



## Complaints – Handling Policy & Response Procedure

### PURPOSE

- (i) To ensure all complaints are handled in a sensitive and appropriate manner.
- (ii) To establish a clear line of communication and procedure to follow in the event of a serious complaint.

### GUIDELINES

**All informal complaints are dealt with at the lowest possible level and as promptly as possible to ensure situations are resolved and do not escalate to become a formal complaint.**

1. In the event of a minor complaint parents should address it with the class teacher or specialist teacher as the case may be. After they have addressed the matter with the teacher concerned, it may need to be escalated to the Coordinators, the Head of Primary or the Student Counsellor. It may also be escalated further to the Principal.
2. Serious grievances or formal complaints should be handled following a clear line of communication and investigated following a process of due diligence. If a parent has a formal complaint that can't be resolved informally, they should:
  - a) Complete in writing either the official Newton British Academy Parent Concern Form, available at Reception or submit a letter outlining the material facts of the complaint, returning this by hand or by email to the Office Administrator. All such complaints must be signed and dated by the complainant and include a day time, contact telephone number.
  - b) A member of the SLT will review the complaint and where appropriate refer it to the relevant staff member for possible investigation and / or feedback within two working days. At this stage of the investigation, any complaint against an individual will be considered 'alleged' until evidenced and proved otherwise. Events can often be misinterpreted, which can easily be corrected by the teacher, avoiding the need for any further action.
  - c) If the matter cannot be resolved by the Class or Year leader within two working days, it will be passed to the relevant Deputy Head or Head Teacher for investigation. Parents will be contacted within three working days with a formal response either by phone, in writing or at a face-to-face meeting.
  - d) If a meeting is convened to discuss the complaint during the investigation, parents are expected to attend the meeting at the time stated and have the meeting completed within the allocated time period. If the parent cannot make the scheduled meeting, then they will need to arrange an alternative time with the school's front Office. The Office Administrator will be the official



minute taker on these occasions. An Arabic translator will also be made available and any written outcomes presented in English and Arabic where appropriate.

- e) If no clear solution or resolution to the problem is found at the above previous stages, the final decision on how to proceed will rest with the Head Of Primary and Principal.
- f) The school reserves the right to inform the CEO of Parents who are aggressive towards staff and recommend that their children are blocked from re-enrolling in the future
- g) An electronic data base is kept by each School Counsellor detailing the facts of all serious parental complaints, the teacher(s) involved and the investigation outcome, this is shared with the Principal.

Parents wishing to make a formal complaint must follow the above procedure, to allow the matter to be thoroughly investigated.

3. The SLT team, Head of Primary and Principal handle serious complaints in an appropriate manner and this may include:
  - Meeting the complainant in person in an interview situation with the Head teacher / teacher and /or pupil present.
  - The collection of factual evidence and witness statements
  - As an outcome of the investigation conducting a formal staff disciplinary hearing if required, in the presence of suitable witnesses and the HR Officer.
  - Where necessary, providing a full report of the complaint and investigation outcome, to the CEO.
4. All formal complaints will be dealt with as promptly as possible, ideally between 2 and 5 work days as per the time lines detailed above.
5. If a parent is still not satisfied with the outcome, the complaint will be referred to a panel hearing.
  - The CEO will appoint the panel
  - There will be 3 members on the panel
  - An independent person must be represented on the panel (not from within Newton staff)
  - The panel will discuss and report their recommendation which will be shared with complainant, Principal & CEO.
  - The timelines above will be adhered to

# Newton British Academy, Al Dafna

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6. A parent may also write directly to the Newton Group Complaints Department which in turn refers the complaint back to the Principal to deal with it and provide feedback. The email address for these complaints is provided in the school.

*Revised & updated August 2023 by SLT*