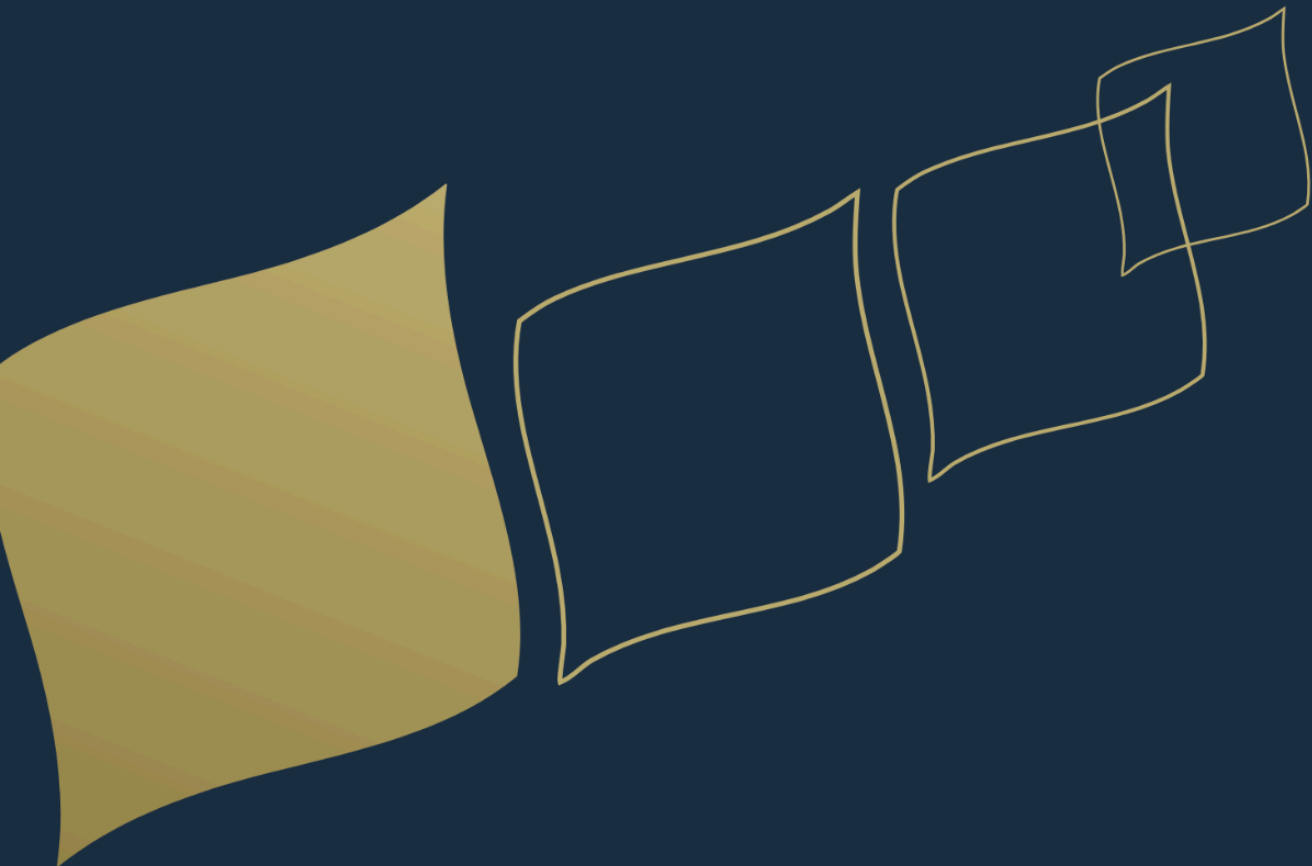




Concerns and Complaints Policy



Policy Title	Concerns & Complaints Policy
Policy Number	73
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Effective Date	9th November 2025

Introduction (Purpose)

BISR is committed to providing outstanding educational experiences. We recognise, however, that parents may occasionally have concerns about an aspect of school life. Every member of our community is entitled to raise a concern or grievance without prejudice and have the matter investigated fairly and promptly.

