

COMPLAINTS POLICY

Kivukoni International School is committed to fostering a positive and respectful partnership among students, parents/guardians, and staff. We believe that open, constructive dialogue is essential for the progress and wellbeing of our entire school community. This Policy aims to do support this collaboration as follows:

1. Purpose of the policy

- Outlines the procedure through which parents/guardians can raise concerns and complaints.
- Ensures that all complaints are managed promptly, fairly, and consistently for the benefit of the students and parents.
- Establishes guidelines to protect staff, parents and students from inappropriate or harassing complaints.

2. Guiding Principles

1. **Constructive Dialogue:** A strong parent–school relationship is vital for student success. All parties are encouraged to engage positively and collaboratively.
2. **Fairness and Respect:** Concerns will be treated impartially and without prejudice. Complainants and staff will be afforded respect throughout the process.
3. **Timeliness:** Complaints should be raised and addressed promptly, however not at the expense of effective and impactful resolutions which helps to maintain the positive environment we strive to create.
4. **Confidentiality:** Complaints will be handled with discretion. Only those involved in the process will have access to the details.
5. **Protection from Inappropriate Conduct:** While the School encourages open communication, it will not tolerate bullying, harassment, abuse, or repetitive vexatious complaints directed at staff.

3. Definitions

- **Complaint:** A grievance or concern expressed by a parent/guardian about an issue related to the school's operation, staff, or decisions affecting a student.
- **Complainant:** The parent/guardian who raises a concern.

4. Procedures for Raising a Complaint

Stage 1: Informal Resolution

1. **Initial Communication:** Parents/guardians are encouraged to first contact the relevant staff member (e.g., the class teacher, coach, or other appropriate personnel) to discuss the issue informally. Discussions should be planned in advance and take place in the school compound/ on the phone at a convenient time for all parties.
2. **Open Discussion:** In many cases, an honest, informal conversation can resolve the matter quickly. Staff will listen to the concern and seek a mutually agreeable solution.

Stage 2: Formal Complaint (If Unresolved)

1. **Written Complaint:** If the issue is not effectively resolved informally, the parent/guardian should submit a formal written complaint to the relevant Head of Department, Deputy Head or Head Teacher. The complaint should clearly state the nature of the concern and desired outcome.
2. **Acknowledgment:** The school will acknowledge the formal complaint in writing (email or letter) within a specified timeframe (e.g., 5 working days).
3. **Investigation:** The Head of Departments/ Head teacher will investigate the complaint, which may involve speaking with staff and students involved, reviewing relevant documentation, and consulting other stakeholders as appropriate. The goal here is to bring about impactful change where there is need.
4. **Outcome and Response:** A written response outlining findings and any actions taken will be provided within a reasonable time period (e.g., 10–15 working days), though quicker where possible.

Stage 3: Appeal (If Dissatisfied)

1. **Appeal:** If the complainant remains unsatisfied with the outcome at Stage 2, an appeal can be made in writing to the Head Teacher or School Director within a set timeframe (Maximum 10 working days after receiving the Stage 2 response).
2. **Review:** The Head teacher/ school director will review all documentation, may gather further information, and will aim to respond with a decision within a set timeframe (e.g., 10–15 working days).
3. **Final Decision:** The Head teacher/ school director's decision shall be final within the school's internal procedures. Should the issue remain unresolved, the complainant may consider referring the matter to the school advisory board.

4. Unacceptable and Inappropriate Complaints

While Kivukoni International School values constructive feedback, behavior that is abusive, threatening, or offensive to any member of staff or the school community will not be tolerated. Such behavior includes but is not limited to:

- Aggressive or intimidating language or tone, whether in person, by telephone, or in writing.

- Deliberate falsehoods or misleading statements.
- Confrontations outside of the school compound
- Complaints made out of working hours (8am-5pm Monday -Friday/ Saturday by arrangement)
- Repetitive complaints that have already been investigated and resolved.
- Physical threats or any form of harassment.
- Complaints or threats to other students or parents.

If any of the above behaviors occur:

1. **Staff and Student Protection:** The school reserves the right to protect staff and students from inappropriate conduct, which may include ending a meeting or phone call, blocking emails, or requesting a third party's involvement in communication.
2. **Withdrawal of Privileges:** In extreme cases, parents/guardians who repeatedly breach conduct standards may be subject to restricted access to school premises or staff contacts, or have admission revoked, in accordance with school regulations and applicable law.

6. Record Keeping

All complaints and their outcomes will be documented and retained according to the school's record-keeping procedures. This ensures accountability, transparency, and the ability to review complaint trends over time.

7. Monitoring and Review

The Principal or a designated senior leader will periodically review this policy to ensure it remains effective, fair, and in line with regulatory requirements. Any recommended changes will be submitted to the School Board for approval.

8. Communication of the Policy

This policy will be:

- Included in the school's handbook or made available on the school website.
- Explained to parents/guardians at orientation events as appropriate.
- Shared and reviewed with staff to ensure consistent application.

Approved by: Lucy Oliff, school director

Date: 2/06/2024

Policy Review Date: 06/2025