

# **Greek School of Wales** **Ελληνικό Σχολείο Ουαλίας**

## **Communication and Complaints Policy**

### **1. Introduction**

- 1.1 The Greek School of Wales is committed to dealing effectively with complaints. We aim to clarify any issues about which you are not sure.
- 1.2 Our definition of a complaint is 'an expression of dissatisfaction in relation to the school or a member of its staff that requires a response from the school.'
- 1.3 This complaints procedure supports our commitment and is a way of ensuring that anyone with an interest in the school can raise a concern, with confidence that it will be heard and, if well founded, addressed in an appropriate and timely fashion.

### **2. When to use this procedure**

- 2.1 When you have a concern or make a complaint, we will usually respond in the way we explain below. Sometimes you might be concerned about matters that are not decided by the school, in which case we will tell you who to complain to. At other times you may be concerned about matters that are handled by other procedures, in which case we will explain to you how your concern will be dealt with.

### **3. Have you asked us yet?**

- 3.1 If you are approaching us for the first time you should give us a chance to respond. If you are not happy with the response then you may make your complaint using the procedure we describe below. Most concerns can be settled quickly just by speaking to the relevant person in school, without the need to use a formal procedure.

### **4. What we expect from you**

- 4.1 We believe that all complaints have a right to be heard, understood, and respected. But school staff and committee members have the same right. We expect you to be polite and courteous. We will not tolerate aggressive, abusive, or unreasonable behaviour. We will also not tolerate unreasonable demands or unreasonable persistence or vexatious complaining.

### **5. Our approach to answering your concern or complaint**

- 5.1 We will consider your concerns and complaints in an open and fair way.
- 5.2 At all times the school will respect the rights and feelings of those involved and make every effort to protect confidential information.
- 5.3 Timescales for dealing with your concerns or complaints may need to be extended following discussion with you.
- 5.4 We may ask for advice from the Cyprus Educational Mission Supervisor and the local authority where appropriate.

5.5 The school committee will keep the records of documents used to investigate your concern or complaint for 5 years after it has been dealt with. Records will be kept in school and reviewed by the school committee after 3 years to decide if they need to be kept for longer.

5.6 Complaints that are made anonymously will be recorded but investigation will be at the discretion of the school depending on the nature of the complaint.

5.7 Where complaints are considered to have been made only to cause harm or offence to individuals or the school, the school committee will ensure that records are kept of the investigations and what actions are taken, including the reasons for 'no action'.

## 6. Answering your concern or complaint

6.1 The chart in Appendix A shows what may happen when you make a complaint or raise a concern. There are up to three Stages A, B and C. Most complaints can be resolved at Stages A or B. You can bring a relative or companion to support you at any time during the process but you will be expected to speak for yourself. However, we recognise that when the complainant is a pupil the companion could speak on their behalf and/or advise the pupil.

6.2 As far as possible, your concern or complaint will be dealt on a confidential basis. However, there could be occasions when the person dealing with your concern or complaint will need to consider whether anyone else in the school needs to know about your concern or complaint to address it appropriately.

6.3 If you are a pupil under 16 and wish to raise a concern or bring a complaint, we will ask for your permission before we involve your parent(s) or carer(s). If you are a pupil under 16 and are involved in a complaint in any other way, we may ask your parent(s) or carer(s) to become involved and attend any discussion or interview with you.

## Responding to your concern or complaint

### Stage A

6.4 If you have a concern, you can often resolve it quickly **by talking to the teacher after the end of a class. You should raise your concern as soon as you can** (within 10 school days of any incident). The longer you leave it the harder it might be for those involved to deal with it effectively.

6.5 If you are a pupil, you can raise your concerns with your teacher. This will not stop you, at a later date, from raising a complaint with the headteacher if you feel that the issue(s) you have raised have not been dealt with properly.

6.6 We will try to let you know what we have done or are doing about your concern **normally within 10 school days**, but if this is not possible, we will talk to you and agree a revised timescale with you.

6.7 The person overseeing your concern or complaint will keep you informed of the progress made. A log of the concern for future reference will be kept.

