



Al-Hijrah School
مدرسة الهجرة

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Complaints Policy

Policy Monitoring, Evaluation & Review

The school will review this policy as below and assess its implementation and effectiveness. The policy will be promoted and implemented throughout the school.

Updated:	April 2015
Next Review Date:	As required

Reviewed by:	SLT / Governing Body / IEB
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This Policy was adopted by Al-Hijrah School on:	Date: 19 May 2015
Name:	Signed:
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COMPLAINTS POLICY

1. Introduction

- 1.1 At Al-Hijrah School we are obliged to meet statutory requirements and at the same time we use our Holy Qur'an and the Hadith of the Prophet Muhammad (SAW) to guide our etiquettes and practices.
- 1.2 Al-Hijrah School strives to provide a good education for all of our pupils. The Head Teacher and staff work very hard to build positive relationships with all parents/guardians. However, occasionally a situation arises that causes concerns for parents/guardians. This policy sets out the procedures that the school community will need to follow in such cases.

2. Aims & Objectives

- 2.1 This Complaints Policy aims to:
- Encourage the resolution of problems by informal means wherever possible;
 - Ensure that concerns are dealt with quickly, fully and fairly and within clearly defined time limits;
 - Provide effective responses and appropriate redress;
 - Maintain good working relationships between all people involved with the school.

3. Summary

- 3.1 A summary of the various Stages is given below:

1)	Informal discussion and resolution	Informal Stage	School Staff
2)	Investigation by Complaints Coordinator	Formal Stage	School Staff
3)	Investigation by Head Teacher	↓	School Staff
4)	Review by the Governing Body Complaints Committee		Governing Body

4. Circumstances under which Stages should be missed out

- 4.1 This policy sets out the most suitable and effective process for dealing with the majority of complaints. In most cases any concern or complaint, regardless of whose attention it is initially brought to, should be discussed informally (Stage 1) before being escalated to any of the Formal Stages.
- 4.2 In some cases, it may be deemed inappropriate for individuals to discuss their concerns informally. In such cases, they may be directed to contact the Complaints Coordinator directly (i.e. begin at Stage 2).

5. Monitoring Complaints

- 5.1 At all Formal Stages of the Complaints Procedure, the following information should be recorded:
- The name of the complainant;
 - The date and time at which complaint was made;

- c) The details of the complaint;
- d) The desired outcome of the complainant;
- e) How the complaint is investigated (including written records of interviews held);
- f) Results and conclusions of investigations;
- g) Any action taken;
- h) The complainant's response (satisfaction or further pursuit of complaint) and the next step identified.

6. Upholding or Not Upholding Complaints

6.1 At each Stage of the Complaints Procedure, the conclusion will be either:

- a) That the complaint is upheld (in part or in full) and, where appropriate, some form of action is taken. It may be appropriate to offer one or more of the following:
 - i. an apology;
 - ii. an explanation;
 - iii. an admission that the situation could have been handled differently or better;
 - iv. an assurance that the event complained of will not recur;
 - v. an explanation of the steps that have been taken to ensure that it will not happen again;
 - vi. an undertaking to review school policies in light of the complaint.

6.2 Or...

- b) That the complaint is not upheld and reasons for this are clearly given.

6.3 The complainant may either choose to take no further action or will be advised of how to take the complaint to the next relevant Stage of the Complaints Policy.

7. Confidentiality

7.1 All conversations and correspondence will be treated confidentially. Personal information will only be shared between staff and Governors on a 'need to know' basis. Confidentiality will be maintained within the Governing Body to ensure sufficient Governors have no prior knowledge of the complaint to enable a Complaints Committee to be convened, if required at Stage 4.

8. Timings, Responses & Deadlines including Changes to This

8.1 After each Stage, the complainant and the individual who is dealing with their complaint at that time should allow 15 school days for the complainant to decide whether to proceed to the next Stage, if at all. If the complaint is not submitted to the next Stage within this agreed time limit it should be considered as closed.

8.2 In general, the time limits and deadlines contained within this policy should be adhered to by the school. However, in certain circumstances it may be inappropriate or impractical, for example, if an investigation cannot be conducted due to school holidays or illness. Where a complaint leads to criminal proceedings this will always be the case.

8.3 If and when it becomes necessary to alter the time limits and deadlines set out within this policy, the complainant should be told and given an explanation as to why this has been the case.

9. *Vexatious Complaints*

- 9.1 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 Chair of the Governing Body is able to inform them in writing that the procedure has been exhausted and that the matter is now closed at School level.

10. *Complaints Procedure – The Stages*

10.1 **Stage 1: Informal Discussion**

a) **Introduction**

The vast majority of concerns can be dealt with informally. There are many occasions where concerns are resolved straight away without the need to submit a formal complaint. Indeed, many concerns raised at this level might not be classified as complaints. If the complaint is judged to be a safeguarding issue, it will automatically be referred to the Complaints Coordinator.

b) **Who to Speak to Informally**

Individuals may decide to raise their concerns with a member of school Administrative Staff, Class Teacher, Senior Teacher, Governor or Head Teacher depending on their wishes and the type of issues they want to discuss. The member of staff may wish to involve the Complaints Coordinator at this stage. The concern may be made by telephone, in person or in writing.

c) **Monitoring**

Although this stage involves dealing with the issue informally it may prove helpful later, although not essential at this stage, for the person responding to make a basic record of the issue or complaint raised, which may include brief notes of conversations and the responses made.

d) **Timescales**

The complaint should be resolved within 5 working days

e) **Response**

The individual who raised the issue should be informed of any action to be taken to resolve the issue. If appropriate, this might be confirmed in writing.

f) **Options for Complainant**

If the individual is dissatisfied with the response they have been given and would like to take their concerns further, they should be referred to the school's Complaints Procedure.

