



The British School of Córdoba

Complaints Policy

Approved by The Board	June 2022
Next Revision Date	June 2023

Any complaint by a student, parent or teacher against any other member of the school community must be channeled correctly and communicated in an acceptable way to be treated objectively and with respect towards all people involved.

To be constructive, complaints should be made to the appropriate person in the school and should not be expressed outside the school where such comments can damage the school and its employees and pupils. There are specific procedures for each of the following:

- 1) suggestions to improve the running of the school.
- 2) complaints about the running of the school.
- 3) complaints about individual members of the school community or

Stage 1 – Initial or Informal Resolution

1. Suggestions to improve the running of the school

Suggestions from parents, students and staff to improve the running of the school will all be given due consideration. Suggestions can be made verbally or in writing to the appropriate person:

- students should make their suggestions via their representatives (who will raise them in the School Council) or their Form Tutor or key stage coordinator.
- Parents should make their suggestions to the Head of Section (Head of Foundation, Primary or Sub-Director) or to the Principal.
- Staff should book an appointment with either their head of sections, the Sub-Director or the Principal.

Once made, the suggestions will be passed to the relevant person(s) for their consideration and acceptance if considered appropriate. In all cases suggestions must be acknowledged in writing.

2. Complaints about the running of the school

- Parents who wish to complain about an aspect of the way the school is run should do so in writing to the Principal. If a meeting is requested to discuss the complaint it will be dealt with at that time. If no meeting is requested the written complaint will receive a written reply from the school management within five working days.

- Pupils can register their disapproval of a school rule or the running of the school to their tutor or their representatives.

- Teachers and other school employees can register their complaints in the same way as the parents.

3. Complaints about individual members of the school community.

Any complaints about individual members of the school community should be sent, in writing, to the school management. (Complaints by a student directed at another pupil can be made to a teacher, Form Tutor or key stage coordinator either verbally or in writing).

The complaint will be investigated by a member of the senior leadership team which may include interviewing students. If a complaint falls under the category of 'Very Serious Incident' which includes

complaints of potential bullying, then a formal investigation will be carried out as described on section 3a above.

In all other case the Head of Pastoral, Sub-Director or Principal will decide on further action.

- Issues which arise which affect a specific group of parents (for example, the parents of a specific class) can be brought to the attention of the school's management in writing, signed by all the members of that specific group, or signed by a designated representative or representatives assigned to deal with the issue.

Within no more than five school days, and following the enquiries which the management feels necessary, the members of the group or their representative(s) will be given a reply to the complaints or enquiries made.

NB The Principal does not grant group parent meetings

- Under no circumstances will anonymous complaints be given any consideration. - Complaints against the Principal must be sent to the Chair of the School Board in writing. The Chair will decide, in consultation with the Board, the subsequent procedure to follow.

Stage 2 – Formal Resolution

Where an initial resolution has not been found

-If a decision or complaint cannot be resolved informally, parents should make a formal complaint in writing to the Principal. The Principal will appoint an appropriate person to lead any further investigation.

-The Principal will respond to parents within five working days, outlining how the school will proceed and giving details and timescale for a further investigation, if necessary.

-Once the Principal is satisfied that, so far as is practicable, all of the relevant facts have been established, during the course of the investigation, a decision will be made in relation to the complaint within 10 working days from the date the complaint was received. Parents will be informed of the decision, and the reasoning behind it, in writing.

-Where this is not possible, the Principal will notify the parents in writing of a new time frame.

-If the complaint concerns the Principal, the complaint should be addressed to the Managing Director, who will oversee the investigation.

Stage 3 –Panel Hearing

-Where parents are not satisfied with the response or process undertaken at Stage 2, the matter will be referred to a Complaints Panel.

-Parents should request a Panel Hearing in writing addressed to the Managing Director or Board within one week of receipt of the decision at Stage 2.

-Receipt of a stage 3 complaints will be acknowledged and the panel hearing will be scheduled within 20 working days of receipt.

-The Complaints Panel will be appointed by the Managing Director or a member of the Board and at least one of the three members shall be independent of the management and running of the school.

-The members of the Complaints Panel will have no connection to the pupil or the family concerned and will not have been directly involved in the matters detailed in the complaint.

-If the Chair of the Complaints Panel deems it necessary, they may require that further particulars of the complaint and any relevant documents or records be supplied in advance of the panel meeting. Copies of such particulars will be supplied to all the parties wherever practicable and not later than 3 working days prior to this hearing.

-The parents may be accompanied to the hearing by one other person. This may be a relative, teacher or friend. Recordings of hearings are not permitted.

-After due consideration of all facts considered relevant, the Panel will reach a decision and make recommendations, which it shall complete within 10 working days of the hearing.

Recording of Complaints

All complaints which have reached Stages 2 or 3 are duly recorded in the School Complaint Register, including the outcome of the individual complaint and any actions taken as a result. The stage at which the complaint is concluded is also recorded.

Confidentiality

Parents can be assured that all concerns and complaints will be treated seriously and confidentially. Correspondence, statements and records will be kept confidential. The exceptions to confidentiality are inspection bodies. The school will make available to an inspectorate on request a written record of any complaints made during a specified period and the action which was taken as a result.

Publication

This procedure is published on the school website.

Final Notes

-A complaint can be made by any parent (or person deemed to have parental responsibility) of a pupil registered at the school.

-Complaints from groups of parents linked to the leadership team and/or management style will not be heard collectively. Confidentiality must be maintained for each individual complaint.