



TITLE OF POLICY	Complaints & Grievance Policy
COVERAGE	Whole School
PERSON RESPONSIBLE	Principal, HR Director, Headteachers
CONTRIBUTORS	SLT
DATE OF RATIFICATION	June 2016
DATE FOR REVIEW	June 2018

1. General

One of the main aims of ICS is to ensure that our students receive the highest standard of international education available, and remain safe and happy at our school. We recognise that the home-school relationship is crucial in this endeavour; therefore, the school makes every effort to maintain effective communication with our parents. However, whilst we always aim to do our very best to guarantee stakeholder satisfaction, we also recognise there may be times when things do not go as well as we would like and that parents may, from time to time, have complaints related to their children that need to be addressed by the school. The purpose of this policy document is to outline clear procedures to enable complaints to be dealt with quickly and efficiently, thereby ensuring that student learning is not disrupted and to maintain confidence and trust in the home-school relationship.

2. Definitions

- A **complaint** is defined in this policy as ‘an expression of dissatisfaction, however made, about actions taken or a lack of action.
- A **grievance** is defined in this policy as ‘a complaint for which normal remedy has not been achieved, and is accelerated beyond the level of the Principal to the SMC’.

NB A **concern** may be defined as ‘an expression of worry or doubt over an issue considered to be important for which reassurances are sought’, and **concerns are not covered by this policy**. In addition please note that for the purposes of this policy the following are not considered as complaints: general enquires; request for services, request for information or explanation of a policy or practice; any matter for which there is a right of appeal or a legal remedy; matters appropriate to be dealt with under other procedures.

3. Aims:

At ICS we value positive relationships with all parents. It is in everyone's interest that complaints about the school are resolved at the earliest possible stage, without the need for formal procedures. ICS is committed to dealing with all complaints fairly and impartially, and to providing a high quality service to all stakeholders.

4. Complaints & Grievance Process:

Policy Type	Stage*	Description
Complaint	1	Informal expression of concern made
	2	Discussion with the Head of Faculty/Pastoral Leader or Deputy Head of Phase
	3	Discussion with Head of School or Principal
Grievance	4	Involvement of School Management Committee (SMC)
	5	Further representation to SMC

**Please see Appendix 1 for full description of each stage*

5. Confidentiality:

Confidentiality is vital to securing the confidence of all concerned and to ensure equity and impartiality. Therefore, all conversations and correspondence will be treated with discretion and those involved in any investigation related to a complaint will endeavour to be sensitive to the feelings of all parties involved. In addition any investigation will:

- Establish what has happened so far and who has been involved;
- Clarify the nature of the complaint and what remains unresolved;
- Meet with the complainant or contact them if further information is required;
- Clarify what the complainant feels would put things right;
- Conduct any interviews with an open mind and be prepared to persist in the questioning;
- Complete all necessary notes.

6. Anonymous Complaints:

In normal circumstances the school will not take any action regarding anonymous complaints received - either in writing or via another student or parent. However, where an anonymous complaint relates to student welfare or safeguarding* (i.e. child protection, including bullying) the school will investigate and also consider contacting external agencies.

7. Vexatious Complaints/ Grievances:

If, despite all stages of this policy being followed, a complainant remains dissatisfied, they are not entitled to reopen the same issue. In such cases, the Chair of the SMC will inform each party in writing that the process has been exhausted and that the matter is now closed. If a dissatisfied party continues to raise the same complaint, it will be treated as a vexatious complaint. In such circumstances, ICS reserves the right to take any action deemed necessary to protect the school's reputation.

8. School Line Management Structure:

Line Manager (LM)	Staff	Line Manager (LM)	Staff
Principal	Headteachers Director Finance, Director HR	Head of Science Faculty	Science Technician
Headteachers	Deputy Heads	Head of Arts Faculty	Arts Technician
Primary Deputy Head (KS1)	Teachers (KS1)	Class Teachers	TAs (FS1 to Y3)
Primary Deputy Head (KS2)	Teachers (KS2)	Class Teachers	TAs (Y4 to Y6)
Primary TAs	Primary Teachers	Director Finance	Procurement & Contracts Manager, Stores Supervisor, Accounts, Admissions, Facilities Manager

Secondary Deputy Head (CAP)	Faculty Heads	Director HR	Security & Safety Manager, Receptionist, Bus Manager
Secondary Deputy Head (Pastoral)	Heads of Year 7, 8 & 9; Head of KS4, Head 6th Form, Inclusion Manager	Security & Safety Manager	Security Team
Faculty Heads	Secondary Faculty Staff	IT Manager	IT Team
Heads of Year 7, 8 & 9 & Head of KS4,	Form Tutors	Procurement & Contract Manager	Cleaning & Cafeteria Contractors
Head 6th Form	Form Tutors, University Counsellor & Careers Counsellor	Facilities Manager	Maintenance Team
Inclusion Manager	EAL Teachers & LSAs (Primary & Secondary)		