### Stage B

6.8 In most cases, we would expect that your concern is resolved informally. **If you feel that your initial concern has not been dealt with appropriately you may put your complaint in writing to the headteacher.**

- 6.9 We would expect you to aim to do **this within five school days of receiving a response to your concern as it is in everyone's interest to resolve a complaint as soon as possible.** There is also a form attached (**Appendix B**) that you may find useful. If you are a pupil we will explain the form to you, help you complete it and give you a copy.
- 6.10 If your **complaint is about the headteacher, you should put your complaint in writing to the president of the school committee**, addressed to the school by letter or email, to ask for your complaint to be investigated.
- 6.11 In all cases, the school can help to put your complaint in writing if necessary.
- 6.12 If you are involved in any way with a complaint, we will explain what will happen and the sort of help that is available to you.
- 6.13 The headteacher may invite you to discuss your complaint at a meeting in the present of another member of staff or the committee. We will aim to have a meeting with you and to explain what will happen, normally within 10 school days of receiving your letter. **The school's designated person will complete the investigation and will let you know the outcome in writing within 10 school days of completion.**

### Stage C

- 6.14 It is rare that a complaint will progress any further. However, if you still feel that your complaint has not been dealt with fairly, you should write, through the school's address, to the President of the School Committee setting out your reasons for asking the committee to consider your complaint. You do not have to write details of your whole complaint again.
- 6.15 The committee will acknowledge receipt of the complaint and a meeting may be convened to discuss the matter further within 15 school days of receiving your letter. The President of the School committee will write down what is discussed and what, in your own words, would resolve the problem. You will be asked to read the notes or will have the notes read back to you and then be asked to sign them as a true record of what was said.
- 6.16 We will let you know how the complaint will be dealt with and will also tell you when all the evidence and documentation to be considered by the committee must be received. Following an investigation, the school will aim to provide a response as soon as possible. The timescale may need to change, to allow for the availability of people, the gathering of evidence or seeking advice. In this case, the person dealing with the complaint will agree a new meeting date with you.
- 6.17 If you ask to reschedule the meeting more than once, the committee may think it reasonable to make a decision on the complaint, in your absence to avoid delays.
- 6.18 We will write to you normally within 10 school days of the meeting explaining the outcome of school committee's consideration.
- 6.19 We will keep records of all conversations and discussions for the purpose of future reference and review by the full committee. These records will be kept for a minimum of five years.
- 6.20 The school committee is the final arbiter of complaints.

**7. Special circumstances:** Where a complaint is made about any of the following the complaints procedure will be applied differently.

i. **Member(s) of the committee**

The concern or complaint will be referred to the President for investigation. The president may alternatively delegate the matter to another committee member for investigation. Stage B onwards of the procedure will apply.

ii. **The president**

The complaint will be delegated it to the Secretary of the School. Stage B onwards of the complaints' procedure will apply.

iii. **The headteacher**

The concern or complaint will be referred to the President of the committee who will undertake the investigation or may delegate it to another member. Stage B onwards of the complaints' procedure will apply.

In all cases the school and governing body will ensure that complaints are dealt with in an unbiased, open, and fair way.

