



INDEPENDENT JEWISH DAY SCHOOL
an ACADEMY

Complaints and Complaints Against Staff Policy

Date: September 2023

Review Date: December 2024

Principal Rabbi Eliezer Zobin M.A.

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Charity number 287148; Company number 7718480

Introduction and Overview of the Policy

- We believe that the IJDS Academy ('the IJDS') provides a good education for all our children, and that the Headteacher and other staff work very hard to build positive relationships with all parents. However, the IJDS is obliged to have procedures in place in case there are complaints.
- Complaints can be made by any person, including members of the public, as well as parents or carers of children that are registered to the school.
- The following policy sets out the procedure that the IJDS follows in such cases.
- If any parent is unhappy with the education that their child is receiving, or has any concern relating to the IJDS, we encourage that person to talk to the child's class teacher immediately. If the matter is unresolved then the process outlined in this Policy should be followed.
- All parents have the right, as a last resort, to appeal to the Secretary of State for Education, if they still feel that their complaint has not been properly addressed having followed the process contained in this Policy.

The difference between a concern and a complaint

- A concern may be defined as '*an expression of worry or doubt over an issue considered to be important for which reassurances are sought*'.
- A complaint may be defined as '*an expression of dissatisfaction however made, about actions taken or a lack of action*'.
- It is in everyone's interest that concerns and complaints are resolved at the earliest possible stage. Many issues can be resolved informally, without the need to use the formal stages of the complaints procedure. Independent Jewish Day School takes concerns seriously and will make every effort to resolve the matter as quickly as possible.
- If you have difficulty discussing a concern with a particular member of staff, we will respect your views. In these cases, The Headteacher will refer you to another staff member.
- Similarly, if the member of staff directly involved feels unable to deal with a concern, the Headteacher will refer you to another staff member. The member of staff may be more senior but does not have to be. The ability to consider the concern objectively and impartially is more important.
- We understand however, that there are occasions when people would like to raise their concerns formally. In this case, Independent Jewish Day School will attempt to resolve the issue internally, through the stages outlined within this complaints procedure.

Aims and objectives

- The IJDS aims to be fair, open and honest when dealing with any complaint.
- We give careful consideration to all complaints and deal with them as swiftly as possible.
- We aim to resolve any complaint through dialogue and mutual understanding and, in all cases, we put the interests of the child above all other issues.
- We provide sufficient opportunity for any complaint to be fully discussed, and then resolved.

How to raise a concern or make a complaint:

- A concern or complaint can be made in person, in writing or by telephone.
- They may also be made by a third party acting on behalf of a complainant, as long as they have appropriate consent to do so.
- Complaints against school staff (except the Headteacher) should be made in the first instance, to the Headteacher via the school office. Please mark them as Private and Confidential.
- Complaints that involve or are about the Headteacher should be addressed to the Managing Director, via the school office. Please mark them as Private and Confidential.

- Complaints about the Managing Director, any individual director or the whole director body should be addressed to The Clerk to the Director Body via the school office. Please mark them as Private and Confidential.
- For ease of use, a template complaint form is included at the end of this procedure. If you require help in completing the form, please contact the school office. You can also ask a third-party organisation for example like the Citizens Advice to help you.
- In accordance with equality law, we will consider making reasonable adjustments if required, to enable complainants to access and complete this complaints procedure. For instance, providing information in alternative formats, assisting complainants in raising a formal complaint or holding meetings in accessible locations.

Anonymous complaints

- We will not normally investigate anonymous complaints.
- However, the Headteacher or Managing Director, if appropriate, will determine whether the complaint warrants an investigation.

Time scales

- You must raise the complaint within three months of the incident or, where a series of associated incidents have occurred, within three months of the last of these incidents.
- We will consider complaints made outside of this time frame if exceptional circumstances apply.

Complaints received outside of term time

- We will consider complaints made outside of term time to have been received on the first school day after the holiday period.

