Learners Today.. Leaders Tomorrow

The Gulf English School - Wholeschool

Complaints & Feedback Policy

Author: Leadership Team

Created	Committee	Lead Personnel	Next Review Date:
April 2026		LT	April 2027

This policy applies across all campuses:
GES Gharafa (Infants, Juniors, and Secondary) GES Bin Omran

The Gulf English School

Our Vision

We aim to develop a responsible, respectful, resilient school community, supporting the highest level of personal achievement in a changing modern intercultural world.

V1	We aim to develop a responsible, respectful, resilient school community,
V2	supporting the highest level of personal achievement
V3	in a changing modern intercultural world.

Mission Statements

M 1	We provide a high-quality education, focusing on skills, knowledge and application, enabling our community to strive and achieve excellence
M 2	We aim to develop a culture of life-long learning, independence, ambition, which is continuously demonstrated by our community.
M 3	Our community promotes diversity and global citizenship where individual differences are understood and celebrated.
M 4	To drive the development of creative skills and critical awareness in our students.
M 5	Our school community provides a safe, supportive, and stimulating learning environment that focusses on the well-being of all
M 6	We aim to integrate the use of technology on a day-to-day basis to enhance our teaching and learning.

Our Core Values: The 3 R's

- ✓ **Responsible:** Driven, Ambitious, Achiever
- ✓ **Respectful:** Empathy, supportive, caring, diversity
- ✓ **Resilient:** Risk takers, empowered, committed

Introduction

At GES, we value open and respectful communication with our families. We recognise that concerns may arise and welcome the opportunity to listen, respond fairly and work together towards a resolution. We aim to put pupils' wellbeing and best interests at the heart of the process.

We take all feedback and complaints seriously, consider the circumstances of each case and explain our decisions clearly. Raising a concern in good faith will not disadvantage a pupil or family.
This policy explains how parents and members of our school community can raise a concern or complaint, how GES will respond, and how a matter may be reviewed if it remains unresolved.

Who is this policy for?

The policy is in place primarily for parents and carers of a pupil and members of the school community, but essentially anyone who wishes to raise a complaint about GES.

Aims and Objectives:

GES aims to be fair and open and adhere to our core values when dealing with any complaint. We give careful consideration to all complaints and deal with them as swiftly as possible. We aim to resolve any complaints through dialogue and mutual understanding, and, in all cases, we put the interest of the child above all other issues. The school endeavours to provide sufficient opportunity for any complaint to be fully discussed, and then resolved. Therefore, this policy advises all persons on how to direct a complaint and the escalation procedure around this.

Definition

A complaint within the context of our school's complaints policy is defined as an expression of dissatisfaction or concern brought forward by a student, parent, guardian, or member of our school community regarding a perceived failure of the school to meet its obligations or adhere to its established policies, procedures, or standards.

Types of Concerns and Complaints

The majority of concerns/complaints received by the school fall into the following categories:

- **Academic and Curriculum** – Teaching and learning, curriculum provision, homework, assessment, reporting, academic progress and the support provided to pupils.

- **Safeguarding and Child Protection** – Concerns relating to pupil safety, welfare, allegations against staff, inappropriate conduct or the handling of safeguarding matters. Such concerns will be addressed in accordance with the GES Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy.
- **Pastoral Care and Behaviour** – Pupil wellbeing, behaviour management, sanctions, bullying, peer relationships and concerns about a child's experience of school.
- **Inclusion and Learning Support** – Provision for pupils with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND), English as an Additional Language (EAL), reasonable adjustments and access to appropriate learning support.
- **Communication and School Relationships** – Communication between the school and parents, staff conduct, responsiveness to concerns, parent engagement and the handling of information.
- **Financial and Administrative Matters** – School fees, payments, refunds, admissions, administrative procedures and other school-related financial matters.
- **Health, Safety and School Operations** – School facilities, hygiene, medical care, supervision, transport arrangements, educational visits, extracurricular activities and the general safety of the school environment.

Concerns will normally be addressed informally first. A parent may submit a formal complaint where informal resolution has not been successful or where the seriousness or nature of the matter makes an informal approach inappropriate. Safeguarding concerns follow the Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy without delay.

The Complaints Process

It is hoped that most complaints and concerns are resolved quickly and informally.

Step 1 Informal Resolution

Parents are encouraged to discuss day-to-day concerns with their child's Class Teacher (Primary) or Form Tutor (Secondary) in the first instance, where appropriate. Most concerns can be addressed through an early conversation. Serious matters or concerns about the person normally contacted may be raised directly with the Head of School.

Parents are encouraged to contact the Class Teacher or Form Tutor directly and arrange a suitable discussion. The school will acknowledge concerns within two working days.

If the concern cannot be resolved by the Class Teacher or Form Tutor, they may seek support from a Year Group Leader, Head of Department or member of the Leadership Team.

Staff receiving concerns will record the nature of the issue, date received and action taken as appropriate. More serious or unresolved concerns should be referred to the Head of School. A written complaint may be requested to clarify the matters to be investigated; assistance will be offered where necessary.

The school will aim to resolve informal concerns within five working days of receipt. If unresolved, the parent will be informed how to proceed to Stage 2.

Step 2 Formal Resolution

A formal complaint should be submitted in writing to the Head of School, including the concern, relevant details and the outcome sought. The Head of School is responsible for overseeing a fair investigation and may appoint an uninvolved senior colleague to investigate. A complaint about the Head of School will be referred to the General Manager; a complaint about the General Manager will be referred to an appropriate uninvolved representative of the Board.