**8.0 Our commitment to you**

8.1 We will take your concerns and complaints seriously and follow the above procedures.

8.2 If you need help to make your concerns known we will try and assist you.

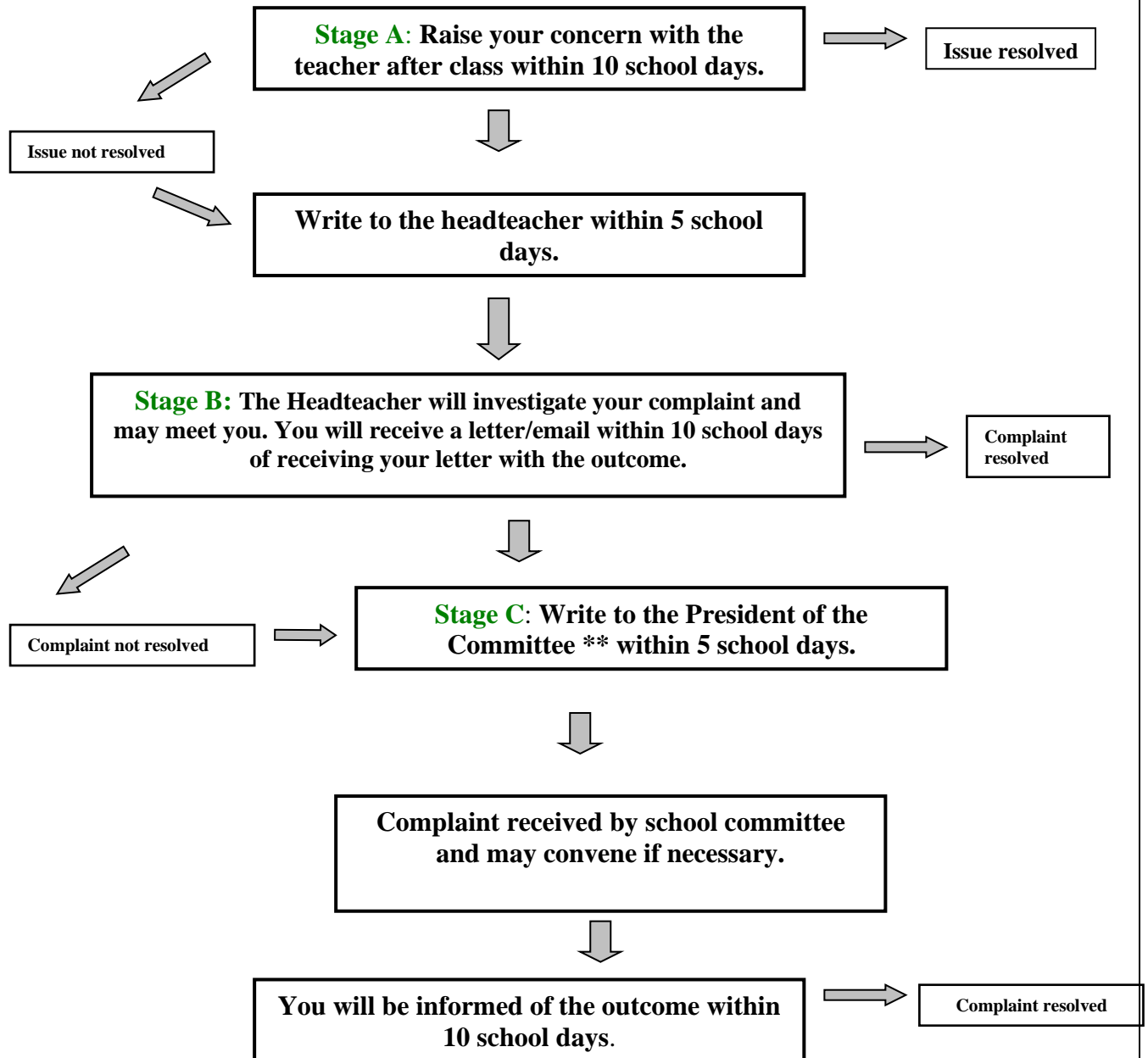
Date Approved by Greek School Committee

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Appendix A

Summary of dealing with concerns or complaints

This procedure will be followed in the event of a complaint or concern about the school, provided that the concern or complaint does not fall under other statutory procedures.



- \*If the complaint is about the Headteacher you should write to the president of the school committee.
- \*\* If the complaint is about the president of the school you should write to the Secretary of the school committee.

All the timescales are shown as targets and can be flexible; however, it is in everyone's best interests to resolve a complaint as soon as possible.

The school will work with you to ensure that the time allowed to deal with your concern or complaint is reasonable and helps to achieve an answer to the problem.

*Appendix B*

**Complaint Form**

<b>Your details</b>	
<b>Your name:</b>	
<b>Child (children's names)</b>	
<b>Daytime telephone number:</b>	
<b>e-mail address</b>	
<b>If you are making a complaint on behalf of someone else, what is their name and your relationship to them?</b>	
<b>Why you are complaining</b>	
<b>What or who are you complaining about?</b>	
<b>What do you think was problematic?</b>	
<b>Describe how you have been affected.</b>	
<b>When did you first become aware of the problem?</b>	
<b>If it is more than three months since you first became aware of the problem, please give the reason why you have not complained before?</b>	
<b>What do you think could be done to put matters right?</b>	
<b>Have you already put your complaint to a member of staff? If so, please give brief details about how and when you did so.</b>	
<b>Signature and date:</b>	