



المدرسة العالمية الأمريكية  
UNIVERSAL AMERICAN SCHOOL

Al-Futaim Education Foundation

# VISION

FOREVER DRIVEN BY KNOWLEDGE,  
INSPIRED BY SUCCESS

# MISSION

TO NURTURE AN INTERNATIONALLY  
MINDED COMMUNITY OF INTEGRITY  
AND ACADEMIC EXCELLENCE

# VALUES

RESPECT, INTEGRITY,  
COLLABORATION, EXCELLENCE

## PARENTAL COMPLAINTS POLICY

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## 1. Underpinning Complaints Philosophy:

UAS is committed to providing parents and carers with a voice and welcome their feedback. UAS will take a customer service approach to complaints and aims to resolve parents' concerns and complaints as swiftly and effectively as possible to avoid escalation and recurrence. It is hoped that any worries or complaints can be dealt with informally, but if not, the School has a formal complaints procedure.

Formal complaints are extremely rare, reflecting the positive relationships between students, parents and the School which enable matters to be resolved informally.

During orientation, UAS Teachers and Leaders are advised of the professional expectation to be proactive, preventative and accommodating in resolving parent concerns.

A more formal procedure for parent complaints is outlined and takes into consideration requirements advised by local regulatory authorities. All stages of the complaints procedure will be investigatory rather than adversarial.

## 2. Purpose of the Policy:

- Outlines expectations, general procedures for managing parent complaints in a proactive and preventative manner.
- Outlines procedures for documenting complaints providing an overview in an effort to prevent recurring conditions, and to track individual matters to ensure swift effective resolution to retain families at UAS.
- Any complaint which requires further action beyond listening, must be escalated and recorded, along with resolution/actions taken and dates. Parents are advised that anonymous complaints will not be investigated unless under truly exceptional circumstances, such as child protection issues or bullying allegations, which may involve external agencies.

## 3. Responsibilities:

- The Director is responsible for ensuring the Complaints Policy and procedures are implemented in school and for ensuring any complaint is reasonably investigated.
- School staff are responsible for implementing the Complaints Policy and for reporting any complaint to their direct line manager or Senior Leadership Team if relevant.

## 4. Procedures:

### Stage 1: Informal Procedure

- It is hoped that almost all complaints will be resolved quickly and informally.
- Complaints may come by email/phone/in person/anonymous letters (see requirements above)/redirected by teacher.
- As per School Handbook and Parent Contracts (where applicable), Parents are requested to approach the person(s)/department directly involved for swift resolution.

- If the complaint is against a specific member of staff and parents believe that the complaint is of a serious nature, they may make the complaint directly to the Director or a member of the Senior Leadership Team.
- If, after the meeting, there is no satisfactory resolution, parents are advised to proceed to Stage 2 of the procedure.

### **Stage 2: Formal Resolution**

- If the complaint cannot be resolved on an informal basis, parents should put their complaint in writing to the Principal of either Primary School or High School.
- The Principal will inform the Director of any formal complaints received within 24 hours of their receipt.
- The Principal will meet the parents concerned, within two working days of receiving the written complaint, to discuss the matter. If possible, a resolution will be reached at this stage. If the complaint is made against a specific member of staff, the Principal will have the right to decide whether the member of staff's presence will be appropriate at this stage.
- The Principal may appoint an Investigating Officer to investigate the matter and will provide a response within 2 working days. The investigation report will confirm if they believe there is a case to answer. This will be communicated to all interested parties.
- The School will keep written records of all meetings and interviews held in relation to the complaint.
- If parents are not satisfied with the decision, they should proceed to Stage 3 of the procedure, which will be considered by the Director.

### **Stage 3: Director's Review**

- If parents wish to proceed to Stage 3 of the procedure, they will be referred to the Director for review.
- The Director will acknowledge the complaint within 2 working days of the receipt and reply within a further 2 working days.
- The Director's review will consist of the following:
  - A review to ensure the process that the correct processes have been followed
  - A review of the written records of meetings and interviews and of any other evidence
  - A review of the decision made by the Principal
- The Director will meet with the parents to convey their decision.

## 5. Appeal to the Board:

- If parents are dissatisfied with the decision made, they should write to the School Board within 7 days of the date they have been notified of the decision, so that the matter can be referred to the Complaint and Appeal Panel for consideration.
- Parents should ensure that a copy of all relevant documents and their full contact details accompany their letter, which should also state the outcome desired and all the grounds of the complaint. The Complaint and Appeal Panel will only be convened if Stages One to Three of this procedure have been followed.
- The School Board Secretary shall acknowledge the complaint and schedule a hearing to take place as soon as reasonably practicable, but the Panel will not normally sit during half terms or school holidays. The Panel will consist of at least three persons not having detailed knowledge of or being directly involved in the matters detailed in the complaint. Each of the Panel members shall be appointed by the School Board. The hearing will be chaired by one member of the Panel (chosen by themselves) and will be conducted in an informal manner. The School Board Secretary will be asked to take handwritten minutes of the proceedings.
- The parents will be sent written notification of the date, time and place of the hearing together with brief details of the panel members. Parents/guardians will be asked to attend the hearing and may be accompanied by one other person, this may be a relative or friend. Legal representation is not normally considered appropriate.
- If parents wish to bring a legally qualified person to act in their professional capacity, the parents should provide the school with at least 7 days' notice.
- After consideration of all matters discussed at the hearing, the Panel will reach a decision (unless there is an agreed position) and may make recommendations, which it shall complete within 14 working days of the appeal hearing. The School Board Secretary will write to the parents/ third party, informing them of its decision and the reasons for it. The Panel's findings and recommendations, if any, will be sent in writing to the parents, the Director, the Board members and, where relevant, the person complained of.
- Parents can be assured that all concerns and complaints will be treated seriously and confidentially. Correspondence, statements and records will be kept confidential.
- The Complaint and Appeal Panel will be made up of:
- Members of the School Board (who were not involved in Stage Three).
- A School Leadership representative (normally the Director, however the director will not take part in making the final decision).

## 6. Complaints about members of the Senior Leadership Team and the Director:

- If a complaint is received about a member of the Senior Leadership Team, it is hoped that the complaint can be resolved informally. If a complainant believes this would not be possible, the complaint should be sent directly to The Director.

- If a complaint is received about the Director, it is hoped that the complaint can be resolved informally. If a complainant believes this would not be possible, the complaint should be sent directly to the School Board Secretary.

## **7. Register of Complaints:**

- A record of all written complaints, and whether they were resolved at the preliminary stage or proceeded to an investigation, will be kept in confidence by the relevant Principal's P.A.
- A register (stage 2, 3 or complaints escalated to the School Board) will be held centrally by the Director's PA and will be reviewed annually by the School Board.

## **8. Confidentiality:**

- Parents can be assured that all concerns and complaints will be treated seriously and in confidence.
- Correspondence, statements and records will be kept confidential.