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Parent complaints policies and procedure

Parent complaints procedures

It is hoped that most complaints will be resolved quickly and informally by means of clear and open communication between those parties directly involved. Occasionally, however, issues may need to be sorted out through a more formal process. These policies and procedures aim to structure this process so that parents have a clear understanding of how complaints will be handled.

- Each concern or complaint will be dealt with as close to its source as possible.
- Complaints and concerns will be treated confidentially and with respect. Knowledge of the complaint or concern will be limited to the Board of Directors and those directly involved.
- Correspondence, statements, and records will be kept confidential except where disclosure is required in the course of the school's inspections or where any other legal obligation prevails.
- The person about whom a formal complaint is made must have the opportunity to:
  - Hear the details of the complaint
  - Respond to the complaint
- Any parties making a decision on dealing with a complaint must pay due regard to all parties without bias.
- All perspectives will be heard before decisions are made.
- The interests of all people will be taken into account.
- People who raise a concern, or who make a formal complaint, will be informed of any outcomes.
- If the complaint concerns a teacher, the relevant teacher will make a written record of all complaints and concerns and the date on which they were received.
- The Advising Board will keep records of all meetings and interviews held in relation to the complaint, as well as resolutions and at what stage these were achieved.
- The Advising Board will ensure that the complaints procedure is implemented and deals effectively with the handling of complaints from parents of pupils, and which provides for a written record to be kept of all complaints where the parent is not satisfied with the response to the complaint made on an informal basis.
- It is the policy of the International School of Morocco that complaints made by parents shall not rebound adversely on their children.

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Stage 1: Informal resolution:

- If parents have a complaint, they should first contact their child's teacher directly. If the teacher cannot resolve the matter alone, it may be necessary for her/him to consult the Head of Teaching and Learning.
- Complaints made to the Head of Teaching and Learning will usually be referred back to the relevant teacher unless the Head of Teaching and Learning judges that it is appropriate to deal with the matter personally (if the complaint concerns the Head of Teaching and Learning, the complaints shall be made directly to the Director following the steps herein after).
- Should the matter not be resolved within five days, or in the event that the relevant teacher and the parents fail to reach a satisfactory solution, then parents will be advised to proceed with the complaint in accordance with stage 2 of this procedure.

Stage 2: Formal resolution:

- If the complaint cannot be resolved on an informal basis, then the parents will be asked to put their complaint in writing to the Head of Teaching and Learning will consider the complaint and decide on the appropriate action to be taken.
- In most cases the Head of Teaching and Learning will speak to the parents concerned within forty-eight to seventy-two hours of receiving the complaint. If possible, a resolution will be reached at this stage.
- If the Head of Teaching and Learning is satisfied that all of the relevant facts have been established, a decision will be made and parents will be informed of this decision in writing, including the reasons for the decision.
- The written decision will be issued within fourteen days of receiving the complaint. If for any reason this is not possible the Head of Teaching and Learning will write to the parents within the fourteen-day period referred to above, stating the reason(s) why they are unable to issue a decision and informing parents when they will do so, which will be within twenty-eight days of receipt of the complaint.
- If parents are not satisfied with this decision they may proceed to stage 3 of this procedure.

Stage 3: Advising Board hearing

- Upon receipt of the written decision, if parents seek to advance to stage three of this procedure, they are to write to the Advising Board, informing them of their intent to do so within eight days, whereupon the matter will be referred to a member of the Advising Board, (hereafter referred to as the "member in charge"). This member will then take responsibility for the organization of a complaints panel hearing. The panel must comprise one or more members who is independent of the management and running of the school.

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- The member in charge will then acknowledge the complaint and schedule a hearing to take place as soon as practicable, normally within fourteen days. This hearing may be attended only by the parents concerned.
- The parents may ask to be accompanied to the meeting by a supportive companion, interpreter, or advocate. It is not advisable for this person to be a member of the school community, for reasons of confidentiality and to avoid conflict of interest. The parent must advise the member in charge of the name and role of this additional person prior to the hearing, and the member in charge will seek agreement from the Advising Board.
- If the additional person is attending as an advocate, they will be presenting the parent's case and speaking on their behalf, and therefore the parent will not be able to address the Panel directly. If the additional person is attending as a supportive companion, they will not be able to address the Panel directly. As this is not a legal process, neither party may bring legal representation with them except in exceptional circumstances, by prior agreement of the panel.

- The member in charge may judge it necessary to require, in writing, further details of the complaint or any related matter to be furnished prior to the hearing. Copies of these details shall be supplied to all parties not later than five days before the hearing. Details received beyond this date shall be disregarded and deemed inadmissible to the panel.

- If possible, the panel will resolve the parent's complaint at the hearing without the need for further investigation. However, should the Advising Board decide at the hearing that further investigation is needed, the panel will decide how such investigations will be carried out and when they should be concluded.
- The Advising Board will, after due consideration of all relevant facts, reach a decision and may make relevant recommendations. This procedure will be completed within fourteen days of the first hearing whenever possible and always within twenty-eight days unless otherwise agreed by all parties. Parents will be informed in writing of the Advising Board' decision, along with a copy of the findings and recommendations; and these will be available for inspection on the school premises by the Director, and the Head of Teaching and Learning. The decision of the Advising Board will be final.

The Advising Board is chosen by the Proprietors' representative.