

## Communication and Complaints Policy

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Supersedes:	NA
Approved By:	Senior Leadership Team
Owned By:	Principal/CEO
Reviewed By:	Local Advisory Board

### 1. Introduction

**1.1.** GEMS Al Barsha National School is committed to good communication between home and school and to listening to members of the school community in order to improve the quality of education we provide. The guiding principles behind the School Communication and Complaints Procedure are:

- All complaints/communications are dealt with promptly, effectively, objectively and professionally
- Teaching staff all available at the start and end of the school day in the playground to have a quick word with families and to arrange a longer appointment if required. Teaching staff also are able to keep in contact with families by email.
- We aim to respond to concerns and queries in an informal manner and resolve them quickly, sensitively and to the satisfaction of all concerned
- Contact will be made with all complainants within 24 hours.

### 2. Aims and Objectives

**2.1.** The aims and objectives of this policy are:

- To ensure positive and effective communication between parents and other stakeholders and members of staff at GEMS Al Barsha National School.
- To enable our parents and stakeholders to make complaints if they are dissatisfied;
- To encourage our parents and stakeholders to give us feedback;
- To deal promptly and professionally with complaints always seeking to resolve issues to the satisfaction of our parents and stakeholders

### 3. Communication with Parents and the Community

**3.1.** Good communication is based on mutual respect. Staff must take care in all communications with parents both formal and informal, in the work place and out of school. Staff should avoid engaging in discussions about school issues outside of school. This may well be in breach of confidentiality. Further guidance can be found in the school code of conduct. All letters and formal communications with parents should be approved by the Principal or Head of Primary / Head of Secondary prior to being sent home. Great care should be taken when responding to emails. Teachers should ensure they are following school policy and guidance

at all times. Specialist teachers, including Arabic, should copy the appropriate class teacher / form tutor into all communications with parents.

#### **4. Resolving Informal Complaints**

- 4.1. At each stage in the procedure, efforts must be made to keep in mind ways in which a complaint can be resolved. It might be sufficient to acknowledge that the complaint is valid in whole or in part. In addition, it may be appropriate to offer one or more of the following:
  - an apology;
  - an explanation;
  - an admission that the situation could have been handled differently or better;
  - an assurance that the event complained of will not recur;
  - an explanation of the steps that have been taken to ensure that it will not happen again;
  - an undertaking to review school policies in light of the complaint.
- 4.2. It may also be the case however that the complaint may not have any substance and is therefore considered to be unfounded or unsubstantiated.

#### **5. Resolving Formal Complaints**

- 5.1. The school will make every effort to respond fully to a written complaint within 5 school days. Where this proves unrealistic, the school will inform the complainant in writing, and give some estimate of how long it will take to provide a detailed response. Contact will be made with all complainants within 24 hours.
- 5.2. See Appendix 1 for **Parent Concerns Communication Channels**
- 5.3. Complaints regarding school organisation, school policies, staff conduct and conduct of the Principal will follow a more formal route.
- 5.4. If families are still unsatisfied with the steps taken, this formal procedure applies.
  - a. 'Formal Complaints' will need to be put in writing. (Where this would be difficult for the complainant they should contact the Principal).
  - b. Interviews with staff which are carried out as part of the formal complaints procedure must be conducted on the understanding that staff have the right, if they so wish, to be accompanied by a representative or friend.
  - c. Where the complaints are initially made directly by parents and others to the GEMS Education Corporate Office, the GEMS Education Corporate Office management should refer the complainant back to the school unless the complaint is about the Principal.
  - d. If the complaint cannot be investigated objectively by the Principal, or the complainant is dissatisfied with the Principal's response, the management of GEMS Education must be informed.

e. Complainants who remain dissatisfied following the investigations of the complaint by the Principal will be given the opportunity to put their complaint to the management of GEMS Education

f. Complainants will be encouraged to make use of the above procedure before referring the complaint further for example to KHDA.

**5.5.** Complaints regarding school organisation, school policies, staff conduct and conduct of the Principal will follow a more formal route.

