



**AL-HIDAYAH ISLAMIC SCHOOL**

## **PARENT POLICY FOR CONCERNS, COMPLAINTS AND DISPUTES**

**Policy No STA 045**

**Version: 1.1 (Approved 23-02-2020)**

**Responsible Person: Principal**

**Scheduled Review Date: December 2020**

**Signed, Chair:** 

## Table of Contents

Rationale .....	3
Guiding Principles .....	3
Objectives .....	3
Policy .....	3
Definitions.....	3
Rules of procedural fairness .....	4
Making a complaint .....	4
Confidentiality .....	4
Anonymous Complaints.....	4
Steps to follow when making a complaint .....	6
Remedies.....	6
Role of the Director General .....	6
Complaint handling and recording .....	7
Systematic and Recurring Problems.....	7
Accountability.....	7
Reviews.....	7
FLOW CHART: Resolving Complaints from parents.....	8
Acknowledgement.....	9

At Al Hidayah Islamic School the parents, teachers, the school and community together are committed to creating a nurturing learning environment where children are respected, their voices are heard, where they are safe and feel safe and are happy and engaged. It is our shared responsibility to ensure that every child reaches their individual potential academically, spiritually, socially, physically and emotionally. As part of this joint responsibility, positive relationships between home, the community and school are vital. One of the keys to creating and maintaining positive relationships is open and effective communication. It is important therefore that if there are concerns to be raised, there is a fair and productive procedure in place to manage them, with the aim of achieving a positive outcome for all involved.

### **Guiding Principles:**

Al Hidayah Islamic School is committed to responding promptly, fairly and helpfully to parent and caregiver concerns in whatever way they are raised. This includes complaints from former students and/or their parents or guardians. As such, it is important that any concerns are directed to the most appropriate person at the school. Concerns may be made either verbally or in writing and anonymously.

### **Objectives:**

- To ensure that complaints lodged are resolved in a prompt and efficient manner.
- To promote the highest standard of professionalism when dealing with our community.

### **Policy:**

Staff members at this school are responsible for managing the resolution of disputes and complaints lodged with us. We will make every effort to promptly resolve disputes and complaints lodged with us according to the principles of procedural fairness. Where we cannot resolve a complaint, the complainant, or the Principal can forward written complaints to the Amir of the Governing Shurah.

### **Definitions:**

A **concern** is the expression of a worry, something that has made a person troubled or anxious about an issue and is usually expressed at a 'first level' i.e. to a class teacher at the classroom door or by telephone or email directly to the relevant staff member. Depending on the nature of the concern, it can often be resolved at this 'first level' in an informal manner. NB: It would be prudent nonetheless for the teacher or staff member concerned to make and file a brief note regarding the issue and interaction in case of future escalation and to assist in the identification of patterns emerging over time.

A **complaint** is an expression of dissatisfaction made to the school about its services, decisions, actions or those of its staff, or about the complaint management process itself.

More commonly a complaint would be expected to be in the form of a written communication, a letter or email, addressed directly to the relevant staff member, the Principal or the Amir of the Governing Shurah. However, it should be noted that complaints, of a serious nature, may also be made verbally (in person or by telephone).

A complaint may be made if a complainant thinks that the school or someone has, for example:

- done something wrong;
- failed to do something it/they should have done;
- acted unfairly or impolitely; or
- ignored their concern.
- the complaint management process itself.

A complaint may be made about the school as a whole, about a specific department in the school, about a particular school activity, about an individual member of staff or about one or more students.

A **dispute** is a pursued unresolved complaint that has been escalated, either internally and/or externally to the school.

**Complainant:**

A person or persons lodging a complaint.

**Rules of procedural fairness**

These rules require:

- (a) a hearing appropriate to the circumstances;
- (b) lack of bias;
- (c) evidence to support a decision; and
- (d) inquiry into matters in dispute.

**Making a Complaint:**

Complaints can be made –

1. verbally
2. by letter
3. by email

**Confidentiality**

At Al Hidayah Islamic School every complaint is treated in a respectful and confidential manner.

It is very important for all concerned that it is the school’s policy that complaints made by parents will not rebound adversely on their children and similarly that complaints raised by students will not rebound on them or on other students.

The question of confidentiality will be discussed sensitively and on an individual basis. The school’s policy will be carefully explained, particularly in relation to matters where there is a risk of harm to one or more involved.

**Anonymous Complaints**

Anonymous complaints may be where there is no name or address supplied, or where the complainants say that they do not wish to be identified.

Complainants are encouraged to give their names and are given reassurance on the issue of confidentiality. If they persist in wishing to remain anonymous, it is at the Principal’s discretion as to what action, if any, should be taken, depending on the nature of the complaint and the information provided. Irrespective of whether any action is taken, anonymous complaints are recorded in the complaints register for review, as, over time, they may contribute to an identifiable pattern.

## **Steps to follow when making a complaint:**

Clarify your Concerns - Before raising your concern with the school, consider and clarify the issues in your own mind. Be fair and rational and gather as many factual supporting details as you can. You are representing your individual concerns, not the views of others. Everyone at the school has the same and full entitlement to raise concerns that involve them or their child. In many cases, your inquiry or concern is best directed to the classroom teacher and all teachers and staff have an 'open door' policy.

### Minimum information needed when making a complaint:

You are strongly encouraged to provide the following information when making a complaint, but it is not mandatory:

- your name and contact details;
- copies of any relevant correspondence or documents relating directly to the complaint;
- the nature of the complaint; and in the case of a verbal complaint, where you do not want to be identified or to lodge the complaint in writing, we will endeavour to work directly with you to resolve the matter.
- any concern must only be in relation to your child; you cannot speak on behalf of anyone else.

