POLICY NUMBER:
OWNER: PRINCIPAL
DATE OF ISSUE/LAST REVIEW: SEPT 2023
REVIEW DATE: AUGUST 2025

SCHOOL CONCERNS & COMPLAINTS POLICY

RATIONALE

Park House enforces a comprehensive complaints policy providing a framework for resolving concerns and is essential to ensure clarity and professionalism in communication. Within this policy we aim to outline the appropriate channels for identifying, reporting, and responding to complaints and how the school community can expect the school to respond. Park House will ensure all complaints are addressed promptly, and professionally. We aim to highlight the specific steps involved in making a complaint and arranging a meeting with the relevant personnel. Park House will provide clear timelines from the time of the complaint to the resolution stage. All complaints will be investigated thoroughly with relevant parties before any action is taken. Park House will ensure that the school provides the highest standards of education in an environment that is both safe and conducive to learning.

AIMS

At Park House English School, we will:

- Provide clear timelines and channels from the date of the complaint to resolution.
- Respond to concerns promptly and in a courteous, confidential, and efficient way.
- Aim to resolve any complaint through dialogue and mutual understanding.
- All parties who make a complaint must be kept informed of the progress and the actions taken.
- Act appropriately and in a timely manner.
- Conduct a full investigation with relevant parties before action is taken.

PROCEDURES

The difference between a concern and a complaint.

A concern may be defined as ‘an expression of worry or doubt over an issue considered to be important for which reassurances are sought’.

A complaint may be defined as ‘an expression of dissatisfaction however made, about actions taken or a lack of action’.

How to raise a concern or make a complaint

It is in everyone’s interest that concerns and complaints are resolved at the earliest possible stage. Many issues can be resolved informally, without the need to use the formal stages of the complaints procedure. Park House English School takes concerns seriously and will make every effort to resolve the matter as quickly as possible. A concern should be

raised initially with the form tutor or class teacher, a formal complaint to the Head of Primary / Secondary / School Principal.

If you have difficulty discussing a concern with a particular member of staff, we will respect your views. In these cases, the Head of Secondary or Head of Primary, will refer you to another staff member. Similarly, if the member of staff directly involved feels unable to deal with a concern, the Head of Secondary or Head of Primary, will refer you to another staff member. The member of staff may be more senior but does not have to be. The ability to consider the concern objectively and impartially is of greater important.

We do understand that there are occasions when people would like to raise their concerns formally. In this case, Park House English School will attempt to resolve the issue internally, through the stages outlined within this complaint's procedure.

It is made clear by the Ministry of Education that concerns / complaints should be raised to the school and the parents should allow the school to resolve their complaint.

A concern or complaint can be made in person, in writing or by telephone. They may also be made by a third party acting on behalf of the complainant, as long as they have appropriate consent to do so.

Complaints against school staff should be made in the first instance, to the Head of Primary/Secondary, please mark them as Private and Confidential.

You must raise the complaint within three months of the incident or, where a series of incidents have occurred. We will consider complaints made outside of term time to have been received on the first school day after the holiday period.

Resolving concerns/complaints

At each stage of the procedure, Park House English School wants to resolve the complaint. If appropriate, we will acknowledge that the complaint is upheld in whole or part.

If a complainant wants to withdraw their complaint, we will ask them to confirm this in writing.

Concerns

It is hoped that most concerns can be expressed and resolved on an informal basis. Concerns should be raised with either the
class teachers followed by form tutor/year head/ subject head or Assistant / Deputy Head followed by the Head of Secondary/ Primary.

At the conclusion of their investigation, the appropriate person investigating the concern will provide an informal response within 5 school days of the date of receipt of the concern. It may be that additional clarification might be required to which the school will respond. If the issue remains unresolved, the next step is to make a formal complaint.

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Complaints

Complaints must be made to the Head of Primary or Head of Secondary via the most appropriate means. This may be done in person or in writing (preferably by email).

