



## GEMS Winchester School Dubai



# Complaints and Resolution Policy (Whole School)

**Person Responsible:** Principal/CEO and Vice Principals

**Approved by ELT:** September 2022

**Date of Next Review:** June 2024

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## 1. Introduction

GEMS Winchester School Dubai (WSD) is committed to continuous improvement of academic and non-academic support services for its students and parents. The school also provides adequate procedures to deal with complaints and resolution. Effective complaint resolution processes provide WSD with valuable opportunities to analyse recurring or persistent issues and ensure continuous development and improvement of services and student and parent satisfaction.

GEMS Winchester School Dubai has a commitment to make sure that all complaints are resolved quickly, fairly, humanely and with due process. The school treats complaints seriously and ensures all process are clear, prompt, confidential and fair to all parties and will use its best endeavours to guarantee an acceptable resolution is achieved.

GEMS Winchester School Dubai's Complaint Procedure aims to reassure parents and third party that:

- Complaints against the school will be dealt fairly, in an open and responsive way whilst maintaining its highest standards in achieving a speedy/quick and satisfactory resolution
- The school is open and ready to listen to concerns and criticism and respond positively keeping in mind the welfare and the best interest of the students and staff/stakeholders in making decisions
- Transparency will be always adhered to, through open communication with parents and staff
- Procedures are provided and followed which recognises the rights of the complainant and the respondent with due process
- Steps and processes are clearly identified by person involved in handling and resolving conflicts
- The process is accessible to all concerned person dealing with the complaints in an equitable and culturally sensitive manner
- A timeline will be specified during the processes
- A system is in place to maintain confidentiality and secured records keeping
- Feedback is provided equally to complainant and respondent

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## 2. The Role and Responsibilities of the Complaint and Resolution Team (CRT)

### **Establishment of Complaint and Resolution Team (CRT)**

The Complaint and Resolution Team are empowered to take the lead in resolving conflicts following the protocols to maintain conducive, safe and child friendly learning environment. The colleagues identified below may form part of a CRT (as appropriate):

- Form Tutor/Homeroom Teacher (FT)
- Subject Teacher
- Head of Year (HoY)
- Phase Leaders
- Senior Phase Leaders
- Parent Relation Executive (PRE)
- Director of Pastoral (DoP)
- Director of Studies (DoP)
- Head of Department (HoDs)
- Heads of Houses (HoHs)
- Senior Director of Inclusion
- Assistant Principals – Primary/Secondary
- Manager Schools Operation (MSO)
- Heads of School
- Vice Principals
- Executive Principal/CEO

### **Role and Responsibilities of Complaints and Resolution Team**

Once a complaint has been received, an appropriate team is convened to carry out the system and procedures identified below, in an effective manner. This team:

