



## COMPLAINTS POLICY

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## COMPLAINTS POLICY

### A Guide for Parents and Carers

Principal, Academy Staff and the Governing body at Iqra Academy are committed to maintaining a positive partnership with parents. Sometimes things happen, which make children or parents unhappy. It is important that parents and carers feel able to raise concerns and do this in the best way. In most cases, concerns and complaints can be resolved by talking to staff at the academy. It may be all that you need to do to solve the problem. Whatever the issue, the important thing is to talk to someone at Iqra Academy as soon as you can. Sometimes parents may wish to raise a more formal complaint.

**All Correspondence, statements and records of complaints are to be kept confidential.**

The following describes procedures that will be used by our academy for dealing with general complaints.

**The Iqra Academy Policy has THREE main stages.**

In summary they are as follows:

- Stage 1 – A concern is raised informally with a staff member.
- Stage 2 – Complaint is heard by Principal or Deputy Head.
- Stage 3 – Complaint is heard by Governors / Directors of the school.

### Stage 1 – Raising a concern

- If parents have a complaint, they should normally contact their daughter's Class teacher or personal Tutor.
- In many cases the matter will be resolved straight away by this means to the Parents' satisfaction. If the Class teacher or personal Tutor cannot resolve the matter alone, it may be necessary for him or her to consult the Lead for Pastoral Care or Deputy Head/Principal.
- Complaints made directly to the Principal or another member of staff will usually be referred to the Pupil's Class teacher or personal Tutor unless the Principal or other member of staff deems it appropriate for him or her to deal with the matter personally.
- Should the matter not be resolved within **12 working days** or in the event that the person dealing with the complaint and the Parents fail to reach a satisfactory resolution, then the Parents will be advised to proceed with their complaint in accordance with Stage 2 of this procedure.



A written record of all complaints will be kept and shall include the date on which each complaint is received and details of all meetings and interviews and whether the complaint is resolved at the preliminary stage or proceeds to a next stage.

## 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 speak to the Parents, normally within **10 Working days** of 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.
- Once the Principal is satisfied that so far as is practical, all of the relevant facts have been established, he will make a decision on the merits of the complaint and the Parents will be informed of his decision in writing.
- If the Parents are not satisfied with the Head's decision, they should proceed to Stage 3 of this procedure.<sup>2</sup>
- The Head will keep written records of all meetings and interviews held in relation to the complaint.

## Stage 3 – Complaint heard by the Complaints Appeal Panel

- If parents seek to invoke Stage 2 (following a failure to reach an earlier resolution), they will be referred to the Chairman of Governors, who has been appointed by the Governors to call hearings of the Complaints Panel.
- The matter will then be referred to the Complaints Panel for consideration. The Panel will consist of at least three persons not directly involved in the matters detailed in the complaint, all/one of whom shall be independent of the management and running of Iqra Academy. Each of the Panel members shall be appointed by the Chairman of Governors and two shall be members of Iqra Academy's governing body. The Chairman of Governors, on behalf of the Panel, will then acknowledge the complaint and schedule a hearing to take place as soon as practicable and normally within **12 days**.
- If the Panel deems it necessary, it may require that further particulars of the complaint or any related matter be supplied in advance of the hearing. Copies of such particulars shall be supplied to all parties not later than **four days** prior to the hearing.
- The parents may be accompanied to the hearing by one other person. This may be a relative or friend. Legal representation will not normally be appropriate.



- If possible, the Panel will resolve the parents' complaint immediately without the need for further investigation.
- Where further investigation is required, the Panel will decide how it should be carried out. After due consideration of all facts they consider relevant, the Panel will reach a decision and may make recommendations, which it shall complete within **12 days of the Hearing**.
- The Panel will write to the parents informing them of its decision and the reasons for it. The decision of the Panel will be final. The Panel's findings and, if any, recommendations will be sent in writing to the parents, the Head, the Governors, proprietor and, where relevant, the person complained of and are available for inspection on Iqra Academy premises by proprietor and the principal.
- \* **N.B.** In cases where the matter concerns the conduct of the Principal, the Principal and Chair of Governors will be informed of the complaint. The Chair of Governors will arrange for the matter to be investigated. In cases where the matter concerns the conduct of a member of the Governing Body the member will be informed of the complaint.

## **TREATMENT OF COMPLAINTS, CONFIDENTIALITY AND RECORDS**

A written record of all complaints will be kept and shall include the date on which each complaint is received, details of all meetings and interviews and whether the complaint is resolved at the preliminary stage or proceeds to a Hearing.

Parents can be reassured that all concerns and complaints will be treated seriously and confidentially. Correspondence, statements and records will be kept confidential except in so far as is required by Iqra Academy in the Education [Independent Schools Standards] Regulations; where disclosure is required in the course of Iqra Academy's inspection; or where any other legal obligation prevails.

The Academy will have a system for logging and monitoring all complaints termly to ensure they have been dealt with as per Academy Policy. The Academy will retain records of previous academic year's complaints.

**Written records will be kept of all complaints, indicating whether they were resolved at the preliminary stage, or whether they proceeded to a panel hearing**

**Correspondence, statements and records of complaints are to be kept confidential.**

**(Policy updated in October 2020. To be reviewed and updated in October 2021.)**

**Appendix: Complaints Procedure – Independent Member of the Panel**

The DFE has supplied the following guidance in a letter to the ISC General Secretary:

Whilst we do not intend to be prescriptive our general view is that suitable people would be those who have held positions of responsibility and who are used to analysing evidence and putting forward balanced arguments/points. It would add credibility if independent panel members had some standing in the local community. In this connection serving or retired business people, civil servants, heads or senior members of staff at other schools, people with a legal background – perhaps retired members of the Police Force – might be considered suitable by schools. Schools will have their own views and may well have other suitable suggestions to make.

You asked if it would be acceptable to appoint former governors or staff of Iqra Academy as the independent panel member. The regulations do not preclude this since the stipulation is that the person must be independent of the management and running of Iqra Academy. Clearly former governors or staff would not have any such involvement. However, schools should bear in mind that they may be subject to criticism that such people would remain too close to Iqra Academy and would not be truly independent.

The Appendix does not form part of the actual model procedure.