Concerns and Complaints Procedures for Parents and Guardians 2026

Approved by:	Mel Hitchcocks	**Last reviewed on:**	Sept 2026
Date:	Sept 2026	**Next review due by:**	Sept 2028

This is a whole school policy which includes Early Years provision.

1. Rationale

The staff and management of British International School of Ljubljana (BISL) are committed to providing the best education for our students. We want them to be healthy, happy and safe and to be successful in their academic development. In order to achieve this, we fully recognise the importance of successful home-school partnerships; of establishing and maintaining good relationships with parents and the wider community.

Inevitably, there will be occasions where students or parents have concerns or complaints, and these must be resolved as quickly and fairly as possible.

This Policy should be considered in conjunction with, and with reference to:

- BISL Terms & Conditions, Caring For Each Other Statement and other policies as posted on the School's website.
- BISL Parent Handbook and Parent Code of Conduct Policy.
- Staff Behaviour & Code of Conduct Policy and Grievance Policy.
- Personal Data Protection Act Act (ZVOP-1, 2005) and Data Protection Policy.
- Health & Safety at Work Act (ZVZD-1, 2011).

2. Aims

At BISL, we believe that:

- parents have the right to address and resolve concerns relating to their children's education;
- concerns and complaints should be addressed through a clearly structured process;
- any concern or complaint must be treated sensitively and addressed fairly;
- parents or staff have a right of appeal to Orbital Education if they are not satisfied with the outcome of any complaint;
- decisions of Orbital Education are final and binding.

This Policy lays out clear guidelines for addressing concerns and resolving complaints as quickly as possible and with the least possible disruption to the operations of the school and the students' learning. It states:

- the expectations and responsibilities of those involved;
- the informal and formal procedures to be followed;
- the procedures for appealing against decisions.

3. Purpose

- Provide a fair, impartial, timely and transparent process for raising and resolving concerns and complaints.
- Promote early resolution by encouraging informal discussion before escalation.
- Ensure consistency and procedural fairness in handling issues across the school.
- Protect all parties (complainant and subject) through structured, impartial processes.

- Demonstrate accountability and good governance to governors, proprietors, and inspectors.

4. Scope

This policy applies to all concerns and complaints raised by parents and carers of current pupils, in accordance with the expectations of the British Schools Overseas (BSO) framework.
It covers matters relating to:

- The quality of education and curriculum delivery
- Standards of teaching, learning, and assessment
- Pupils' welfare, pastoral care, and wellbeing
- Behaviour management and the implementation of school policies
- Communication with parents and stakeholders
- The operation and management of the school, including administrative services and co-curricular provision

The policy applies to all phases of the school, including Early Years (where applicable), and to all activities provided under the school's responsibility, whether on or off site.

5. Roles & Responsibilities

Stage 1: Teachers and support staff: Informal concerns

Stage 1: Middle and Senior Leaders: Informal concerns escalated from teachers

Stage 2: Principal: formal Complaints

Stage 3: Governors: Formal Complaints Panel.

Complaints Procedure

Stage 1 – Informal Resolution

It is hoped that most complaints and concerns will be resolved quickly and informally by discussion with staff at the school; more difficult or complex concerns may take more than one discussion.

If parents have a complaint, they should normally contact their child´s class/ form/subject teacher. In most cases (except during the school holiday periods) the teacher will meet/speak to/contact the parents concerned, **normally within two days** of receiving a complaint to discuss the matter. In many cases, the matter will be resolved straightaway by this means to the parents´ satisfaction. If the teacher cannot resolve the matter alone, it may be necessary for him/her to consult their Line Manager and involve her/him in the matter.
Should the matter not be resolved **within 10 days** or in the event that the Class/ Form Teacher and parents fail to reach a satisfactory resolution, then parents will be advised to proceed with their complaint to the Director of Teaching and Learning to see if it can be resolved on an informal basis.

The Director of Teaching and Learning may request to meet the complainant to gain further information relevant to the complaint. Statements from witnesses will be collected where necessary. When all the relevant facts have been established, the s/he may either call a meeting with the complainant and provide a verbal response, or produce a written response to the complainant, as considered appropriate. The aim is to find an informal resolution.
The Director of Teaching and Learning will keep written records of all meetings and interviews held in relation to the complaint and consult with the principal regarding future actions.

Stage 2 – Formal Complaint

Where the parent is not satisfied with the response to the complaint initiated on an informal basis, then this should be forwarded to the principal, formally **in writing**.
The complainant will be contacted within 24 hours of receiving the notice, in order to arrange a meeting.
The meeting should be held as soon as practicable and convenient to both the complainant and the principal in order to try to establish a solution. All written reports must be forwarded to the principal at least 24 hours in advance of the meeting. Until this is attended to, the meeting cannot take place.

After the meeting, and within 48 hours, the principal will give their written final resolution to the matter.