## **6. Investigating Complaints**

6.1. The Investigating Officer (as named by the Principal) should follow the process below:

- establish what has happened so far, and who has been involved;
- clarify the nature of the complaint and what remains unresolved;
- meet with the complainant or contact them (if unsure or further information necessary);
- clarify what the complainant feels would put things right;
- interview those involved in the matter and/or those complained of, allowing them to be accompanied if they wish;
- conduct an interview with an open mind and be prepared to persist in the questioning;
- keep notes of any interviews / discussions

## Appendix 1: Parent Concerns Communication Channels

Concern	First point of contact	Escalated to	Escalated to	Escalated to
<b>Subject matter, homework or the curriculum</b>	<b>Prim:</b> Class Teacher <b>Sec:</b> Subject Teacher	<b>Prim:</b> Year Leader <b>Sec:</b> Head of Department	Vice-Principal	Principal GEMS School Support Centre (Vice-President Education) KHDA
<b>Welfare issues, problems between students</b>	<b>Prim:</b> Class Teacher <b>Sec:</b> Form Tutor	<b>Prim:</b> Year Leader <b>Sec:</b> Head of Department	Vice-Principal	
<b>School organisation, policies, staff conduct, serious issues</b>	<b>Whole School:</b> PRE <b>Prim:</b> Phase Leader	<b>Prim:</b> Head of Primary <b>Sec:</b> Head of Secondary	Principal/CEO	
<b>Staff Issues</b>	<b>Prim:</b> Head of Primary <b>Sec:</b> Head of Secondary	Principal	GEMS School Support Centre	

## Email Contact

<p><b>Middle Leadership Team</b>            FS-Year 2: <a href="mailto:a.kirkham_gns@gemsedu.com">a.kirkham_gns@gemsedu.com</a>            Year 1: <a href="mailto:j.gibson_gns@gemsedu.com">j.gibson_gns@gemsedu.com</a>            Year 2: <a href="mailto:m.luekong_gns@gemsedu.com">m.luekong_gns@gemsedu.com</a>            Year 3: <a href="mailto:e.armstronghaw_gns@gemsedu.com">e.armstronghaw_gns@gemsedu.com</a>            Year 4: Hannah Bridge &lt;<a href="mailto:h.bridge_gns@gemsedu.com">h.bridge_gns@gemsedu.com</a>&gt;            Year 5: <a href="mailto:b.wright_gns@gemsedu.com">b.wright_gns@gemsedu.com</a>            Year 6:  <a href="mailto:e.courtney_gns@gemsedu.com">e.courtney_gns@gemsedu.com</a>            Islamic Culture and Values:  <a href="mailto:a.abuhassan_gns@gemsedu.com">a.abuhassan_gns@gemsedu.com</a>            Islamic Curriculum  <a href="mailto:s.chennoune_gns@gemsedu.com">s.chennoune_gns@gemsedu.com</a>            Arabic: <a href="mailto:z.majed_gns@gemsedu.com">z.majed_gns@gemsedu.com</a>            English: <a href="mailto:n.akhter_gns@gemsedu.com">n.akhter_gns@gemsedu.com</a>            Mathematics: <a href="mailto:m.jonesevans_gns@gemsedu.com">m.jonesevans_gns@gemsedu.com</a>  <a href="mailto:f.shariff_gns@gemsedu.com">f.shariff_gns@gemsedu.com</a>            Science: <a href="mailto:s.imtiaz_gns@gemsedu.com">s.imtiaz_gns@gemsedu.com</a></p>	<p><b>Senior Leadership Team</b>            Primary:  <a href="mailto:m.barron_gns@gemsedu.com">m.barron_gns@gemsedu.com</a>  <a href="mailto:g.cooper_gns@gemsedu.com">g.cooper_gns@gemsedu.com</a>  <a href="mailto:m.maher_gns@gemsedu.com">m.maher_gns@gemsedu.com</a>  <a href="mailto:l.murphy_gns@gemsedu.com">l.murphy_gns@gemsedu.com</a>  <a href="mailto:l.claridge_gns@gemsedu.com">l.claridge_gns@gemsedu.com</a>            Secondary:  <a href="mailto:m.chehab_gns@gemsedu.com">m.chehab_gns@gemsedu.com</a>  <a href="mailto:s.marren_gns@gemsedu.com">s.marren_gns@gemsedu.com</a>  <a href="mailto:l.clarke_gns@gemsedu.com">l.clarke_gns@gemsedu.com</a>            Arabic/MoE: <a href="mailto:z.majed_gns@gemsedu.com">z.majed_gns@gemsedu.com</a>            Inclusion:  <a href="mailto:r.ahmed_gns@gemsedu.com">r.ahmed_gns@gemsedu.com</a></p>	<p><b>Executive Leadership</b>            Vice-Principals:  <a href="mailto:e.baker_gns@gemsedu.com">e.baker_gns@gemsedu.com</a>  <a href="mailto:a.touati_gns@gemsedu.com">a.touati_gns@gemsedu.com</a>            Principal/CEO: <a href="mailto:k.murcia_gns@gemsedu.com">k.murcia_gns@gemsedu.com</a>            GEMS School Support Centre            (Vice-President Education):  <a href="mailto:ghadeer.a_akn@gemsedu.com">ghadeer.a_akn@gemsedu.com</a></p>
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