



iBOS Complaints Policy

The aims of our school are

- A school where teachers, staff, and students are expected to support and extend the atmosphere of respect, courtesy, the love of learning and the value of friendship that is held dear at iBOS.
- iBOS aims to develop students to become well-rounded individuals. We aim to empower our students with the best tools and resources, making them capable in following and achieving their dreams, to become valued members of our global societies, and to allow them to make a positive difference to the world, wherever they choose to progress to.
- Students leave iBOS prepared for university. They are confident, contributing and caring members of the global community and they have embraced the challenge of our specialised education. They will have gained the values that equip them to make a positive contribution

Responsibility of: The Principal

Date Ratified: 05 May 2023

Review Date: 05 May 2024

iBOS COMPLAINTS POLICY

We hope you will never have cause to complain to us here at iBOS, but recognise and accept that from time to time, in a busy school such as ours, things do go wrong, and you may feel we could have handled a situation in a different or better manner. Usually, matters are resolved before there is any need to raise a formal complaint, in an amenable way. But should you feel that is not the case, this procedure provides a clear and transparent process for the complaint to be investigated and followed up.

1.0 Overview

Our parents and students are our key stakeholders. If you are unhappy about something, we need to have a procedure that is fair and impartial, and a clear route through which you can make the school aware of any concerns you may have.

Our complaints procedure is for use by anyone who has a concern or complaint about our school. The complaint at this stage may not be formal, some of the most common complaints may include the following examples, please note that this list is not exhaustive.

- Staff or student conduct
- Teaching and Learning
- Homework
- Computer system issues

In each of these examples the responsibility for action lies with the school, it may be that on some occasions, the school decides that the complaints procedure is not how the matter should be handled, and if required the matter may be handled under another policy. Such as the disciplinary process, which is separate from the complaints policy.

Any action taken, or information disclosed on an individual will be in line with the data protection act 1998 and its successor the GDPR.

Should you wish to make a formal complaint, our complaints form can be obtained from admin@ibos.education. However, we will also consider complaints made without the use of this form.

2.0 Issues the complaints procedure does not deal with:

The complaints procedure does not deal with, the following matters as there are already policies dealing with these separately.

- Grievance or Disciplinary matters relating to members of staff
- Data protection
- Inclusion
- Exclusion
- Curriculum complaints

If during any stage of the process the complainant begins legal action, then the complaints procedure will automatically stop. All correspondence will be dealt with through the school's solicitors at this point.

3.0 Resolving complaints

In our experience, most complaints can be resolved informally, and our effective complaints procedures work towards this outcome. If it is, unfortunately, not the case with a complaint, we have procedures in place to formally investigate and deal with those complaints. The school will endeavour to identify any areas of concern and work quickly to tackle the problem effectively. You may expect to receive the following information whilst we attempt to resolve your complaint

- An apology
- An explanation as to what went wrong and how we will stop it from happening again
- If the situation should have been handled differently, we will admit this and let you know how we will rectify it.
- We will involve the complainant in all stages of the complaints procedure and ask what they feel they would like to see happening which may help resolve the complaint

There are circumstances in which we may decide that following the complaints procedure is no longer appropriate. Such circumstances include:

- Insufficient evidence to reach a fair conclusion and in that case, the complaint may not be upheld;
- The concern is not substantiated by the evidence;
- The matter has been fully investigated and procedures are being followed.

4.0 What we will do when we receive a complaint

When we have received a complaint, the following steps will be taken.

- We will have an initial conversation with the complainant
- Establish and note down the exact details of the complaint
- Ask the complainant what they would like to see as the outcome
- Tackle each new complaint with an open mind and keep accurate records of all calls emails and letters relating to the complaint.

It may be, that we are unable to respond within the prescribed time frames of this policy, as some investigations may take longer to complete. If this is the case in your complaint, we will inform you before the deadline and communicate the new date for a response. Any revised deadline will be reasonable and proportionate to the timescales of this procedure.

5.0 Timescales for making a complaint

Although we would hope that you do not feel necessary to make a complaint, it is best to raise any concerns or complaints as soon as the incident occurs.

We will consider a complaint up to 3 months after the incident has occurred or up to 3 months after the incident has been brought to the attention of the complainant. It is in the best interests of all parties, including the principal and teachers, to be able to deal with matters whilst they are

fresh. **The school is not obliged to investigate events after this period.** We may examine complaints outside of this time frame on a case-by-case basis.