When responding to complaints, BISR aims to:

- Ensure impartiality and a non-adversarial process.
- Facilitate a full, fair, and, where necessary, independent investigation.
- Address all issues and provide an effective, prompt response.
- Respect the complainant's confidentiality (The school will protect your identity to the greatest extent possible; however, it must disclose the necessary information to those directly involved in the investigation to ensure a fair and thorough resolution.)
- All complaints will be handled in strict adherence to the school's policy and all applicable data protection laws.
- Treat all parties with respect and courtesy.
- Ensure decisions are lawful, rational, fair, and proportionate.
- Keep the complainant informed of the process and progress.
- Use complaints to inform and drive school improvement.

We try to resolve concerns by informal means wherever possible. Where this is not possible, formal procedures will be followed. The school will aim to give the complainant the opportunity to complete the complaints procedure in full. To support this, we will make sure we publicise the existence of this policy and make it available on the school website. Throughout the process, we will be sensitive to the needs of all parties involved, and make any reasonable adjustments needed to accommodate individuals.

Definition

A concern becomes a formal complaint when it is not resolved through routine discussion. Concerns and routine matters should first be discussed informally with the relevant staff member (Class Teacher in Primary, Form Tutor in Senior). Complaints of a serious nature or those unresolved informally must be submitted using the online form. Complaints of a serious nature should be addressed using the online form.

Concerns and complaints should be:

- Raised with the school as soon as possible after the incident.
- Acknowledged promptly by the school within 24 hours (during term time)
- Resolved promptly.
- If a concern is not resolved, a complaint must be made using the formal form to ensure accurate record-keeping.
- All formal complaints must be raised within three months of the incident occurring, unless exceptional circumstances prevent you from doing so.

The link between a "concern" and a "complaint" is that a concern is typically the precursor or the lower, informal level of a complaint.

Following is a breakdown of the typical relationship and key differences:

Feature	Concern (Informal)	Complaint (Formal)
Definition	An expression of worry or doubt over an issue for which reassurances or clarification are sought.	An expression of dissatisfaction about an action taken, a lack of action or a service received.
Goal	To seek information, explanation, or resolution at the earliest, simplest stage.	To seek a formal investigation, resolution, or remedy for dissatisfaction.
Process	Usually handled informally by the person closest to the issue (e.g., a teacher, curriculum leader, assistant head).	Follows a formal, documented procedure with specific stages, deadlines, and potential outcomes.
Link	A concern that remains unresolved or unaddressed will often be escalated to become a formal complaint.	A formal complaint is the mechanism used when informal concerns fail to provide satisfaction.

Roles and Responsibilities

The Complainant

The complainant will get a more effective and timely response to their complaint if they:

- Follow these procedures.
- Co-operate with the school throughout the process, and respond to deadlines and communication promptly.
- Ask for assistance as needed.
- Treat all those involved with respect.
- Refrain from approaching individual Governors about the complaint.
- Refrain from publishing complaint details on social media or public forums.

The Investigator

An individual will be appointed to look into the complaint and establish the facts. They will:

- Interview all relevant parties, keeping notes.
- Consider records and any written evidence and keep these securely.
- Prepare a comprehensive report to the complaints co-ordinator and/or relevant staff, which includes the facts and potential solutions.

The Complaints Co-ordinator

The complaints co-ordinator will be:

- A BISR staff member providing administrative support.

The complaints co-ordinator will:

- Keep the complainant up to date at each stage in the procedure.
- Make sure the process runs smoothly by liaising with staff members, the Principal, Director of Schools, Chair of Governors, and Clerk.
- Be aware of issues relating to:
 - Sharing third-party information.
 - Additional support needed by complainants.

Policy Statement - Principles for Investigation

During the investigation, we will aim to establish:

- What happened?
- Who was involved?
- What specific outcome or resolution is the complainant seeking?

Timescales

All complaints must be raised within three months of the incident, or within three months of the last in a series of related incidents. Exceptions to this timeframe will only be considered if valid reasons for the delay are provided, and a fair investigation for all parties remains possible.

When complaints are made out of term time, we will consider them to have been received on the first school day after the holiday period.

If at any point we cannot meet the timescales we have set out in this policy, we will:

- Set new time limits with the complainant.
- Send the complainant details of the new deadline and explain the delay.