10.2 **Stage 2: Investigation by Complaints Coordinator**

a) **Introduction**

This is the first Stage of the Formal Complaints Process and, as a result, all communications between parties need to be carefully recorded and monitored as set out in the 'Monitoring Complaints' section of this document. When a complaint is made directly against the Head Teacher, Stages 2 and 3 are not required and the Formal Procedure begins at Stage 4.

b) **Submitting a Formal Complaint**

By this Stage it must be clear that the concern is a definite complaint which will be dealt with according to this policy and should be formally submitted in writing to the Complaints Coordinator.

c) **Acknowledgement & Timescales**

The Complaints Coordinator should formally acknowledge the complaint within 5 school days of receiving it and begin an investigation.

d) **The Investigation**

The Complaints Coordinator will need to investigate the complainant and review any relevant documentation and information. If necessary, the Complaints Coordinator will take statements from those involved.

e) **Response**

The Complaints Coordinator will provide the complainant with a full written response within 10 school days of acknowledging it. This response will determine whether or not the complaint has been upheld, the reasons why, and what action (if any) will be taken. The response will provide details of how to move on to the next Stage, if the complainant is not satisfied.

10.3 Stage 3: **Investigation by Head Teacher**

a) **Introduction**

This is the second Stage of the Formal Complaints Process and, as a result, all communications between parties need to be carefully recorded and monitored as set out in the 'monitoring complaints' section of this document. When a complaint is made directly against the Head Teacher, Stages 2 and 3 are not required and the formal procedure begins at Stage 4.

b) **Submitting a Formal Complaint**

By this Stage it must be clear that the concern is a definite complaint which will be dealt with according to this policy and should be formally submitted in writing to the Head Teacher.

c) **Acknowledgement & Timescales**

The Head Teacher should formally acknowledge the complaint within 5 school days of receiving it and begin an investigation.

d) **The Investigation**

The Head Teacher will need to investigate the complaint and review any relevant documentation and information. If necessary, the Head Teacher will take statements from those involved.

e) **Response**

The Head Teacher will provide the complainant with a full written response within 10 school days of acknowledging it. This response will determine whether or not the complaint has been upheld, the reasons why, and what action (if any) will be taken. The response will provide details of how to move on to the next Stage, if the complainant is not satisfied. A copy of the response will be filed with the Complaints Coordinator.

Stage 4: **Review by Governing Body Complaints Committee**

a) **Introduction**

If the complainant remains unsatisfied following an investigation by the Head Teacher, they can ask for their complaint to be referred to the Chair of Governors. The Chair of Governors will convene a Complaints Committee which will be clerked by a member of the school staff, the Clerk to the Governing Body or another Governor.

b) **The Committee**

The Committee will generally consist of three Governors who have not previously been involved with dealing with the complaint. If the Governing Body is unable to find 3 Governors without prior involvement and has formal collaboration arrangements in place with another school's Governing Body,

independent Governors can be drawn from that Governing Body to sit on the Committee. The Committee should elect its own Chair.

c) Acknowledgement & Timescales

The Chair of Governors should acknowledge receipt of the complainant's letter within 5 school days. This letter will inform them that their complaint will be heard by a Complaints Committee within 15 school days.

d) Governor Complaints Committee Arrangements

The Chair of Governors will contact the Clerk and ask them to begin making preparatory arrangements. The Clerk should then formally write to the complainant, the Head Teacher and any other relevant staff or witnesses and inform them:

- i. Of the date, time and venue of the hearing;
- ii. How it will be conducted;
- iii. Request for any supporting documentation by either the complainant or the school which must be returned to the Clerk no later than 5 school days before the hearing takes place; this should include any request from supporting witnesses or representatives to attend with either party.

The Clerk will ensure that all parties receive all relevant documents at least 3 school days before the date of the hearing so as to allow individuals to familiarise themselves with them.

e) Governors Complaints Committee Meeting

The Chair of the Committee should allow each party involved to explain their understanding or interpretation of events and for the Committee to question them for further clarification. Complainants do not have to attend the Committee Meeting if they would prefer not to, and all written evidence will be considered. Ultimately, the Chair of the Meeting has control over its proceedings.

f) After the Committee Meeting

The Committee will then consider the complaint and all the evidence presented and:

- i. Reach a majority decision on the complaint;
- ii. Decide or recommend upon the appropriate action (if any) to be taken;
- iii. Where appropriate, suggest changes to, or request a review of, the school's systems or procedures to ensure that problems of a similar nature do not happen again.

This information will be included in letters to both the Head Teacher and the complainant within 5 school days of the hearing. This is the end of the school's Complaints Process.



Summary of Complaints Procedure