Complainants are urged to consider how they might best obtain the resolution they desire and if this is possible if considerable time has passed.

6.0 The stages of making a complaint

We will divide the complaints procedure into stages so that complainants are fully aware of the status of their complaints.

Stage 1 – Informal complaints (5 school days)

This is when a parent or student contacts iBOS because of an incident that has occurred or because they are generally unhappy with something in the school. At this stage, the complaint can be resolved by the class teacher and a meeting via skype can be arranged with the teacher if the complainant so desires.

The school aims to resolve complaints at this level quickly and efficiently. At this level, we will respond to complaints within 15 working days from the date of receipt (excluding school holidays).

The response can be verbal or written depending on what is deemed appropriate to the situation. iBOS may retain details of the complaint for monitoring purposes. As part of the response, we will give details on how to escalate the complaint should it be required.

The principal may decide the complaint is serious and requires immediate escalation to stage two of the complaint's procedure.

If a complainant makes an unreasonable refusal to attempt to resolve the complaint at this level, we reserve the right to terminate the complaint and the complainant will be notified in writing.

If the concern is about the principal, the board of governors should be informed and will need to handle the complaint. The complaint can be referred to the chair of the governing body.

Stage 2 Formal Complaints (15 school days)

If the complainant is not satisfied with the response or the complaint is not suitable to be handled as a stage one informal complaint, the complainant will be given the opportunity to escalate it to a stage two formal complaint. A complaint at this stage will be investigated by the Principal or Vice-Principal.

Formal complaints should be made in writing, to the Principal, and should contain all details of the incident as well as what the complainant expects the outcome of the complaint.

If the complaint is escalated at the complainant's request, the complainant must notify the school within 10 working days of the notification of the decision from stage 1. We will not investigate escalated complaints that are received after the specified time frame.

We will provide acknowledgement of the stage 2 complaint within 20 working days of receipt of your written complaint.

Following the completion of all appropriate investigations, the Principal will respond to the complainant in writing with the outcome of the investigation. The response will also include the next stage of the complaint's procedure, should they not be satisfied with the response of the principal.

If the complaint is against the principal, the complainant will initially need to write, in confidence, to the chair of the governing body. The chair will seek to resolve the issue informally before moving directly to stage three of the procedure.

If the complaint is about a member of the governing body, a suitably skilled governor will be appointed to complete all actions along with an independent investigator appointed by the governing body. After their investigation, the independent investigator will provide a formal written response.

Stage 3 Complaints (20 school days)

It is rare for complaints to reach this stage, however, should your complaint not be satisfactorily resolved in stages 1 & 2, it is possible to have the complaint looked at by the governing body of the school.

The chair of the governing body will review the complaint and discuss it with the Principal before taking any action. It is important to ensure that all previous stages have been fully exhausted before referral to the governors.

Complainants will be advised of the progress of complaints at this stage no later than 10 working days from the written outcome of stage 2. The complainant should state in writing why the responses in stage 1 and stage 2 are unacceptable.

In case the complaint is against the principal, an independent investigation will be conducted by the independent school link. The independent investigator(s) will carry out an investigation and consider all available evidence.

7.0 Complaint handling

The following details will be required for all written complaints

- Name of complainant
- Details of complaint
- When the complaint was originally made
- The results and conclusion of any investigation
- Any further action to be taken

The stages of the complaint and the status of the complaint will be recorded as follows

- Upheld
- Not upheld
- Upheld in part

We will publicise our complaints procedure on our website.

8.0 Persistent complaints

We hope that the above complaints procedure will resolve all complaints, however, if a complainant attempts to reopen a complaint that has already exhausted all the above steps, the school reserves the right to classify this as a serial complaint and will not respond again. The school will only use this measure if the complaints are deemed inappropriate or aggressive or if the complainant is repeating a complaint that has already been thoroughly investigated.

Should however any new issues emerge from the complaint this will be separately addressed under the appropriate stage of the complaint's procedure.

The school will not tolerate any abuse of its staff based on the decisions reached in the complaint's procedures.

For complaints against a member of staff please send your query to patoprincipal@ibos.education

For complaints against the principal please send your query to the chair of governors via governors@ibos.education