Stage 3 – Panel Hearing

If parents are not satisfied with the response to the complaint arising from the stage 2 Principal review, there is a provision for a hearing before a panel appointed by on behalf of the proprietor and consisting of at least three people who were not directly involved in the matters detailed in the complaint.
The point of contact should be the: Director of Education, Ariston Education michael@orbital.education

The Director of Education will acknowledge the receipt of the complaint normally within five working days.

At least one member is independent of the management and running of the school and has no prior involvement in the complaint.

The Director of Education will schedule a meeting with the Panel to take place as soon as practicable and normally within 28 days of receipt of the complaint.

Parents may attend and be accompanied at a panel if they wish. This may be a relative, teacher or friend. Legal representation will not normally be appropriate. Details of this person should be supplied to the Director of Education not later than three days prior to the hearing.

If possible, the Panel will resolve the parents´ complaint, without the need for further investigation. Where further investigation is required, the Panel will decide how to carry out the investigation.
After due consideration of all facts, they consider relevant, the Panel will reach a decision and may make recommendations, which it shall complete within 10 working days of the Hearing.
The Panel will write to the parents, and where relevant, the person complained about, informing them of its decision, the reasons for it, and, where relevant, any recommendations. A copy of these findings and recommendations will be kept in the Official Complaints Folder in the Principal's Office and will be available for inspection by the Director of Education and/or the CEO of the group.

The decision of the Panel will be final in that there will be no further right to appeal or further hearing within the school's procedure.

The panel's decision is the final stage of the school's internal complaints procedure. This does not prevent a complainant from pursuing any rights they may have under local law or through any competent external authority.

Recording Complaints

A written record is kept in the Official Complaints Folder in the Principal's Office of all complaints made in writing under the formal part of this procedure. A record is held of whether the complaint has been resolved at the formal stage or proceeded to a panel hearing, and any action taken by the school as a result of the complaint regardless of whether it is upheld.

Records will be retained in accordance with the school's records retention schedule and applicable data protection law, and for at least three years from resolution unless a longer retention period is required

Confidentiality

Correspondence, statements and records relating to individual complaints will be kept confidential except where disclosure is required or permitted by law, or where an inspection or accreditation body properly requires access.

If the complaint is about the principal directly, as opposed to school policy or procedures, then the Director of Education and the CEO of the group will be informed, and the parents will be asked to send their complaint in writing to them. Michael@orbital.education

All parties are expected to respect the confidential nature of the process.

Vexatious Complaints

Persistent / repetitive complaints

Where a complainant seeks to re-open an issue that has already been fully considered through all stages of the school's complaints procedure, and the school has taken all reasonable steps to address the complaint, the Principal or Director of Education will write to the complainant to confirm that the matter is closed.

If the complainant continues to contact the school regarding the same issue, the school is not required to enter into further correspondence where:

- the complaint has been investigated fully and in line with this procedure;
- a clear and reasoned written response has been provided; and
- no new, material information or evidence is presented.

In such cases, the school will inform the complainant in writing that the matter is closed and that further correspondence on the same issue will not receive a response.
The school will, however, continue to consider any new complaints, or new evidence relating to a previously considered matter, in line with this policy.

Managing Unreasonable Behaviour

The school is committed to ensuring that all complaints are handled fairly, transparently and without prejudice. However, there are occasions where a complainant's behaviour may hinder the effective investigation or resolution of a complaint.

Behaviour may be considered unreasonable where it:

- is abusive, offensive, threatening, or intimidating towards staff;
- involves an excessive frequency or volume of contact;
- is persistently repetitive without presenting new information; or
- places unreasonable demands on school time or resources.

Where such behaviour is identified, the school may take **proportionate and reasonable steps** to manage communication. These may include:

- requiring contact to be made through a single nominated point of contact;
- limiting the frequency or method of communication;
- declining to respond to repeated correspondence that raises no new issues.

Any such decision will be:

- made by the Principal or an appropriate senior leader/proprietor representative;
- reasonable and proportionate in the circumstances;
- communicated clearly to the complainant in writing, including the reasons for the decision; and
- subject to periodic review.

Who is a Vexatious Complainant?

The school recognises the importance of addressing all complaints fairly and encourages complainants to raise concerns without fear of disadvantage.
A complaint may be considered vexatious where it is pursued in a manner that is unreasonable, for example where it:

- continues after all stages of the complaints procedure have been exhausted, without the submission of new evidence;
- is repetitious or duplicates previous complaints;
- seeks remedies that are clearly unreasonable or beyond the authority of the school to provide; or
- is pursued in a manner that is abusive, harassing, or intended to cause disruption.

The decision to classify a complaint as vexatious will be made by the Principal or, where appropriate, the School Board/Proprietor, and will be formally recorded.

Who determines when a Complainant is a Vexatious Complainant?

The principal may make a finding that the Complainant is a Vexatious Complainant at the same time as it provides a final decision in respect of any complaint at Stage 3 of the Complaints procedure or The School Board, after Stage 3 of the Complaints Procedure has been invoked, the Complaint remains unresolved.

What are the consequences of being classified as a Vexatious Complainant?