The formal complaint will be acknowledged within two working days. The Head of School will seek relevant evidence, hear from those involved as appropriate, and normally issue a reasoned written decision within ten working days of receipt. If additional time is required, the complainant will be informed of the reason and given a revised expected completion date.

Any complaint suggesting a child is at risk of harm, or involving a safeguarding allegation, must be referred immediately to the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) or Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead (DDSL), following the GES Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy. The Heads of School act as DSLs for their respective schools, and the designated DDSL provides cross-campus support. Where the DSL or Head of School is implicated, concerns must be escalated to the General Manager or an appropriate uninvolved safeguarding lead in accordance with the safeguarding policy. Urgent safeguarding action or external referral must not await completion of this complaints procedure.

Safeguarding allegations and records will be managed under the separate safeguarding procedures, including the policy's reporting, information-sharing, confidentiality and escalation protocols.

The person who is the subject of a complaint will not investigate or determine its outcome. Any actual or perceived conflict of interest will be addressed through the appointment of an appropriate uninvolved decision-maker.

Written records of relevant meetings, interviews, evidence considered and decisions will be maintained securely, with access limited according to the nature and seriousness of the complaint.

The Head of School, or an appointed uninvolved decision-maker, will communicate the outcome in writing, normally within ten working days of receiving the formal complaint. The response will explain the reasons for the decision, any appropriate actions and how to request a Stage 3 panel review.

Stage 3 – Panel Hearing

Parents who remain dissatisfied may request a Stage 3 review within 10 working days of receiving the written Stage 2 outcome. Requests should be sent to info@gulfenglishschool.com, marked for the attention of the General Manager or Board-appointed complaints coordinator, stating the reasons for the review and the outcome sought. Where exceptional circumstances prevent a parent from submitting an appeal within this timeframe, the school may consider a later request on a case-by-case basis.

The General Manager or Board member will acknowledge the request within two working days and normally arrange a panel hearing within twenty working days of receipt. Where the General Manager is involved in the complaint, the Board will appoint an uninvolved person. Any necessary extension will be explained with a revised date.

The Complaints Panel will comprise at least three individuals who have not been directly involved in the matters complained about. At least one panel member must be independent of the management and running of the school. Members will declare conflicts of interest and be replaced where necessary.

The panel may request further information and will share relevant materials with parties sufficiently in advance of the hearing, normally at least three working days beforehand, subject to confidentiality and safeguarding restrictions. Parents may attend and be accompanied by one other person. The hearing is not a legal proceeding.

The panel will consider the evidence, reach findings on the complaint and may make recommendations for action or school improvement. Its findings, reasons and any recommendations will be documented and communicated in writing within five working days of the hearing. If further enquiries are necessary, the complainant will be given a revised date.

The General Manager or Board-appointed member will communicate the panel's written findings, reasons and any recommendations to the complainant and, where relevant, the person complained about. Findings and recommendations will also be made available to the Board and Head of School as appropriate, taking account of confidentiality and safeguarding obligations. The panel's decision concludes the school's internal complaints process.

A copy of the panel's findings and any recommendations will be retained securely and made available for inspection on school premises by the Board and Head of School, and to authorised inspectors or authorities where permitted or required. Actions arising from recommendations will be assigned and followed up as appropriate.

Stage 4 Ministry Involvement

Parents may contact the Ministry of Education and Higher Education (MoEHE) at any stage, including through the Ministry's official private-school complaints portal or its published contact channels. Access to the Ministry is not conditional on completing the school's internal stages.

Timescales

Working days are school operating days during term time, excluding weekends and public holidays. During school holidays the school will acknowledge complaints as soon as practicable and advise of revised investigation or hearing arrangements. At any stage, where a stated timeframe cannot be met, the complainant will be given an explanation and an updated expected date.

Recording complaints

The school will maintain a secure written register of formal complaints, recording the date, nature, stage reached, findings, outcome, actions taken and closure, whether the complaint is upheld or not. Relevant supporting documents will be retained securely, with access restricted to authorised personnel. The Leadership Team may review anonymised themes and actions to support school improvement.

Complaint records and communications will be handled confidentially, with access proportionate to the nature and seriousness of the matter. Correspondence, statements and records will not be disclosed

except where permitted by applicable host-country law or required for safeguarding or authorised oversight. Safeguarding concerns, records and information sharing will follow the GES Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy. This policy is available to parents and prospective parents on the school website.

Appendix 1 – How to Raise a Concern or Complaint

The following guide summarises the steps explained in this policy. Parents may contact MoEHE at any stage. Safeguarding concerns must be referred immediately to the DSL or DDSL and do not wait for the complaints stages.

1. Talk to us – informal concern Contact your child's Class Teacher or Form Tutor, where appropriate. Acknowledged within 2 working days; GES aims to resolve within 5 working days.
↓ If unresolved or a formal approach is appropriate
2. Write to the Head of School – formal complaint Send the details of your complaint and the outcome sought. Acknowledged within 2 working days; written response normally within 10 working days.
↓ If dissatisfied with the written outcome
3. Request an independent panel review **Email info@gulfenglishschool.com** within 10 working days of the Stage 2 outcome. The request is acknowledged within 2 working days; hearing normally within 20 working days. At least 3 uninvolved panel members, including 1 independent member.
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Panel findings and recommendations Written findings, reasons and any recommendations are normally shared within 5 working days of the hearing. This concludes the internal complaints process.

At any stage: Parents may contact the Ministry of Education and Higher Education (MoEHE) directly. If a complaint involves the Head of School or General Manager, it is referred to an appropriate uninvolved decision-maker as set out in the policy.