appropriate person and results communicated to the stakeholder. Stakeholders can include parents, students, staff, external providers and members of the local community. This is in accordance to Policy 21 (Article 26 of the Organising Regulations) of the Private Schools' Policy and Guidance Manual.

In order to gauge success and further improve the service, stakeholders are encouraged to give feedback when the school has exceeded or fallen short of expectations. Managers can then reward staff when they go the 'extra mile', demonstrating the school's vision and values and address any weaknesses reported.

However, any parent, guardian, or other person who upbraids, insults, or abuses any employee on school property or in the presence of students may in the first instance be asked to leave the school site and further guidance will be sought from the legal and education teams at Corporate Office. GEMS schools reserve the right to restrict or deny anyone access to its premises that it deems disruptive or to have behaved inappropriately towards school staff. School employees who are sued as a consequence of performing their assigned duties appropriately shall be provided full legal service.

It is vital to take all concerns and complaints seriously, always seeking to resolve matters fairly and to the mutual satisfaction of all concerned. One dissatisfied

stakeholder can seriously damage the reputation of the school, even if there are hundreds who are happy with the service.

Complaints regarding school matters should preferably be made in writing and addressed to the Principal in the first instance. The matter may be delegated to a member of the Senior Leadership Team for follow up as appropriate, especially in cases of responsibility for a school section or level.

Where a stakeholder believes the school has failed to or cannot adequately deal with the complaint, or where the complaint is about the Principal, they should direct their complaint to the appropriate Educational Director at a GEMS Corporate Office, who will investigate the complaint according to the procedures in the corporate complaints guidelines.

Aims

- To provide a common system for expressing satisfaction or dissatisfaction with the service provided to customers.
- To deal promptly and professionally with complaints, always seeking to find a way forward which is agreed and understood by all concerned.

Managing Compliments

A suggestion box is placed in the school reception area. Forms are available so that parents and visitors can give feedback. A display of 'compliment' notes in reception helps to demonstrate the school's commitment to high standards of service. When a compliment is received it is filed in the school office and a copy sent to the Principal, line manager and person concerned. Due acknowledgement is made to the person(s) responsible for this noteworthy act.

Managing Concerns

Most expressions of dissatisfaction are not formal complaints. Parents and others may raise issues and concerns to the school either over the telephone, in writing or in person.

All concerns must be treated seriously and action taken within 24 hours of receipt. Serious concerns should be recorded using a Record of Concerns folder kept by the Parent Relations Executive (PRE).



When dealing with a complaint over the telephone full and clear notes of the conversation should be made. Alternatively, the dissatisfied person should be invited into school to discuss the issues and to find a resolution.

The dissatisfied person should be informed of the way in which the matter is being dealt with. Any promises made should always be fulfilled. Commitments should not be made on behalf of another person, faculty or department without first checking that they are able to meet that commitment.

Once a concern has been fully addressed this should be communicated to the complainant.

Procure for raising concerns:

1. Raising concern with child's class teacher/form tutor by email, telephone or by verbally requesting a meeting.
2. If the parent is not satisfied with the response of the class teacher or feels that the matter is sensitive or serious, they contact the Head of Year or the senior leadership team.
3. In more serious cases, the Heads of School or the Principal deals with parents directly.

Referring Concerns and Managing Complaints

Parents and students should be informed about the complaints procedure, for example it should be placed in the school's web-site. If a complainant is not satisfied with the process managed by the Principal and wishes to take the matter further, the Principal should contact the appropriate GEMS Senior Education Officer to mediate informally.

If the complainant wishes to make a formal complaint then the matter will be referred to the GEMS Director of Education. In both these cases, all relevant documentation should be forwarded. Responses and recommendations arising from formal complaints will be communicated in writing to the complainant, the person complained about (where relevant) and copied to the Principal and GEMS Senior Education Officer.



Online complaints that involve E-Safety incidents should be reported to class teachers and form tutors copying in heads of schools.

If there is a problem with the devices or accessing school educational platforms, complaints should be reported to IT and helpdesk.

Complaints Committee

All complaints received by the school in writing, email, phone or from SPEA, are overseen by the complaints committee. The complainant will receive a confirmation of receipt of the complaint within 24 hours. Following this the school under the monitoring of the complaints committee shall investigate and take the necessary action replying to the complainant with 10 working days of the initial complaint.

Complaints Committee

Name	Role	Email	Phone Contact
Albie Huyser	Principal	a.huyser_gcs@gemsedu.com	(+971)06-5024800
Darren Mumford	Vice Principal	d.mumford_gcs@gemsedu.com	(+971)06-5024800
Charne Rossouw	Head of Primary	c.rossouw_gcs@gemsedu.com	(+971)06-5024800
Keiron Tucker	Head of Secondary	k.tucker_gcs@gemsedu.com	(+971)06-5024800
Rasha Jalabi	GRE	r.jalabi_gcs@gemsedu.com	(+971)06-5024800

Reporting Compliments and Complaints

The complaints procedure provides for the panel to make findings and recommendations and does the procedure stipulate that a copy of these findings and recommendations are given to the complainant and, where relevant, the person complained about and the headteachers.

Where there is a panel hearing of a complaint, one panel member is independent of the management and running of the school.



Written records are kept of complaints.

Correspondence, statements and records relating to individual complaints are kept confidential, except in cases where local legal requirements permit access.

Details of compliments and complaints should be included in Principal's monthly report to GEMS.