Where a complainant's behaviour is deemed unreasonable or a complaint is considered vexatious, the school may take appropriate and proportionate action to manage further interactions. This may include:

- restricting methods or frequency of communication;
- declining to respond to further correspondence on the same issue where no new information is provided.

In all cases, the school will ensure that:

- any new complaint is considered on its merits;
- decisions are reasonable, proportionate, and consistently applied;
- the complainant is informed in writing of any restrictions and the reasons for them; and
- restrictions are reviewed periodically to ensure they remain appropriate.
- The school reserves the right to non re-admittance of the family to the school community

Monitoring and Review

The school ensures the effective implementation of this policy through regular review, training and oversight.
Each term, the number of formal complaints should be recorded in the principal's report to Governors.
The Director of Education in their Governance role, will check the Complaints File on an annual basis. This policy is published on the school website and available to parents on request.

Related Policies

This policy should be read in conjunction with the following documents:

- Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy
- Behaviour and Anti-Bullying Policies
- Data Protection Policy
- Admissions Policy
- SEND Policy
- Health and Safety Policy

Appendix 1

Concerns and Complaints – Summary

We are committed to working in partnership with parents and resolving any concerns quickly, fairly, and transparently. Most issues can be resolved informally, and we encourage parents to raise concerns at the earliest opportunity.

How to Raise a Concern or Complaint Step

1: Speak to the School (Informal Stage)

- Please contact your child's class teacher or form tutor first.
- Most concerns are resolved quickly through discussion.
- If needed, the issue may be referred to a Head of Year, Head of Phase or Senior Leader.

🟩 We aim to respond promptly and work with you to reach a solution.

Step 2: Formal Complaint

If your concern is not resolved informally:

- Please write to the Principal outlining your complaint clearly.
- The school will acknowledge your complaint and arrange a meeting if appropriate.
- You will receive a written response with the outcome.

Step 3: Complaints Panel

If you remain dissatisfied:

- You may request a review by a Complaints Panel.
- The panel will include at least three people, with one independent member.
- You may attend the meeting and bring someone with you.
- The panel will consider the complaint and provide a final written decision.

Our Commitments to You

- Your complaint will be handled fairly, impartially and respectfully
- We will follow a clear process with defined stages
- You will receive a written outcome at each formal stage
- A record of complaints will be kept and reviewed by the school

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If a Concern Has Been Fully Considered

Where a complaint has been fully reviewed through all stages:

- The school may confirm that the matter is closed
- We are not required to respond to repeated contact about the same issue
- However, we will always consider new information or new concerns

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Respectful Communication

We expect all communication to be respectful.
Where communication becomes:
abusive, threatening, or excessively repetitive without new information the school may limit how communication takes place (for example, through a single point of contact).
Any such decision will be: explained clearly in writing, and reviewed to ensure it remains reasonable.

Important to Know

- Every complaint is considered on its own merits
- Raising a concern will not disadvantage your child
- New concerns will always be heard, even if previous matters have been closed

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Further Information
The Concerns and Complaints Policy is available on the school website or from the school office.
If you need help raising a concern, please contact the school and we will support you.

Our aim is always to resolve concerns quickly, fairly, and in the best interests of all pupils.

APPENDIX 2: Measures to Prevent Threats and Violence

(Annex 8 to the Health & Safety at Work Act, ZVZD-1, 2011)

Violence, or the threat of violence, towards any member of BISL staff, students or members of the BISL community is unacceptable.

In the event of any risk or act of violence or bullying, the following steps should be taken:

1. **PLEASE STOP**: in the event of **violence (real, threatened or perceived)** by a third party, the staff member will ask the aggressor to stop the unacceptable behaviour;

2. **NOTIFY SLT**: if the unacceptable **behaviour continues**, the staff member will notify a member of the SLT or another competent person;

3. **CALL FOR HELP**: if **serious violence** is threatened or is likely, the staff member should leave the immediate area and call for support (from a colleague, the SLT or the police [telephone: 113]*);

   if the staff member is not able to leave their working space (e.g. they are supervising – and potentially protecting – children), he/she will not oppose the aggressor. He/she will comply with the aggressor's demands but contact the SLT or the police [telephone: 113]* as soon as possible;

   [* To avoid confusion, staff should only call the police directly if they are alone and cannot contact the SLT. In other cases, the SLT will be responsible for calling for any police support.]

   Our working spaces are arranged in a way that would enable the police a fast and effective intervention, if necessary.

4. **DEFEND**: in the event of a **physical assault**, the staff member should fight back to defend themselves and protect children in their care, using their knowledge of self-defence in the best way they can.

All BISL staff are familiar with these measures to prevent or address threats and violence by third parties and are able to implement them.

This is confirmed by their signing of the declaration of awareness and understanding of the Risk Assessment and Safety Statement.

This policy was updated by: Mel Hitchcocks, Principal, 14 August 2026.

This Policy is to be reviewed **annually** and updated as and when changes occur.