We commit to acknowledging receipt of your formal complaint within **24 hours** (during term time) and will provide a full response as promptly as possible, in line with the timelines set out in the official school policy.

Procedure - Stages of Complaint

The Three Stages of Complaint

- **Stage 1** – Informal: The issue is discussed directly with the relevant teacher/tutor or a school leader to seek a quick, informal resolution.
- **Stage 2** – Formal: If Stage 1 is unsuccessful, the issue is submitted via this formal complaint form and thoroughly investigated by the investigator.
- **Stage 3** – Review Panel: If the complainant remains dissatisfied after the formal investigation, they can request a review by an independent panel.

Stage 1 Informal

Most issues should first be addressed informally (Stage 1). Only if an informal resolution is attempted and unsuccessful should the matter be escalated to the formal process (Stage 2).

Our school will take informal complaints seriously and make every effort to resolve the matter quickly. It may be the case that the provision or clarification of information will resolve the issue.

In the vast majority of cases a problem can and should be resolved by contacting the class teacher/subject teacher or member of staff directly involved with the problem. The initial communication with the member of staff may be by letter, email, telephone conversation or in person by appointment. If the complainant is unclear who to contact or how to contact them, they should contact the school office. Where this action does not lead to the problem being resolved, then the concern should be dealt with through the formal stages of this procedure.

The complainant should raise the complaint as soon as possible within the timescales set out in the above sections..

If the complaint is not resolved informally, it can be escalated to a formal complaint.

Primary School Informal Stage:

The first point of contact if it is about a pastoral matter, (i.e. it concerns the general well-being of a child), or an academic matter, should be the relevant class teacher.

The School places great emphasis on the role of the Class Teacher as the primary contact, monitoring the student's attendance, academic performance, and general welfare. For this reason, if parents have a query or a concern, they should contact the class teacher first. If the class teacher is unable to resolve the situation he/she will seek assistance from their Year Leader, Assistant Head or Head of School. For BAE campuses at Al Saqr and Tabuk Campus it will be the Deputy Head and at Al Sharq and Taif the Head Teacher.

The above leaders will endeavour to respond to the complaint within 5 days.

If a resolution is not found at this level, the concern must be formally submitted via the online complaint form to begin Stage 2.

Senior School Informal Stage:

The Form Tutor

The Form Tutor is the primary contact, monitoring the student's attendance, academic performance, and general welfare. For pastoral concerns or queries regarding general academic progress, contact the Form Tutor first.

If the Tutor is unable to resolve the situation, they will seek assistance from their Year Leader.

If the concern remains unsatisfactorily resolved, the parent should contact their Year Leader, Assistant Head or Head of School.

Subject Teacher

For a subject-specific concern, contact the Subject Teacher directly. If unresolved, the next step is the Curriculum Leader. If they cannot address the situation, they will seek assistance from the Assistant Head or Head of School.

If a resolution is not found at this level, the concern must be formally submitted via the online complaint form to begin Stage 2.

Stage 2 Formal

Formal Complaint begins when the complainant submits the complaint using the online form. The primary purpose of a formal complaint form is to initiate and structure the formal resolution process when an informal concern has not been satisfactorily resolved.

Please note that this formal process should only be used *after* you have attempted to resolve the issue through informal discussion (Stage 1). If your initial attempts to resolve the matter directly have not been successful, the form provides the necessary structure to escalate your concern for a formal investigation.

The form requires specific details, including dates, times, witness names, supporting documents, and the desired resolution from the complainant.

If complainants need assistance raising a formal complaint, they can contact the school office.

The Complaints Co-ordinator will record receipt of the complaint and acknowledge it in writing (via email) within **three** school days.

The Investigator (appointed by the Complaints Co-ordinator) will then conduct the formal investigation.

Formal Investigation Outcome

The Investigator will aim to complete the formal investigation and provide a full written response within **15 school days** of the acknowledgement.

- Note: If the investigation is complex and requires more time, the school will set new time limits and explain the delay to the complainant.

Stage 3: Review Panel

Convening the Panel

Convening the Panel Stage 3 begins if the complainant is not satisfied with the outcome of the formal Stage 2 investigation.

