



King's College

DOHA

Concerns and Complaints Policy

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Introduction

King's College Doha aims to provide the best possible quality of teaching and pastoral care to its pupils. Nevertheless, it is acknowledged that, as in most organisations, things do not always go smoothly, and it may occasionally be the case that parents wish to raise a concern or make a complaint.

The school intends to resolve concerns *informally* at the earliest possible stage.

There may be occasions when parents would like to make a complaint *formally*, however, and this policy outlines the procedure for doing so. Parents can be assured that all concerns and complaints will be treated seriously and confidentially and that their child/children will not be penalised for an issue that they or their child/children raise in good faith.

This Concerns and Complaints Policy does not apply to parents of pupils who have left the school.

Availability

The Concerns and Complaints Policy is made available to all parents via the school's website or upon request from the school. There is a separate Complaints and Appeals Procedure (Exams).

Definitions

The difference between a concern and a complaint is as follows:

- A **concern** is defined as “an expression of worry or doubt over an issue considered to be important for which reassurances are sought”

- A **complaint** is defined as “an expression of dissatisfaction, however made, about actions taken or a lack of action”

Roles and Responsibilities

The **complainant** will get a more effective and timely response to their concern or complaint if they:

- Follow these procedures
- Cooperate with the school throughout the process, responding to communication and deadlines promptly
- Ask for assistance as needed
- Treat all those involved with respect
- Do not publish details about the concern or complaint on social media

The **investigator** will examine any formal complaint and establish the facts. They will:

- Interview all relevant parties, keeping notes
- Consider records and any written evidence and keep these securely
- Prepare a comprehensive report to the Principal or Complaints Committee, which includes the facts and potential solutions

The **Complaints Committee** will include the following members of staff:

- Principal – Chairman of the Committee
- Three other members of the Operational Leadership Team – Members
- Ministry Liaison – Member
- PA to the Principal – Member

The **Principal** will keep the complainant up to date at each stage in the procedure. S/he will make sure the process runs smoothly by liaising with relevant staff members and the Complaints Committee and will keep records of the formal complaint and any follow-up.

As Committee Chair, s/he will:

- Chair each Complaints Committee meeting, ensuring that everyone is treated with respect throughout
- Make sure all parties see the relevant information, understand the purpose of the Complaints Committee, and are allowed to present their case

Timescales

Parents must raise a concern or complaint within three months of the incident. If the concern or complaint is about a series of related incidents, they must raise this within three months of the last incident.

The school will consider exceptions to this three-month timeframe in circumstances where there were valid reasons for not raising a concern or complaint at that time.

When concerns or complaints are raised outside of term time, we will consider them to have been received on the first school day after the holiday period.

If at any point the school cannot meet the timescales it has set out in this policy, it will send the parent details of the new deadline and explain the delay.

Stage 1: Informal Resolution of a Concern

It is hoped that most concerns will be resolved quickly and informally.

If parents have a concern, they should normally contact their son/daughter's Class Teacher (Pre-Prep and Lower Schools) or Head of Year/Department (Middle and Senior Schools).

In many cases, the matter will be resolved straightaway by this means to the parents' satisfaction. If the Class Teacher / Head of Year/ Head of Department cannot resolve the matter alone, it may be necessary for them to consult another more senior member of staff.

Concerns shared directly by parents to the Principal or a member of the Senior Leadership Team may be referred to the relevant member of staff if it is deemed to be appropriate for him/her to deal with the matter personally.

The school will acknowledge concerns within two school days and will investigate (as necessary) and provide a response within a maximum of ten school days.

The informal stage will typically include a meeting between the parent who has raised the concern and the subject of the concern, with the support of a more senior member of staff as necessary.

If the concern is not resolved informally, it will be escalated to a formal complaint.

Stage 2 - Formal Resolution of a Complaint

If the concern cannot be resolved on an informal basis, then the complainant should escalate it as a formal complaint in writing to the Principal by completing the following Google Form:

[Form for Raising a Formal Complaint](#)

The Principal will record the date on which the complaint was received and a message will be sent to the complainant immediately acknowledging that the complaint has been received.

The Principal (or a designated member of the Senior Leadership Team) will then call a meeting to clarify the nature of the complaint from the complainant and seek a resolution.

Following this meeting, the Principal (or another member of the Complaints Committee appointed by the Principal) will conduct a thorough investigation. The written conclusion of this investigation will be sent to the complainant within three school days.

If, after receiving the outcome in writing from the Principal, the complainant remains dissatisfied and wishes to proceed to the next stage of the procedure, they will be referred to the Board.

The school will also file a report to the Complaints Department at the Ministry of Education and Higher Education in all instances of a Stage 2 formal resolution of a complaint having not been successfully achieved, which will include details of the complaint and the steps that the school has taken following its receipt.

If the complaint is against the Principal, the Board of Directors will call for a full report from the Principal and all the relevant documents. The Board may also call for a briefing from members of staff, as appropriate, and will in most cases speak to or meet with the complainant to discuss the matter further.

Once the Board is satisfied that, so far as is practicable, all the relevant facts have been established, the complainant will be informed of the decision in writing. The Board will give reasons for the decision taken.

Stage 3 - Panel Hearing

All Stage 3 complaints (including those made against the Principal) will be referred to the Review Panel for consideration. The Review Panel will consist of two members of the Board of Directors and one member from the Complaints Committee, none of whom will have been directly involved in the matters detailed in the complaint. Following its receipt of the referred complaint, the Board will acknowledge the complaint and schedule a hearing to take place as soon as practicable and normally within fourteen days.

If the Board 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 three days before the hearing.

The complainant may be accompanied at the hearing by one other person. This may be a relative or friend. Legal representation will not normally be appropriate.

If possible, the Board will resolve the complaint immediately without the need for further investigation.

Where further investigation is required, the Board will decide how it should be carried out.

After due consideration of all facts they consider relevant, the Board will reach a decision and may make recommendations, which it shall complete within seven days of the Hearing. The Board will write to the complainant informing them of its decision and the reasons for it. The decision of the Board will be final.

The Board's findings and recommendations, if any, will be sent in writing to the complainant, the Principal and, where relevant, any individual subject of the complaint.

A copy of the findings and any recommendations will be available for inspection on the school premises by the Board of Directors and the Principal.

Complainants can be assured that all concerns and complains will be treated seriously and confidentially. Correspondence, statements and records will be kept confidential except where there is a legal requirement to share them.

Policy History

Date of adoption of this policy	September 2022
Date of last review of this policy	August 2023
Date for next review of this policy	August 2024
Policy owner (SLT)	Principal
Policy owner (Board)	Chair of the Board