



AIS Complaints Policy

Introduction

Atherton International School (AIS) is proud of the quality of the teaching and pastoral care provided to its pupils. However, if parents do have a complaint, they can expect it to be treated by the school with care and in accordance with this procedure. AIS makes its complaints procedure available to all parents of pupils and of prospective pupils on the school's website and in the school office during the school day, and AIS will ensure that parents of pupils and of prospective pupils who request it are made aware that this document is published or available and the form in which it is published or available.

What Constitutes a Complaint?

A complaint is an expression of dissatisfaction with a real or perceived problem. It may be made about the school as a whole, about a specific department or about an individual member of staff. A complaint is likely to arise if a parent believes that the school has done something wrong, has failed to do something that it should have done, or has acted unfairly.

Parents can be assured that all concerns and complaints will be treated seriously and confidentially. The school is here for your child and you can be assured that your child will not be penalised for a complaint that you, or your child, raises in good faith.

Timeframe for Dealing with Complaints

All complaints will be handled seriously and sensitively. They will be acknowledged within five working days if received during term time and as soon as practicable during holiday periods. It is in everyone's interest to resolve a complaint as speedily as possible: the school's target is to complete both stages of the procedure within 28 days if the complaint is lodged during term-time and as soon as practicable during holiday periods.

Recording Complaints

Following resolution of a complaint, the school will keep a written record of all complaints and whether they are resolved at the preliminary stage or proceed to a formal process. At the school's discretion, additional records may be kept which may contain the following information:

- Date when the issue was raised
- Name of parent
- Name of student

- Description of the issue
- Records of all the investigations (if appropriate)
- Witness statements (if appropriate)
- Name of member (s) of staff handling the issue at each stage
- 2 Copies of all correspondence on the issue (including emails and records of phone conversations)
- Correspondence, statements and records relating to individual complaints will be kept confidential except to the extent required by any relevant Korean laws or applicable education regulations requiring disclosure.

Stage 1 - Informal Resolution

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

If parents have a complaint they should normally contact their son/daughter's Class Teacher (Primary) or Tutor Teacher (Secondary). In the majority of cases, the matter will be resolved straightaway by this means to the parents' satisfaction. If the Class or Tutor Teacher cannot resolve the matter alone it may be necessary for him/her to consult a Leader for Learning or the Principal depending on the matter.

Complaints made directly to the Principal will usually be referred to the relevant Teacher unless the Principal deems it appropriate for him/her to deal with the matter personally.

The Class or Tutor Teacher will make a written record of all concerns and complaints and the date on which they were received. Should the matter not be resolved within 7 days or in the event that the Class/ Tutor Teacher and the parent fail to reach a satisfactory resolution then parents will be advised to proceed with their complaint in accordance with Stage 2 of this procedure.

If, however, the complaint is against the Principal, parents should make their complaint directly to the Head of School.

Stage 2 - Formal Resolution

If the complaint cannot be resolved on an informal basis then the parents should put their complaint in writing to the Principal. The Principal will decide, after considering the complaint, the appropriate course of action to take.

In most cases, the Principal will meet/speak to the parents concerned, at a maximum of 7 days from receiving the complaint, to discuss the matter. If possible, a resolution will be reached at this stage. It may be necessary for the Principal to carry out further investigations.

The Principal will keep written records of all meetings and interviews held in relation to the complaint. Once the Principal is satisfied that, so far as is practicable, all of the relevant facts have been established, a decision will be made and parents will be informed of this decision in writing. The Principal will also give reasons for the decision.

In the Early Years and Primary Years, all children have a Class Teacher, with whom they spend the majority of their time. In the Middle and Higher Years, students have a Tutor Teacher whom they meet every day and who is the main point of contact for parents about their child's education and wellbeing.

The Principal will need to consider who would be appropriate to undertake an impartial investigation, what form of evidence would be most appropriate, who should be sent the written report at the conclusion of the investigation and what the timescale should be for the investigation.

Notes & References

In many countries, schools are required by law to draw up and implement a complaints procedure for parents of pupils. This is not currently the case for international schools in Korea, but it is in the interest of the AIS community that this should be done.

AIS is committed to compliance with Korean law in all aspects of its operations.

AIS is grateful to ISBA (www.theisba.org.uk) for the model complaints procedure framework, which is based on guidance from Farrer & Co LLP (www.farrer.co.uk) and assistance from The Independent Schools Inspectorate (www.isi.net/home/).

Date	Edit	Signatory
June 5, 2014	Draft policy created	Principal
June 12, 2014	Shared with Team Leaders for feedback	Principal
June 16, 2014	Document finalised	Principal
June 18, 2014	Distributed to Staff	Principal
June 20, 2014	Updated in handbooks & website	Principal
August 2015	Update posted on website	Principal
August 19, 2019	Updated and reposted on website	Principal and VP
October 2020	Updated and reposted	Principal
Sept 2021	Updated and reposted	Principal
Sept 2022	Name change and logo updated	Principal