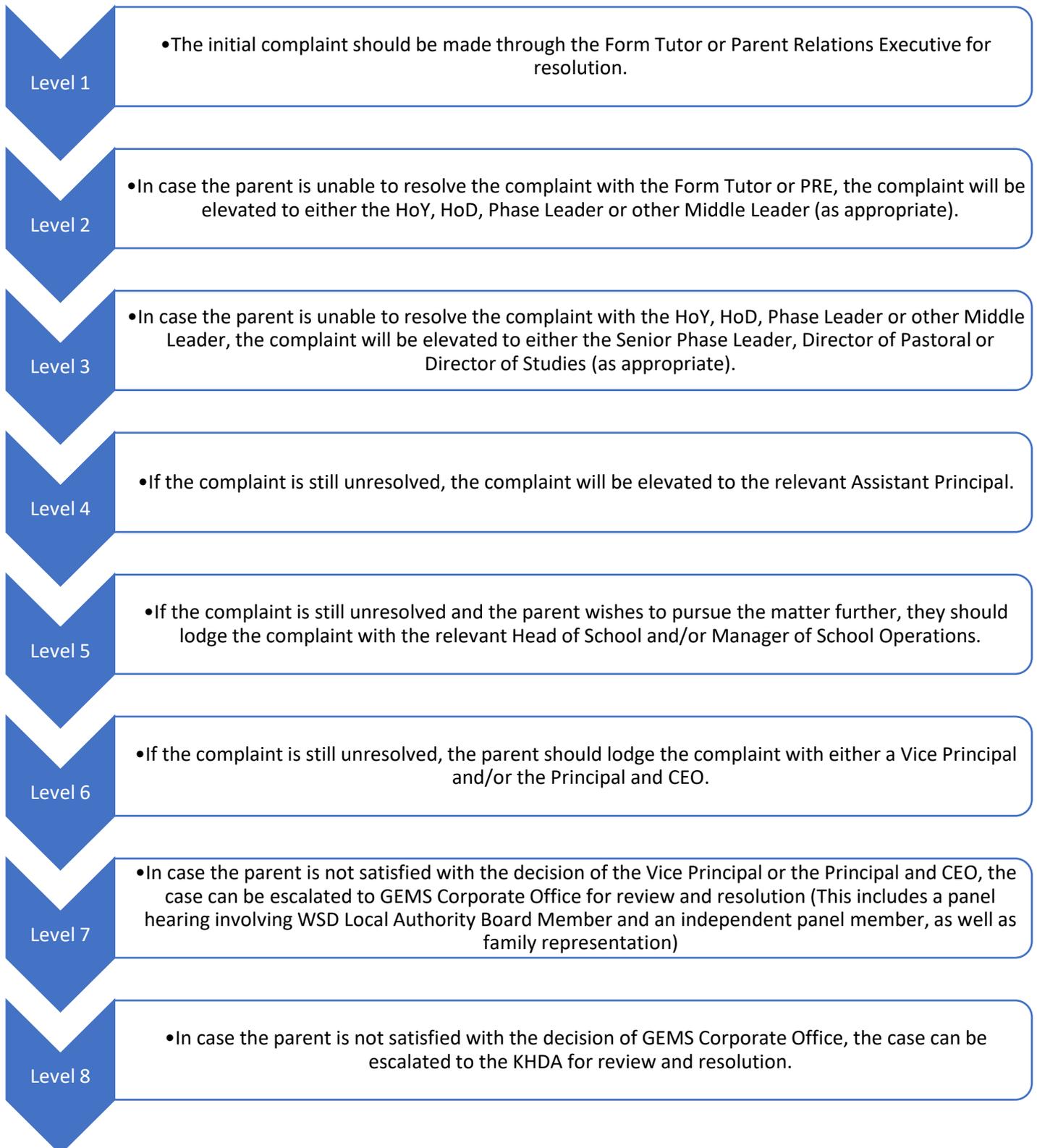
1. Ensures the process used to handle and resolve complaints is perceived as fair, is impartial and is capable of offering appropriate outcomes
2. Makes sure that complaints are treated with utmost confidentiality and that information is only used for the purposes for which it was gathered
3. Ensures that any barriers which deter or prevent students from accessing the complaints system and procedures are identified and steps should be taken to remove biases
4. Monitors that the implementation in resolving complaints should apply the rules of justice; gives all parties the opportunity to respond to issues raised where appropriate; treats each complaint on its merit regardless of the manner of presentation of either the complaint or the complainant
5. That complaint is handled in a timely manner with achievable deadlines clearly stated for each step in the resolution of the complaint.
6. Disseminates information/guidelines on the policies and procedure to students, parents and staff through training and written communication
7. Keeps written records (incident report, action taken and other attachments) for documentations
8. Follows-up reported complaints

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### 3. Complaint Reporting Process

As an educational institution, there are different areas of service which may warrant complaints. To ensure that the right person deals with the right complaint, it is important to outline the procedure in lodging the complaints. Complaints can be received formally in writing, addressed to the concerned person.

All complaints should be dealt with in five working days. Where a complaint is considered more complex and requires additional time for investigation, the lead investigator should inform the complainant in writing (either via email or letter) with the timeline. Transparency in dealing with cases is always adhered to.