ICS Complaints & Grievance Policy (June 2016)
Appendix 1: Stage Descriptors

Complaints (Stages 1, 2 & 3)

Stage	Student complaint	Parental Complaint	Staff Complaint*
<p>Stage 1 Informal expression of concern made to the school</p>	<p>Many complaints can be resolved through an informal process beginning with talking with the individual and his/ her class/ form tutor if necessary. Basic steps in the informal process include: discussing the matter with the staff, faculty, or department personnel in which the issue originated. If the issue is not resolved, the complaint reaches Stage 2.</p>	<p>In the first instance, the matter should be discussed with the child's class teacher or form tutor. In our experience most matters of concern can be resolved positively in this way. Members of the school's senior leadership may become involved at this stage.</p>	<p>In the first instance, the staff member should try to resolve any concern or complaint with their immediate line manager</p> <p><i>*Any concerns or complaints regarding a contract of employment must first be discussed with the HR Director. If the issue is not resolved to the staff member's satisfaction they can move to Stage 2 etc.</i></p>
<p>Stage 2 Discussion with the Head of Department/ Head of Faculty or Deputy of Phase</p>	<p>If unresolved after following the appropriate informal complaint procedures, the student may choose to have the complaint officially documented. The student completes the Student Complaint Form.</p>	<p>We expect most complaints to be resolved by this stage. However if the matter has not been resolved and needs further investigation parents must make an appointment with the Head of Department/ Head of Faculty or Deputy of Phase (where appropriate). They will need time to fully investigate the matter and will respond within 10 school days.</p>	<p>If the matter cannot be resolved as per Stage 1, the staff member should speak to the phase Deputy</p>
<p>Stage 3: Head of School or Principal (complaints to the Head of School will automatically involve the Principal and vice versa)</p>	<p>Upon submission, the school will investigate the complaint. Complaints may be referred to the appropriate division for investigation and proposed resolution. Once resolved, the student may appeal the resolution to the decision.</p>	<p>Complaints rarely reach this formal level but should you need to you should make a formal complaint in writing to the Head of School or Principal explaining why you remain unhappy and what you wish to see happen. The Head of School will let you know when your complaint is to be considered. If a meeting with you and others involved is considered necessary you will be given adequate notice to prepare. You will be informed within 10 school days of the outcome investigation and decision on what further action will be taken</p>	<p>Where concerns or complaints are of a more serious nature the staff member should make an appointment to discuss with Head of School or Principal</p>

Grievances (Stage 4 & 5)

<p>Stage 4 SMC</p>	<p>In the highly unlikely event that a student’s concern or complaint cannot be resolved by the Head of School/ Principal, the student has the right to make an appeal in writing to the Chair of the School Management Committee (SMC).</p> <p>The SMC Chair may request additional information from the complainant and any involved parties. The SMC Chair will issue a written determination of the appeal which shall be provided to the complainant and the affected department. The SMC’s decision is final.</p>	<p>In the unlikely event that a parental complaint cannot be resolved by the Head of School/ Principal, an grievance appeal can be made in writing to the Chair of the School Management Committee (SMC). This must be done within 15 days of the Head of School/Principal’s response.</p> <p>The SMC Chair will form a panel with two more SMC members to consider whether the complaint warrants further investigation. The SMC Panel may ask you to explain your case in person but, it is also possible that, following investigation, they may make a decision without needing you to appear.</p> <p>A decision will be provided within 30 days where possible.</p>	<p>Where a member of staff feels that their complaint has not been resolved to their satisfaction in Stage 3 then they can initiate a grievance procedure by appealing in writing to the SMC Chair.</p> <p>Normally the Chair will not form a panel to hear a grievance from a staff member unless he/she feels the complaint is of such a serious nature that it merits such an approach.</p> <p>If the SMC Chair decides a panel is necessary then the grievance procedure will follow the process set out for parental complaints</p>
<p>Stage 5 Further representation</p>	<p>Any complaint/ grievance about the Principal will be dealt with via the student’s parents (see right)</p>	<p>If parents have a complaint/ grievance about the Principal, they should first make an informal approach to the Chair of the SMC (as at Stage 4 above) who is obliged to investigate. The Chair will do all they can to resolve the issue through a dialogue with the school, but if parents are unhappy with the outcome, they can make a formal complaint, as outlined above.</p>	<p>If parents have a complaint/ grievance about the Principal, they should first make an informal approach to the Chair of the SMC (as at Stage 4 above) who is obliged to investigate. The Chair will do all they can to resolve the issue through a dialogue with the school, but if parents are unhappy with the outcome, they can make a formal complaint, as outlined above.</p>