



PARENTS COMPLAINTS PROCEDURE & POLICY

Aims

1. To inform all stakeholders on the complaints procedure at Abuja Preparatory School.
2. To provide supplementary information for parents

Policy Statement

Abuja Preparatory School prides itself on the quality of the teaching and pastoral care provided to its pupils. Occasionally, however, parents may have a complaint about a matter of School policy or administration. This Policy sets out the way in which parents are asked to communicate any such complaint and how they can expect it to be dealt with by the School. *(Please note that this Policy document does not apply to decisions to permanently exclude or remove a pupil).*

Guidance

1. A complaint is an expression of concern about a real or perceived problem where, for example, a parent thinks that the School has:
 - a. done something wrong
 - b. failed to do something it should have done; or
 - c. acted unfairly.

A complaint may concern the School as a whole, a specific department in the School or an individual member of staff.

2. All complaints will be taken seriously and handled sensitively. No pupil or parent will be penalised for making a complaint in good faith.

If you are in any doubt about whether to make a complaint, please do in the first instance contact your child's Class Teacher.

3. A written record of all complaints will be kept by the School.

Stage 1 – CONCERNS

- It is always best if any issue can be resolved informally in the first instance. Any parent with a concern is encouraged to discuss it informally with their child's Class Teacher.
- The matter will be discussed and every attempt will be made to find an informal resolution to the issue within five working days.

- Should this approach be impractical or unsuccessful the formal Complaints Procedure should be followed.
- If the person contacted initially is unable to resolve the matter alone, it may be necessary for them to consult the most appropriate senior member of staff. In the case of a complaint being made to a member of staff that lies outside their remit, they will refer it to the appropriate person, having informed the parents that they will be doing so.



Stage 2- COMPLAINTS

Even within the formal Complaints Procedure, attempts at resolving the issue informally will be made initially, but only with the agreement of the person making the complaint.

- The formal complaint should be made in writing to the Coordinator or Head of Department.
- It will be investigated by the Coordinator or the Head of Department.
- A response will be given within 48 hours and attempt to complete the investigation within one week.
- All correspondence from and to the complainant will be filed in the School's office.

Stage 3 - COMPLAINTS

- If the complainant is not satisfied with the response to their complaint made in 'Stage 2' they shall notify the Headmaster to that effect in writing.
- An appeal can be requested to the Headmaster. The appeal should be made in writing by the complainant and will be presented to the Headmaster within five working days.
- The Headmaster will convene a panel hearing and parents can attend the appeal hearing. Additionally, parents can be accompanied.
- The Headmaster's PA and the Head of Department/ Coordinator keeps a full record of all concerns and complaints. The records will also state the stage the complaint was resolved.
- Additionally, these records will state whether complaints are resolved by formal procedure or proceed to appeal as well as the action taken by the School because of the complaint (regardless of whether it is upheld).
- All findings are documented and sent to the complainant, and where relevant the person complained about. This file is reviewed termly to monitor any pattern in the complaints.

Parents are advised that they may also take their concerns or complaints to the Proprietress / School Board following exhaustion of the Complaints Procedure stages.

Staff who deal with concerns and complaints at any level should always inform the Coordinator or the Head of Department and for more serious complaints Headmaster.

SUPPLEMENTARY GUIDANCE FOR PARENTS

Abuja Preparatory School welcomes constructive suggestions and comments from parents, and takes seriously complaints and concerns they may raise. It is the School's policy that any **complaint must be responded to as soon as practicable**. We wish to ensure that:

- ✓ Parents wanting to make a complaint know how to do so.
- ✓ We respond to complaints within a reasonable time and in a courteous and efficient way.
- ✓ Parents are reassured that we listen to them and take complaints seriously.
- ✓ We take action where appropriate.

How should I complain? Please following the procedure set out above.

I don't want to follow-up a formal complaint as such, but there is something bothering me. The School is here for your child and we want to hear your views and your ideas. Please get in touch with your child's Class Teacher, as outlined above.

I am not sure whether to complain or not. If, as parents, you have concerns, you are entitled to raise them. If in doubt, you should contact the School in accordance with the above procedure to discuss your concerns. This will hopefully help you to decide if you wish to make a formal complaint.

What will happen next? If parents have a complaint, they can expect it to be treated by the School in accordance with the above procedure.

What happens about confidentiality? Your complaint or concern will be treated in a confidential manner and with respect. It will generally be disclosed only to the Headmaster and those directly involved and, in some cases (as referred to above), the Board. It is the School's policy that complaints made by parents should not adversely affect their children, but we cannot entirely rule out the need to make third parties outside the School aware of the complaint and possibly also the identity of those involved. This would only be likely to happen where, for example, a child's safety was at risk or it became necessary to refer matters to the police, in which case parents would be fully informed. Information relating to specific complaints may be kept confidentially on file. Complaints will be dealt with individually and not in groups. Anonymous complaints will not normally be pursued. Action which needs to be taken under staff disciplinary procedures as a result of complaints will be handled confidentially within the School