The panel (appointed by the Complaints Co-ordinator) must consist of at least three individuals who were not directly involved in the complaint. The panel composition requires that at least one member cannot be involved in the school's management or regular operations.

The panel will have access to the existing record of the complaint's progress.

The complainant may attend and be accompanied. While legal representation is generally discouraged, it may be considered on a case-by-case basis, particularly if a school employee requires support as a witness. All parties will have the opportunity to ask and reply to questions. After the complainant and school representative(s) have presented their cases, they will be asked to leave so the panel may deliberate and consider the evidence in private.

If the complainant rejects the offer of three proposed dates without good reason, the Complaints Coordinator will set a date. The hearing will go ahead using written submissions from both parties.

Any written material will be circulated to all parties at least five school days before the date of the meeting. The board will ensure that the hearing is properly minuted.

At the Meeting

The meeting will be held in private. Electronic recordings of meetings or conversations are not normally permitted unless required as part of reasonable adjustments. Prior knowledge and consent of all parties attending will be sought before meetings or conversations take place. Consent will be recorded in any minutes taken.

At the review panel meeting, the complainant and representatives from the school, as appropriate, will be present. Each will have an opportunity to set out written or oral submissions prior to the meeting.

The complainant must be allowed to attend the panel hearing and be accompanied if they wish. We don't encourage either party to bring legal representation, but will consider it on a case-by-case basis. For instance, if a school employee is called as a witness in a complaint meeting, they may wish to be supported.

Representatives from the media are not permitted to attend.

At the meeting, each individual will have the opportunity to give statements and present their evidence, and witnesses will be called, as appropriate, to present their evidence.

The panel will then put together its findings and recommendations from the case. The panel will also provide copies of the minutes of the hearing and the findings and recommendations to the complainant and, where relevant, the individual who is the subject of the complaint, and make a copy available for inspection by the proprietor and headteacher.

The Outcome

The committee can:

- Uphold the complaint, in whole or in part.
- Dismiss the complaint, in whole or in part.
- If the complaint is upheld, the committee will:
 - Decide the appropriate action to resolve the complaint.
 - Where appropriate, recommend changes to the school's systems or procedures to prevent similar issues in the future.

The school will inform those involved of the decision in writing within **five** school days.

Availability for Inspection

The review panel will provide copies of the finding and recommendations to the complainant and where relevant, the individual who is subject of the complaint. Additionally, a copy will be made available for inspection on the school premises by the proprietor and the Principal.

Records of All Complaints

The school will maintain a written record of all formal complaints, including information about actions taken by the school at all stages. This record will be kept regardless of whether the complaint is upheld or dismissed.

Documentation

These records will include copies of all correspondence, meeting notes and the final outcome to ensure a complete audit trail of the school's response.

Complaints against the Director of Schools, a Governor or the Board of Governors

Stage 1: Informal

Complaints made against the Director of Schools or any individual member of the Board of Governors (including the chair or vice-chair) should be directed to the clerk of the Board of Governors in the first instance.

A suitably skilled and impartial governor will then carry out the steps at stage 1 set out in the section above. If the complaint is not resolved informally, it will be escalated to a formal complaint.

Complaints about the whole Board of Governors will be resolved at stage 2 below.

How to Escalate a Complaint

Complaints can be escalated by contacting the Head of Board Relations:

- By letter or email boardclerk@bISR.com.sa
- Over the phone
- In person
- Through a third party acting on behalf of the complainant

The clerk will need the details of the complaint as set out above, as well as details from the complainant on how they feel the previous stage of the procedure has not addressed their complaint sufficiently, and what they feel would resolve the complaint.

Stage 2: Formal

Complaints that involve or are about the Director of Schools should be addressed to the Chair of Governors, via the school office, marked as private and confidential.

Complaints about the Chair of Governors, any individual Governor or the whole Governing Body should be addressed to the clerk to the Board of Governors via the school office, marked as private and confidential.

Formal complaints can be raised:

- By letter or email
- Over the phone
- In person
- By a third party acting on behalf of the complainant

If the complaint is about the Director of Schools or an individual Governor, a suitably skilled and impartial Governor will then carry out the steps at stage 2 set out in the section above.