*Please note: At Level 4, 5 and 6, colleagues should not repeat the process that has already been concluded at Level 1, 2 and 3.*

At WSD, a parent may raise their concerns and difficulties which might include dissatisfaction about teaching and pastoral care, timetable clashes or some other aspect of the school's system, facilities, or account related matter. For a clearer understanding, key personnel and related functions are outlined:

- The Form Tutor, Heads of Year, Phase Leaders, Director of Pastoral, Senior Director of Inclusion and/or Assistant Principals handles complaints pertaining to SEND, discipline, behavioural, mental health and wellbeing
- Class Teachers, Phase Leaders, Heads of Department, Director of Studies and/or Assistant Principals handle complaints on academic issues
- The Parent Relation Executive and Manager Schools Operation handles complaints pertaining to administration like support staff, guards, drivers, contractual services and facilities

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#### 4. Procedures for Handling Complaints

The following procedure should be followed by colleagues when handling complaints:

1. The complainant will send the concern in writing addressed to concerned personnel stated above
2. The colleague in-charge will assess the veracity of the information and will conduct investigation on the foregoing complaint or allegations upon receipt of the written complaint
3. A one to one meeting will be conducted by the CRT for data gathering procedures on the complaints or allegations
4. The complainant will be notified on the timeline, procedures and documents to be submitted to form part of the exhibit (evidence) as deemed necessary
5. If the defendant is an employee, an administrative case will be filed against him/her
6. The rules and procedure for employees in administrative cases shall be applied in accordance with GEMS Grievance Policy and Employee Handbook
7. The Principal & CEO's decision is final and executory unless the complainant escalates the complaint to GEMS Corporate Office for case review and to execute the final decision.
8. The identity of both the complainant and respondent shall remain confidential if warranted by the CRT

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## 5. Preventative Measures

WSD takes a proactive approach to avoiding complains, which includes, but is not limited to, the following actions and measures. Therefore, the school will:

1. Follow a strict policy in recruiting highly qualified professional school personnel and carry out rigorous background checks on all those hired
2. Establish and maintain an environment conducive to study by way of providing the student with safe school facilities, equipment, clean and safe classrooms
3. Provide our employees with necessary training to enhance their teaching skills/performance and equip them with the necessary competencies to address the issues concerns affecting the student and/or their family
4. Establish a safe environment where students can learn and develop their potential, knowledge, understanding and skills
5. Conduct capacity building training and/or information sessions for school staff, parents and students, including but not limited to, the following aspects:
  - a. Child Protection Policy (Students, Parents & Staff)
  - b. School Rules & Regulations (Parents and Students)
  - c. Classroom Management (Teachers)
  - d. Behaviour Management (Teachers)
  - e. Conflict Resolution (Students)
  - f. Anti-bullying (Students)
  - g. Safe and secured Learning Environment (Students, Parents and Staff)
6. Conduct individual/group counselling for students as appropriate
7. Ensure opportunities for regular parent-teacher engagement
8. Provide regular opportunities for meetings between the Senior and Executive Leadership Teams and students, parents and teachers
9. Provide an information campaign through newsletters/ bulletins and advisories
10. Establish links and networks with relevant government agencies and non-government organisations (as appropriate)

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## 6. Record Keeping

WSD will keep a written record of the incident, investigation and decision and attached to student file for future reference.

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## 7. Confidentiality

Concerns, complaints and records including the statements and correspondences of both parties will be always treated with utmost confidentiality.

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## 8. Referral

The CRT may refer the respondent to GEMS Corporate Office for further investigation and resolution of the case if deemed necessary.

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## 9. Monitoring, Evaluation and Review

The Executive and Senior Leadership Teams will monitor and evaluate the effectiveness of the Complaint and Resolution Policy annually. In case new legislation from Gems Corporate Office, KHDA and UAE Ministry of Education, the policy will be amended in accordance with the corporate policy and national law set forth.

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## 10. Links to Other Policies

This policy is related to the following policies:

- Behaviour Policy
- Grievance Policy

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## 11. Complaint and Resolution Form

### Student Details

Name of Student			
Student ID Number		Year Group and Section	
Name of Parent			
Contact Number			
Email ID			
Date of Complaint			

### Type of Complaint (Select Below)

Academics	Non-Academic	Pastoral	Operations
Please provide specific details of the complaint, including person/s involved:			
Date of Incident		Time of Incident	

To be filled out by school staff initially resolving the complaint:

### Action Taken and/or Recommendation

Name		Role	
Signed		Date	

### Complaint Status

Complaint Resolved?	Yes/No		
Name		Role	
Signed		Date	

To be filled out by colleagues if the complaint is escalated (repeat as necessary):

Action Taken and/or Recommendation			
Name		Role	
Signed		Date	

Complaint Status			
Complaint Resolved?	Yes/No		
Name		Role	
Signed		Date	

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