



BRITISH SCHOOL OF GENEVA

COMPLAINTS POLICY



General Principles

At the outset, a distinction needs to be made between a concern and a complaint. BSG is aware that taking informal concerns seriously at the earliest stage will reduce the numbers that develop into formal complaints. However, formal complaints should always follow the complaints procedure which we endeavour to be:

- simple to understand and use
- impartial
- non-adversarial
- allow swift handling with established time-limits for action and keeping people informed of the progress
- respect people's desire for confidentiality
- address all the points at issue and provide an effective response and appropriate redress, where necessary

Complaints Procedure

Complaint by parent / guardian

In the event of a parent / guardian / client having a grievance of a complaint the following procedure should be followed:

- 1) If the complaint relates to any aspect of classroom contact, the first action should be a discussion either by phone, email or in person with the Primary Co-ordinator or Head of Secondary who will in turn to the teacher concerned and re-contact the parent / guardian.
- 2) In the event that they are unable to resolve the complaint, the parent may submit the complaint in written form to the Principal who will handle the complaint in person. In regards to all classroom matters, the Principal is the ultimate authority.
- 3) If the complaint relates to the school as a whole, it should be made in writing to the Principal.
- 4) If the complaint cannot be resolved by the Principal it can then be referred by either party to the Director General of the company. In the final event a complaint may also be made to the Board. However, the Board will only consider a complaint if the above steps have been followed.
- 5) Complaints must be registered within one month of any specific cause.
- 6) Complaints of a serious, criminal nature (assault, sexual harassment, theft, child protection) should be made directly to the Principal.

Complaint by student

- 1) If the complaint relates to a teacher, the first action should be a discussion with the Form Tutor.
- 2) In the event that they are unable to resolve the complaint, the student may contact the Head of Secondary or the Primary Co-ordinator.
- 3) As a final step, the student may submit the complaint in written form to the Principal who will handle it in person. In regards to all classroom matters, the Principal is the ultimate authority.
- 4) If the complaint relates to the school as a whole, it should be made in writing to the Principal.



Complaint by staff member

In the event of a staff member having a grievance or a complaint the following procedure should be followed:

- 1) The first point of contact will be the Primary Co-ordinator or Head of Secondary if the complaint involves a student or any aspect of teaching.
- 2) If the complaint involves working conditions or salary, then a meeting should be sought with the Principal.
- 3) If the complaint cannot be resolved by the Principal it can then be referred by either party to the Director General of the company. In the final event a complaint may also be made to the Board. However, the Board will only consider a complaint if the above steps have been followed.
- 4) Complaints must be registered within one month of any specific cause.
- 5) Complaints of a serious, criminal nature (assault, sexual harassment, theft, child protection) should be made directly to the Principal.

Resolving Complaints

The satisfactory resolution of all concerns and complaints is our goal. To this end, a resolution may be:

- An apology
- An explanation
- 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

Vexatious Complaints

If properly followed, a good complaints procedure will limit the number of complaints that become protracted. However, there will be occasions when, despite all stages of the procedures having been followed, the complainant remains dissatisfied. If the complainant tries to reopen the same issue, the Director General is able to inform them in writing that the procedure has been exhausted and the matter is now closed. If the complainant writes again on the same issue, then the correspondence may be recognised as vexatious and there will be no obligation on the part of the school to respond.

Time Limits

We understand that complaints need to be considered and resolved as quickly and efficiently as possible and therefore have set a time limit of 2 weeks for each action within each stage. However, where further investigations are necessary, new time limits will be set.

Amended July 2015

Raji Sundaram

Principal

To be reviewed July 2017