If the complaint is:

- Jointly about the chair and vice-chair or
- The entire Board of Governors or
- The majority of the Board of Governors

An independent investigator will carry out the steps in stage 2 set out in the section above. They will be appointed by the Board of Governors and will write a formal response at the end of their investigation.

The written conclusion of this investigation will be sent to the complainant within five school days.

If the complainant wishes to proceed to the next stage of the procedure, they should inform the clerk to the Board of Governors in writing within five school days. Requests received outside of this timeframe will be considered in exceptional circumstances.

The clerk will acknowledge receipt of the request within five school days.

Stage 3: Review Panel

If the complaint is about the Director of Schools or an individual Governor, the steps outlined in stage 3 of the section above will be followed.

If the complaint is:

- Jointly about the chair and vice-chair or
- The entire Board of Governors, or
- The majority of the Board of Governors

The Clerk will commission an independent, external authority/ party to conduct an investigation, as the complaint can not be processed through the school's standard internal complaints procedure. This party must have no conflicts of interest and sufficient expertise in British independent school governance.

If the investigation confirms the complaint has merit, the final stage typically requires an Independent Panel. This panel must be:

- Composed of individuals entirely independent of the school's management and governance.
- Given a clear remit to review the investigator's findings and make final, binding recommendations on remedial action (which could include recommendations for changes to the Board's composition or operations).

When the whole Board is the subject of a complaint, the usual internal procedures are bypassed, and the Board's key duty becomes facilitating a fair, impartial process by appointing external, independent expertise to investigate and resolve the matter.

Unreasonable Complaints

Most complaints raised will be valid, and therefore we will treat them seriously. However, a complaint may become unreasonable if the person:

- Refuses to articulate their complaint or specify the grounds of a complaint or the outcomes sought by raising the complaint, despite offers of assistance.
- Refuses to co-operate with the complaints investigation process.
- Refuses to accept that certain issues are not within the scope of the complaints procedure.
- Insists on the complaint being dealt with in ways which are incompatible with the complaints procedure or with good practice.
- Introduces trivial or irrelevant information which they expect to be taken into account and commented on.
- Raises large numbers of detailed but unimportant questions, and insists they are fully answered, often immediately and to their own timescales.
- Makes unjustified complaints about staff who are trying to deal with the issues, and seeks to have them replaced.
- Changes the basis of the complaint as the investigation proceeds.
- Repeatedly makes the same complaint (despite previous investigations or responses concluding that the complaint is groundless or has been addressed).
- Refuses to accept the findings of the investigation into that complaint where the school's complaint procedure has been fully and properly implemented and completed.
- Seeks an unrealistic outcome.
- Makes excessive demands on school time by frequent, lengthy and complicated contact with staff regarding the complaint in person, in writing, by email and by telephone while the complaint is being dealt with.
- Uses threats to intimidate.
- Uses abusive, offensive or discriminatory language or violence.
- Knowingly provides falsified information.
- Publishes unacceptable information on social media or other public forums.

Please note: the above list is not intended to be exhaustive and is for guidance purposes only. It is at the discretion of the school what is deemed to be unreasonable.

Complainants should try to limit their communication with the school while the complaint is being progressed. It is not helpful if repeated correspondence is sent (either by letter, phone, email or text), as it could delay the outcome being reached.

Steps we will take

We will take every reasonable step to address the complainant's comments, and give them a clear statement of our position and their options. We will maintain our role as an objective arbiter throughout the process, including when we meet with individuals. We will follow our complaints procedure as normal (as outlined above) wherever possible.

Whenever possible, the Director of Schools or Chair of Governors will discuss any concerns with the complainant informally before applying an 'unreasonable' marking. If the behaviour continues, the Director of Schools will write to the complainant explaining that their behaviour is unreasonable, refer them to this policy and remind them to act in accordance with it. For complainants who excessively contact the school causing a significant level of disruption, we may:

- Give the complainant a single point of contact via an email address.
- Limit the number of times the complainant can make contact, such as a fixed number per term.
- Ask the complainant to engage a third party to act on their behalf.
- Put any other strategy in place as necessary.

In response to any serious incident of aggression or violence, we will immediately inform the police and communicate our actions in writing. This may include barring an individual from school premises and ensuring appropriate measures of support are provided to staff where they are the subject of aggression and/or violence.

