

## PARENTS COMPLAINTS PROCEDURE

August 2026

### 1. INTRODUCTION

EIFA International School (“EIFA”, “School”, “we”, “us” or “our”) has long prided itself on the quality of the teaching and pastoral care provided to its pupils. It is very important for us that children and their parents are happy with the School. However, if parents do have a complaint, they can expect it to be treated by the School with care and in accordance with this Complaints Procedure.

This Parents Complaints Procedure (the “Procedure”) is meant to outline the formal process available to Parents who wish to make a complaint, though we always aim and prefer for matters to be resolved swiftly, informally and amicably.

The School is here for your child, and you can be assured that your child will not be penalised for a complaint that you or your child raise(s) in good faith.

In this Procedure, “Parent(s)”, “you”, “your” and “yours” refer to the legal guardian(s) with parental responsibility, as registered with the School, and the “School”, “us”, “we”, “our” and “ours” to EIFA International School.

This Procedure is available to all parents of pupils and of prospective pupils on the School’s website and is available on request from the School. The Procedure applies to all pupils of the School, including Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS).

Reasonable adjustments will be considered where required to ensure accessibility and fairness throughout the procedure.

Our Complaints Procedure is available to all parents of pupils and of prospective pupils on the School’s website and upon request, in the School during the School day. The School will ensure that parents of pupils and of prospective pupils who request it are made aware that this document is available and of the form in which it is published or available, and of the number of complaints registered under the formal procedure during the preceding School year.

In accordance with paragraph 32(1) of Schedule 1 to the Education (Independent School Standards) Regulations 2014, EIFA International School will also make available, on request, to Ofsted, the Department for Education (DfE) or the Independent Schools Inspectorate (ISI), details of this Complaints Procedure and the number of complaints registered under the formal procedure during the preceding School year.

The School will be mindful of its obligations under the Equality Act 2010 in the application of this policy.

Although the School endeavours to manage complaints in an open and transparent manner, parents should be aware that there may be circumstances which mean the School is unable to share complete details about how a complaint has been handled by the School, the evidence collated, steps taken in response or other related matters. This could be the case even when a complaint is upheld. For example, this may be because such information constitutes sensitive third-party data (for example belonging to a staff member, pupil or other parent), legal or regulatory requirements prohibit disclosure, or withholding information is in accordance with specific instructions from a statutory agency. This list is not exhaustive.

## WHAT CONSTITUTES A COMPLAINT?

A complaint is an expression of dissatisfaction with a real or perceived problem. It may be made about the School as a whole, about a specific department or about an individual member of staff. Any matter about which Parents are unhappy and seeks action by the School is within the scope of this Procedure.

**The School is here for your child, and you can be assured that your child will not be penalised for a complaint that you (or your child) raise(s) in good faith.**

This policy does **not** cover complaints procedures relating to:

- Admissions
- Statutory assessments of special educational needs (SEN)
- Suspension and permanent exclusion
- Whistleblowing
- Staff grievances
- Staff discipline

Safeguarding concerns should be raised immediately under the School's Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy.

Please see our separate policies for procedures relating to these types of complaints.

Complaints about services provided by other providers who use school premises or facilities should be directed to the provider concerned.

## 2. LEGISLATION AND GUIDANCE

This document meets the requirements set out in part 7 of the schedule to [The Education \(Independent School Standards\) Regulations 2014](#), which states that we must have and make available a written policy to deal with complaints from parents/carers of pupil

It is also based on [best practice guidance for academies complaints procedures](#) from the Department for Education (DfE).

In addition, it addresses duties set out in section 3.98 of the [Early Years Foundation Stage statutory framework for group and school-based providers](#), with regards to dealing with complaints from parents and/or carers about the school's fulfilment of Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) requirements.