### Arrange to Speak with the Classroom Teacher

In many circumstances, the classroom teacher is best placed to hear and discuss any concerns. Inquiries regarding academic progress, general behaviour, homework, assessment, attendance and social or emotional wellbeing are best discussed with your child's teacher. You are welcome to either contact the teacher directly, verbally or in writing, to arrange a suitable time to speak with them. When discussing concerns remember the best interests of your child are foremost in mind. Once you have agreed on a path forward, arrange a follow-up form of communication to share progress and gain feedback. Finding solutions agreeable to everyone is a shared responsibility. The teacher will document the complaint and any agreed course of action. Both the parent and teacher are to sign the documented copy.

### If unresolved, involve the Principal

Most concerns can be resolved at the classroom level. However, sometimes concerns are broader than the classroom, or a satisfactory outcome may not have been reached with the classroom teacher. In such cases, concerns can be directed, verbally or in writing, to the Principal.

The Principal will promptly hear your concerns and manage them in a way that is fair and reasonable to all parties. This may require one or several face-to-face meetings and other forms of communication.

To aid a satisfactory and positive outcome, provide as much factual information as you can and be accepting of the need for the Principal to consider impacts on the greater school community. Anonymous concerns will be investigated and followed up on wherever possible.

Complaints can be lodged with the school using any of the contact methods listed above. Written complaints should be addressed:

**"PRIVATE AND CONFIDENTIAL".**

The Principal  
PO Box 761

Complaints about the Principal

If a parent has a complaint about the Principal, they can contact the Amir of the Governing Shurah directly. Written complaints should be addressed:

**"PRIVATE AND CONFIDENTIAL."**

The Amir  
PO Box 761  
Victoria Park WA 6979

Exceptional circumstances

It may be necessary to contact an authority outside of the school to address your concerns. Generally, this is if your concern has not been resolved by the above procedures, or if there is a valid reason for not raising your concern with the school directly. In such cases, the Amir of the School's Governing Shurah is the most appropriate contact point. To do this contact:

**"PRIVATE AND CONFIDENTIAL."**

The Amir  
PO Box 761  
Victoria Park WA 6979

Responsiveness:

Al Hidayah Islamic School will acknowledge written complaints within 5 school days. We seek to resolve local complaints within 14 days. If because of the serious nature of the complaint, it is deemed necessary to forward it on to the Governing Shurah, we will do this without delay. In all cases you will be kept informed of the progress of your complaint.

Enquiring on a complaints progress:

You may inquire as to the progress of your complaint at any time by directly contacting the appropriate person. At the time of lodging a verbal complaint, or in the acknowledgment letter for a written complaint, this person will be identified for you.

Outcome of a complaint:

Al Hidayah Islamic School will advise you verbally or in writing of the outcome of the complaint. Confirmation of the outcome of all written complaints will be provided to you in writing.

Complaints judged to not warrant further action, will not be progressed. You will be advised of this decision in writing.

**Remedies:**

Where a complaint results in the identification of changes that should be made to our processes, those changes will be made.

**Role of the Director General:**

The Director General of the Department of Education is responsible for ensuring that the school

student, parent or community member is entitled to contact the Director General with concerns about how the school has dealt with a complaint. Information is available on the Department of Education website<sup>16</sup>. While the Director General may consider whether the school has breached the registration standards, she does not have power to intervene in a complaint or override the school's decision.

### **Complaint handling and recording:**

Data about complaints lodged with our school is collected and recorded.

- date of complaint;
- name of complainant and relationship to the school;
- subject matter of the complaint, including the name of any person complained about and his or her relationship to the school;
- complaint investigator and position or role at the school;
- date investigation completed;
- whether complaint upheld;
- resolution agreed with or offered to complainant;
- date of referral for review (for example by the Governing Shurah);
- complaint reviewer and relationship to the school;
- date review finalised; and
- review resolution agreed with or offered to complainant.

### **Systemic and Recurring Problems:**

The school regularly reviews, evaluates and improves child safe practices. This involves complaints, concerns and safety incidents being analysed to identify causes and systemic failures to inform continuous improvement.

The school reports on the findings of relevant reviews to staff and volunteers, community and families and children and young people.

### **Accountability:**

We report our complaints handling processes against our documented performance standards.

### **Reviews:**

The Governing Shurah reviews this policy annually.

**Resolving Complaints from Parents**

Procedure for expressing a concern or complaint



Contact a staff member with whom you feel most comfortable and/or is closely connected with the issue. If the matter is not dealt with to your satisfaction the next step is ...



**Principal**  
Option to speak or write to the Principal – please make an appointment for a meeting through the front office. After this step if the matter has not been dealt with to your satisfaction, it can be referred on for further review by (the Chair of the school’s governing body or nominate the designated person authorised by the school).



Amir of the Governing Shurah  
For review  
Please write to:  
The Amir of the Governing Shurah  
PO Box 761  
Victoria Park WA 6979  
Mark: Private & Confidential

**Legal Advice**  
Please note that you are able to seek legal advice at any time you wish. However it would not be appropriate in the early stages of resolution.



## Parents Complaints Policy

### **Acknowledgement**

By signing this Acknowledgement, you are agreeing to abide by this Parents Complaints Policy to the best of your ability and acknowledge that you understand that breaches of this Parents Complaints Policy will be taken seriously.

Please sign and date your Acknowledgement and return to the Administrative Officer within five (5) working days. Thank you.

I \_\_\_\_\_ have read, understood and agree to comply with the terms of this Parents Complaints Policy.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Employee Signature

\_\_\_\_\_  
Dated

\_\_\_\_\_  
Principal Signature

\_\_\_\_\_  
Dated