Serial/Persistent Complaints

If the complainant contacts the school again on the same issue, the correspondence may then be viewed as 'serial' or 'persistent'. We may stop responding to the complainant when the following conditions are met:

- We have taken every reasonable step to address the complainant's concerns.
- The complainant has been given a clear statement of our position and their options.
- The complainant contacts the school repeatedly, making substantially the same points each time.
- The case to stop responding is stronger if:
 - The complainant's communications are often or always abusive or aggressive.
 - The complainant makes insulting personal comments about or threats towards staff.
 - We have reason to believe the individual is contacting the school with the intention of causing disruption or inconvenience.

Where we decide to stop responding, we will inform the individual that we intend to do so. We will also explain that we will consider any new complaints they make provided the concerns raised are materially different to those raised previously and/or are unconnected to the previous concern.

Duplicate Complaints

If we have resolved a complaint under this procedure and receive a duplicate complaint on the same subject from a partner, family member or other individual, we will assess whether there are aspects that we hadn't previously considered, or any new information we need to take into account.

If we are satisfied that there are no new aspects, we will:

- Tell the new complainant that we have already investigated and responded to this issue, and that the local process is complete.
- If a duplicate complaint is raised which in the view of the school warrants further consideration, the procedure outlined above will be repeated.

Complaint Campaigns

Where the school receives a large volume of complaints about the same topic or subject, especially if these come from complainants unconnected with the school, the school may respond to these complaints by:

- Publishing a single response on the school website.
- Sending a template response to all of the complainants.

If complainants are not satisfied with the school's response, or wish to pursue the complaint further, the normal procedures will apply.

Record Keeping & Confidentiality

The school will record the progress of all complaints, including information about actions taken at all stages, the stage at which the complaint was resolved, and the final outcome. The records will also include copies of letters and emails, and notes relating to meetings and phone calls.

This material will be treated as confidential and stored securely, and will be viewed only by those involved in investigating the complaint or on the review panel.

Records of complaints will be kept securely, only for as long as necessary and in line with our PDPL Policy.

The details of the complaint, including the names of individuals involved, will not be shared with the whole Board of Governors in case a review panel needs to be organised at a later point.

Where the Board of Governors is aware of the substance of the complaint before the review panel stage, the school will (where reasonably practicable) arrange for an independent panel to hear the complaint.

Complainants also have the right to request an independent panel if they believe there is likely to be bias in the proceedings. The decision to approve this request is made by the Board of Governors, who will not unreasonably withhold consent.

Learning Lessons

The Board of Governors will review any underlying issues raised by complaints with the Director of Schools, Executive Team, Senior Leadership Team, Complaints Coordinator, where appropriate, and respecting confidentiality, to determine whether there are any improvements that the school can make to its procedures or practice to help prevent similar events in the future.

Monitoring arrangements

The Board of Governors, Director of Schools and Complaints Coordinator will monitor the effectiveness of the complaints procedure in making sure that complaints are handled properly. The Board of Governors, Director of Schools and Complaints Coordinator will track the number and nature of complaints, and review underlying issues as stated in 'Learning Lessons'.

The complaints records are logged and managed by the Complaints Coordinator.

This policy will be reviewed by the Board of Governors, Director of Schools, and Complaints Coordinator every two to three years. At each review, the policy must be formally approved by the Board of Governors.

Forms

Name of Form	Link
BISR COMPLAINT RESOLUTION FORM	Click here

Need Assistance?

Parents who require assistance completing this form may contact the Complaints Co-ordinator directly:

- **Email:** complaints@bisr.com.sa

Statement of Intent

BISR is committed to resolving all concerns and complaints **fairly, promptly** and with a focus on **continuous improvement**.

Revision History

Change Date	Revised Clauses	Description of Changes	Page No.
13th October 2025	All	Rewrite of policy	All
March 2026	Stage 2 Formal	Addition of days to acknowledge	8
March 2026	Formal Investigation Outcome	Addition of paragraph	8
March 2026	Availability for Inspection	Addition of paragraph	10
March 2026	Record of Complaints	Addition of paragraph	10
March 2026	Documentation	Addition of paragraph	10