The complaints process:

- If a parent is concerned about anything to do with the education that we are providing at the IJDS, they should, in the first instance, discuss the matter with their child's class teacher.
- Most matters of concern can be dealt with in this way.
- All teachers work very hard to ensure that each child is happy at the IJDS, and is making good progress; they always want to know if there is a problem, so that they can take action before the problem seriously affects the child's progress.
- Where a parent feels that a situation has not been resolved through contact with the class teacher, or that their concern is of a sufficiently serious nature, they should make an appointment to discuss it with a member of the Senior Leadership Team (SLT).
- The SLT consists of the Headteacher, Assistant Headteacher/s and SENCo.
- Where necessary the SENCo and/or Assistant Headteacher will subsequently involve the Headteacher.
- The Headteacher and Senior Leadership Team (SLT) consider any such complaint very seriously and investigate each case thoroughly. Most complaints are normally resolved at this stage.

Complaints against the Headteacher:

- Should a parent have a complaint about the Headteacher, s/he should first make an informal approach to one of the members of the Board of Directors, who is obliged to investigate it.
- The Director in question will do all s/he can to resolve the issue through a dialogue with the Headteacher, but if a parent is unhappy with the outcome, s/he can make a formal complaint, as outlined below.

- Only if an informal complaint fails to resolve the matter should a formal complaint be made to The Board of Directors. This complaint must be made in writing, stating the nature of the complaint and how the IJDS has handled it so far. The parent should send this written complaint to the Managing Director of the IJDS (the person who was formally known as the Chair of Governors).
- The Managing Director must consider all written complaints within 21 days of receipt.
- If necessary, the Managing Director of the IJDS will convene a Complaints Panel consisting of three Directors who should not have been involved in the early stages of the complaint and who are not closely connected to the parent or to any member of staff who is the subject of the complaint, as far as is reasonably practicable ('the Complaints Panel').
- The Complaints Panel will elect their own Chair.
- A Clerk will be appointed to the Complaints Panel, by the Complaints Panel, who will set the date, time and venue of the hearing, will collate any written material and send it to the parties in advance of the hearing, record the proceedings and notify all parties of the Complaints Panel's decision.
- The complainant should be given at least 5 working days' notice of the hearing.
- The aim of the hearing, which needs to be held in private, will always be to resolve the complaint and achieve reconciliation between the IJDS and the complainant.
- After hearing all the evidence, the Complaints Panel will consider their decision and inform the parent about it in writing within 14 days of the hearing. The Complaints Panel will do all they can at this stage to resolve the complaint to the complainant's satisfaction.
- The Complaints Panel is the last IJDS based stage of the complaints process. Individual complaints will not be heard by the whole Board of Directors at any stage as this would compromise the impartiality of any Complaints Panel set up for a disciplinary hearing against a member of staff following a serious complaint.
- It is important that the appeal hearing is independent and impartial and that it is seen to be so. No Director may sit on the panel if they have had a prior involvement in the complaint or in the circumstances surrounding it.
- If any parent is still not content that the complaint has been dealt with properly, then s/he is entitled to appeal to the Secretary of State for Education.

Monitoring and review:

- The Board of Directors will monitor the complaints procedure, in order to ensure that all complaints are handled properly. The Headteacher will log all complaints received by the IJDS and will record how they were resolved. The log will be available for inspection by a Director if necessary.
- The Board of Directors will take into account any local or national decisions that will affect the complaints process, and make any modifications necessary to this policy. This policy is made available to all parents, so that they can be properly informed about the complaints process.

Signed: Mr Yosh Radomsky (Headteacher)

Dated: September 2023



Complaint Form

Please complete and return to the Headteacher / Managing Director / Clerk who will acknowledge receipt and explain what action has been taken.

Your name:
Pupil's name (if relevant):
Your relationship to the pupil (if relevant):
Address: Postcode: Daytime telephone number: Evening telephone number: Email address:
Please give details of your complaint, including whether you have spoken to anyone at the school about it.
What actions do you feel might resolve the problem at this stage?

Are you attaching any paperwork? If so, please give details.

Signature:

Date:

FOR OFFICAL USE ONLY:

Date acknowledgement sent:

By whom:

Complaint referred to:

Action taken:

Date: