



Complaints Policy

Draft for approval

Policy owner	Administration Director
Approval authority	Board of Governors
Status	Draft for approval
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1 Purpose and scope

English International School Baghdad (EISB) welcomes concerns and complaints from parents and guardians and aims to resolve them fairly, promptly and without disadvantage to a student. This policy explains how a concern can be raised informally, how a formal complaint is investigated, and how an unresolved complaint reaches an independent panel. It is available to parents through the school website and on request. A student may seek help from a trusted member of staff to raise a concern.

Safeguarding concerns are referred immediately to the Designated Safeguarding Lead under the Safeguarding Policy. Urgent safety concerns receive immediate attention. Employment grievances, student disciplinary appeals and requests for a review of an exclusion follow their specific procedures; where a complaint also raises a wider service concern, this policy may address that part.

2 Principles and timescales

- The school listens respectfully, considers evidence fairly, protects the student's welfare and avoids retaliation against anyone raising a concern in good faith.
- A school day is a day when EISB is open to students. During school closures, the school acknowledges receipt when practicable and explains when the school day timetable will resume.
- If an investigation needs more time, the person handling it explains the reason, gives an update and provides a revised response date. Urgent safeguarding action is never delayed by these timescales.
- A person who is the subject of a complaint is given a fair opportunity to respond. No one investigates or decides a complaint about their own conduct.

3 How to raise a concern

Parents may use the Complaints Form on the EISB website or contact the school by phone or in person. Parent Engagement staff help parents record a phone or in-person complaint on the form and confirm the details with them. A parent should state the issue, relevant dates, people involved and the outcome sought, and provide supporting information where available. The Administration Director ensures each formal complaint is entered in the Complaints Log, allocated to an appropriate person and tracked through closure or escalation.



A complaint concerning a Head of School or the Administration Director is referred to an uninvolved SLT member or the Board of Governors. A complaint about the Board or a governor is referred to an uninvolved governor or a suitable independent person appointed by the Board. The respondent cannot oversee their own complaint.

4 Stage 1 Informal resolution

Parents are encouraged to discuss a concern with the relevant staff member, Head of Department or Head of School. The person receiving it listens, clarifies the desired outcome, takes appropriate action and responds within three school days where practicable. If it cannot be resolved by then, the school gives an update and a date for the next response. A parent may proceed directly to the formal stage when the matter is serious or informal handling is unsuitable. Informal handling never prevents a formal complaint.

5 Stage 2 Formal written complaint

A parent submits the Complaints Form or a written complaint clearly asking for a formal review. Parent Engagement staff may transcribe an oral complaint for the parent to check and submit. The Administration Director acknowledges it within three school days, logs it, identifies the investigator and confirms the issues, requested outcome and expected response date.

The Head of Junior School investigates Early Years and Junior School matters; the Head of Senior School investigates Senior School matters; and the Deputy Head of Administration investigates school services and administration matters. If the designated investigator is involved, an uninvolved SLT member or Board appointee takes the case. The investigator obtains relevant accounts and records, offers the parent and any person complained about an opportunity to respond, and records findings and action in the Complaints Log.

The school sends a reasoned written decision, normally within 10 school days of receipt of the formal complaint. It explains the issues considered, findings, actions or remedies, and how to request a Stage 3 panel hearing. The parent may request the panel within 10 school days of the Stage 2 decision. A late request may be accepted where there is a reasonable explanation.

6 Stage 3 Independent panel hearing

The Board of Governors appoints a panel of at least three people who were not directly involved in the complaint or its investigation. At least one member must be independent of the management and running of the school. Parent Engagement staff may coordinate arrangements but are not treated as independent merely because they did not investigate. The panel chooses an uninvolved chair.

The panel coordinator acknowledges the request within three school days and arranges the hearing as soon as reasonably practicable, normally within 15 school days of the request. The parent may attend and be accompanied by a person of their choice; the school may also present its case. The panel receives the complaint, Stage 2 outcome and relevant evidence in advance, hears both sides fairly, and may ask for further information. If a party cannot attend, the panel offers a reasonable alternative or considers written representations.

The panel makes findings and recommendations. Its written outcome is sent normally within five school days of the hearing to the complainant and, where relevant, the person complained about. A copy is held at the school and available for inspection by the Board of Governors and the designated senior school leader. The panel outcome ends the school's internal complaints process, subject to any external rights available under applicable law.



7 Records, confidentiality and oversight

The Complaints Log has these fields: Email Address, Date, Student Name, Student Grade, Department, Incident Details, Resolution Details, Result and Resolved by. Student details are entered where applicable. Incident Details summarises the concern. Resolution Details records findings, action taken and any remedy, whether or not it is upheld. Result shows whether the case is open, resolved at Stage 2 or escalated to the Stage 3 panel; Resolved by identifies the decision maker when the case closes. Every formal complaint is logged, including unresolved cases and those proceeding to a hearing.

A linked confidential case file holds information that does not fit the Log: the written complaint, acknowledgement and response dates, investigator and panel membership, correspondence and statements, the Stage 2 decision, any hearing request, panel findings and recommendations, written notifications, and evidence of completed actions. This records the stage reached and action taken in every formal case. The Log and case file are retained securely under the Record Keeping Policy. Access is limited to people who need it to handle or oversee the complaint, except where disclosure is required or permitted by applicable law. Information about other students or staff is shared only where appropriate and lawful.

The Administration Director monitors open cases, deadlines, unresolved or unsatisfied outcomes and recurring themes, and reports anonymised findings and improvements to the Board. The school makes available to parents the number of complaints registered under the formal procedure in the preceding school year, on request. The Board reviews this policy annually or sooner if practice or requirements change.

8 Related procedures

This policy should be read alongside the Safeguarding, Behaviour, Exclusion, Record Keeping and Data Protection policies and the published Complaints Form. A complaint raising several issues may be divided between the appropriate procedures, with the parent told who is handling each part.