## 3. WHO SHOULD A COMPLAINT BE DIRECTED TO?

Complaints should be addressed to the appropriate person(s), as follows:

|                                                                              |                                       |
|------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------|
| Initial complaint                                                            | Discussion with teacher               |
| Complaint about teachers                                                     | Head of Early Years/Head of School    |
| Complaint about administrative/support staff                                 | Head of Administration and Compliance |
| Complaints about the Head of Early Years                                     | Head of School                        |
| Complaints about the Head of School or Head of Administration and Compliance | School's Board of Directors           |

#### **4. THE THREE-STAGE COMPLAINTS PROCEDURE**

The School encourages concerns to be raised as early as possible so that issues may often be resolved informally and constructively. Should an informal resolution not be found, then the following three stages are available for a formal process.

##### **Stage 1 – Informal Resolution**

- If you have a complaint or are unhappy about a matter, it would be advisable to initially contact your child's teacher. In many cases, the matter will be resolved straightaway. If the teacher cannot resolve the matter alone, it may be necessary for [him/her] to consult the relevant Director of Studies or Head of Early Years.
- A written record of all concerns and formal complaints and the date on which they were received will be made.
- Should the matter not be resolved within 10 working days, then you will be advised to proceed with your complaint in accordance with Stage 2 of this Procedure.

##### **Stage 2 – Formal Resolution**

- If the matter cannot be resolved on an informal basis, you will be advised to put your complaint in writing to the Head of School.
- The Head of School will meet with you, within 5 working days of receiving your complaint. If possible, a resolution will be reached at this stage.
- It may be necessary for the Head of School to carry out further investigations.
- It may also be necessary for the Head of School to delegate responsibility at this stage to another senior member of staff.
- Once the Head of School or senior member of staff is satisfied that, so far as is practicable, all of the relevant facts have been established, a decision will be made and you will be informed of this decision in writing. The Head of School or senior member of staff will also give you the basis of their decision.
- Written records of all meetings and interviews held in relation to the complaint will be made and kept within the Schools complaints log
- If the parent remains dissatisfied, they may request that the complaint proceeds to Stage 3
- If the complaint is about the Head of School or Head of Administration and Compliance, it will be dealt with using the same procedure and timeframe as set out in this procedure, but the complaint should be directed to the Board of Directors (the "Board").

##### **Stage 3 – Panel Hearing**

- At this stage, the School's Board of Directors would be involved
- The Board will appoint a Complaints Panel, consisting of three persons not directly involved in the matters detailed in the complaint and at least one of whom shall be independent of the management and running of the school.
- A hearing will be scheduled to take place within 10 working days
- If the Panel deems it necessary, it may require that further particulars of the complaint or any related matter be supplied in advance of the hearing. Copies of such particulars shall be supplied to all parties not later than 5 working days prior to the hearing.
- Parents will be allowed to attend the panel hearing and be accompanied by a person of their choice.
- The manner in which the hearing is conducted shall be at the discretion of the Panel
- If possible, the Panel will consider the complaint without the need for further investigation. Where further investigation is required, the Panel will decide how it should be carried out

- After due consideration of all facts presented, the Panel will reach a decision and will write to parents confirming its decision and the reasons for it. This should be within 5 working days of the hearing (unless further investigations following the hearing have been deemed necessary)
- After due consideration of the facts, the Panel will reach a decision and may make findings and recommendations. The parent will be informed in writing of the Panel's decision and the reasons for it within 5 working days. A copy of the Panel's findings and recommendations will be sent to the parent, the person complained about, the Head of School and the Board of Directors. The decision of the Panel will be final

## 5. TIMEFRAME FOR DEALING WITH COMPLAINTS

All complaints will be acknowledged within 5 working days if received during term time and as soon as practicable during holiday periods. The first two stages of the procedure will be completed **within 20 working days**. Stage 3, the Complaints Panel hearing, will be completed **within a further 20 working days**. Please note that, for the purposes of this Procedure, **working days** refers to weekdays (Monday to Friday) during term time, excluding bank holidays.