The Head of Primary / Secondary will record the date of the complaint is received and will acknowledge receipt of the complaint in writing (either by letter or email) within three days.

Within this response, the Head of Primary / Secondary will seek to clarify the nature of the complaint, ask what remains unresolved and what outcome the complainant would like to see. The Head of Primary / Secondary can consider whether a face-to-face meeting is the most appropriate way of doing this.

During the investigation, the Head of Primary / Secondary (or investigator) will:

- If necessary, interview those involved in the matter and/or those complained of, allowing them to be accompanied if the wish.
- Keep a written record of any meetings/interviews in relation to their investigation.

At the conclusion of their investigation, the Head of Primary / Secondary will provide a formal written response within 10 school days (or as soon as is practically possible) of the date of receipt of the complaint. If the Head of Primary / Secondary is unable to meet the 10 days deadline, they will provide the complainant with an update and revised response date.

The response will detail any actions taken to investigate the complaint and provide a full explanation of the decision made and the reason(s) for it. Where appropriate, it will include details of actions Park House English School will take to resolve the complaint. The Head of Primary or Head of Secondary will advise the complainant of how to escalate their complaint should they remain dissatisfied with the outcome.

In the event of the complainant not being satisfied with the outcome of the complaint, the Principal will review how the complaint has been dealt with together with the suggested outcome. After a full review, the Principal will respond to confirmed whether the complaint has been dealt with appropriately or whether further investigation/action is required.

The Principal will decide if a panel will need to be convened to deal with a complaint. Any such panel will be made up of relevant members of the school team who are not involved in the matters detailed in the complaint. If an independent panel member is required, the ISP Regional Director of Learning will be appointed to the panel. If applicable, the concerned parent may be invited to the panel and be accompanied by a person for support purposes. The purpose of the panel will be to review the complaint and make findings and recommendations.

Documentation from the panel hearing will be shared with the complainant, the person being complained about, and all other relevant parties. All complaint documentation will be stored securely and retained for inspection by concerned parties.

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If the complaint is about the Head of Primary / Secondary, the school Principal will be appointed to deal with the issues raised.

If the complaint is about the Principal, ISP's Regional Managing Director will be appointed to deal with the issues raised.

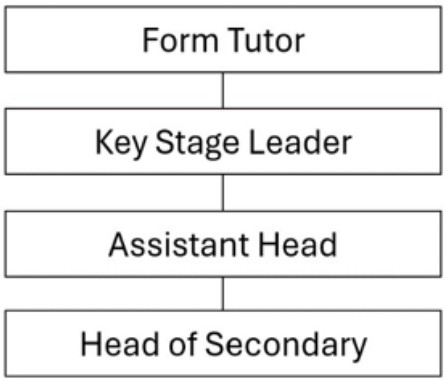
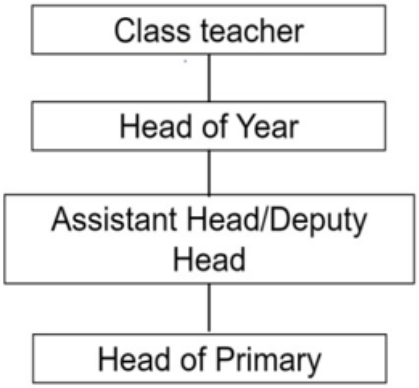
If a complainant wants to withdraw their complaint, we will ask them to confirm this in writing.

EVALUATION

Our school concerns and complaints policy aims to address objections concerning clarity, communication, response times, follow up and satisfactory outcomes. Park House will ensure that clear channels are provided for stakeholders to report concerns/complaints, and concerns/complaints are addressed promptly, transparently, and professionally with the transparent timelines provided. This approach ensures that Park House provides the highest standards of education in an environment that is both safe and conducive to learning.

APPENDIX: CONCERNS AND COMPLAINTS PROCESS

Primary



Secondary