

Introduction

AHBS is committed to good communication between home and school and to listening and being sensitive to family's views and opinions.

The guiding principles behind the School Communication and Complaints Procedure are:

- All complaints/communications are dealt with promptly, effectively, objectively and professionally.
- We aim to respond to concerns and queries in an informal manner and resolve them quickly, sensitively and to the satisfaction of all concerned.
- Communications can be received by telephone, in person and by e-mail to feedback@ahbs.ae
- The referral guidelines below showing to whom the issue can be referred should be followed
- Contact will be made with all complainants within two working days.

Referral Route

1	2	3	4
Subject matter, homework or the curriculum	Welfare issues, problems between pupils	School organisation, policies, staff conduct, serious issues	Staff issues
Class teacher	Class teacher		Head of Primary Principal
Phase leader Head of Primary Principal	Phase leader Head of Primary Principal	Phase leader Head of Primary Principal	

Communication with Parents and the Community

Good communication is based on mutual respect. Teachers must take care in all communications with parents both formal and informal, in the work place and out of school. Flippant comments or things said as a joke should be avoided as they can be misinterpreted!

As a general rule, staff should avoid engaging in discussions about school issues outside of school. This may well be in breach of confidentiality.

All letters and formal communication with parents should be approved by the SLT prior to being sent home.

Great care should be taken when responding to emails. Teachers should ensure they are following school policy and guidance at all times.

Specialist teachers, including Arabic, should copy the appropriate class teacher into all communications with parents.

Resolving Complaints

At each stage in the procedure, efforts must be made to keep in mind ways in which a complaint can be resolved. It might be sufficient to acknowledge that the complaint is valid in whole or in part. In addition, it may be appropriate to offer one or more of the following:

an apology;

an explanation;

an acknowledgment 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;

It may also be the case however that the complaint may not have any substance and is therefore considered to be unfounded or unsubstantiated.

Timescale

The school will make every effort to respond fully to a written complaint within 5 school days. Where this proves unrealistic, the school will inform the complainant in writing, and give some estimate of how long it will take to provide a detailed response. Contact will be made with all complainants within two working days.

Complaints regarding school organisation, school policies, staff conduct and conduct of the Principal will follow a more formal route.

If you are still unsatisfied with the steps taken, please follow the formal procedure.

i. Formal Complaints

- a. 'Formal Complaints' will need to be put in writing. (Where this would be difficult for the complainant they should contact the Principal. All formal complaints will be logged on a Parent Contact form and uploaded to the Engage DMS.
- b. The complaints file will be reviewed every term by the Leadership Team to see if changes in procedures need to be made.
- c. Interviews with staff which are carried out as part of the formal complaints procedure must be conducted on the understanding that staff have the right, if they so wish, to be accompanied by a representative or friend.

ii. Procedure in Operation

- a. All formal complaints must be in writing and must be referred in the first instance to the Principal or Deputy Principal (depending on the issue).
- b. When the Academies receive or have a formal complaint, it must be referred to the Managing Director who would then refer the complaint to the Principal.
- c. Where the complaints are initially made directly by parents and others to the Academies, they may refer the complainant back to the school unless the complaint is about the Principal.
- d. If the complaint cannot be investigated objectively by the Principal, or the complainant is dissatisfied with the Principal's response, the Managing Director must be informed.
- e. Complainants who remain dissatisfied following the investigations of the complaint by the Principal will be given the opportunity to put their complaint to the Managing director
- f. Complainants will be encouraged to make use of the above procedure before referring the complaint further.

iii. Investigating Complaints

The Investigating Officer (as named by the Principal) should follow the process below:
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 unsure or further information necessary);
clarify what the complainant feels would put things right;

interview those involved in the matter and/or those complained of, allowing them to be accompanied if they wish;
conduct an interview with an open mind and be prepared to persist in the questioning;
keep notes of any interview for record.

iv. In Summary

Most complaints are best dealt with informally.

Formal Complaints are in writing. They will be dealt with by an individual nominated by the Principal.

GUIDANCE NOTE – INFORMAL CONVERSATIONS WITH PARENTS

All staff are reminded that when speaking with parents ensure that initial pleasantries are exchanged before moving on to the main topic of conversation. Staff should always try to be as empathetic, understanding and courteous as possible.

Any concerns relating to individual pupils should be discussed with the Phase Leader prior to any informal discussion with parents.

GUIDANCE NOTE – EMAIL COMMUNICATION WITH PARENTS

When a parent contacts a member of staff with a concern or query via email, the member of staff should reply within **24 hours** and ensure they **copy their reply to their Phase leader**.

Where the Phase leader considers the matter warrants the attention of the Head of Primary/Principal they should forward it directly.

Phase Leaders should copy their responses to the Head of Primary and where the Head of Primary deems it appropriate, a copy will be forwarded to the Principal.

GUIDANCE NOTE – MEETING REQUEST BY PARENT

Where a parent has requested a meeting with a member of staff, this request should be met at the earliest opportunity. Please notify your Phase Leader of the request, together with date and venue of meeting.

Following all meetings with parents, staff should ensure that a 'Parent Consultation' form has been completed. The member of staff should retain a copy for their records and **pass a copy directly to the Principal's PA**. The PA will then ensure that copies of the form will be given to the parent, Team Leader and Principal, uploaded onto the DMS.

Family Contact Form

Please complete for every contact with parents following a concern.

Childs Name:

Date of Contact:

Concerns

Action Points

Signed :..... (Teacher)

Date:

Send completed forms to the Pa pa@ahbs.ae to load onto the DMS.