Please note that, for the purposes of this procedure, **working days** refers to weekdays (Monday to Friday) during term time, excluding bank holidays and half term. This means that during School holidays it may take longer to resolve a complaint although the School will do what is reasonably practicable to avoid undue delay.

It may also take longer to resolve a complaint during periods of significant disruption to School life or as a consequence of unavoidable staff absence, however deviation from the normal timescale for resolving a complaint during term time will only occur on an exceptional basis, and the School will take all reasonable steps to limit any such delay.

The School expects parents to engage in the process in a reasonable, constructive and responsive manner to help ensure matters can be dealt with in a timely way and in line with the targets set out in this Procedure.

## 6. RECORDING COMPLAINTS AND USE OF PERSONAL DATA

The School will keep a written record of all formal complaints at any of the stages outlined above and any action taken by the School as a result of the complaint (regardless of whether the complaint is upheld).

The School processes data in accordance with its Privacy Notice, available on our website. When dealing with complaints the School (including any panel member appointed under the Stage 3 process) may process a range of information, which is likely to include the following:

- Date when the issue was raised
- Name of parent
- Name of pupil
- Description of the issue
- Records of all the investigations (if appropriate)
- Witness statements (if appropriate)
- Name of member (s) of staff handling the issue at each stage
- Copies of all correspondence on the issue (including emails and records of phone conversations)
- Notes of the hearing
- The Panel's written decision.

This may include 'special category personal data' (as further detailed in the School's Privacy Notice, but potentially including sensitive data such as information relating to physical or mental health) where this is necessary owing to the nature of the complaint. For more information about Data Protection at EIFA International School, please contact the Data Protection Officer on [DPO@eifaschool.com](mailto:DPO@eifaschool.com).

The School will keep a written record of all formal complaints, whether they are resolved at Stage 2 or proceed to a Panel hearing, and any action taken by the School as a result of the complaint.

**Correspondence, statements and records relating to individual complaints are to be kept confidential except where the Secretary of State or a body conducting an inspection under section 109 of the Education and Skills Act 2008 requests access to them, e.g. the Independent Schools Inspectorate (ISI).**

**There may also be other circumstances in which the School is required to share information relating to a concern or a complaint in order to comply with its legal or regulatory obligations.**

Parents of EYFS pupils should follow the three stages of this Complaints Procedure. If parents remain dissatisfied and their complaint is about the School's fulfilment of the EYFS requirements, then parents may take their complaint to the ISI or Ofsted. The School will notify the parents about the outcome of the investigation into their complaint within 28 days from the date the complaint was received.

EIFA International School will provide ISI/Ofsted, on request, with a written record of all complaints made during any specified period, and the action which was taken as a result of each complaint. The record of any such complaints will be kept in accordance with its Privacy Notice and Data Storage and Retention Policy.

Ofsted can be contacted on 0300 123 1231 or by email: [enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk](mailto:enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk) or letter to: Ofsted, Piccadilly Gate, Store Street, Manchester M1 2WD.

ISI can be contacted on 020 7600 0100 or by email: [info@isi.net](mailto:info@isi.net) or letter to: ISI, CAP House, 9-12 Long Lane, London EC1A 9HA

## **Data Protection**

We take any complaints about how we collect and use personal information very seriously. If you think that our collection or use of personal information is unfair, misleading or inappropriate, or have any other concerns about our data processing, please raise this with our Data Protection Officer (DPO), Debbie O'Sullivan, in the first instance.

You can do this by completing the Data Protection Complaints Form in Appendix 2 of our Data Protection Policy, which is available on our website: [www.eifaschool.com](http://www.eifaschool.com). The completed form should be emailed to Debbie O'Sullivan at [dpo@eifaschool.com](mailto:dpo@eifaschool.com).

## **7. COMPLAINTS - 2025-2026 ACADEMIC YEAR**

For the academic year 2025-2026, the School received two formal complaints. Both were resolved before they progressed to a panel hearing.