**ONE INTERNATIONAL SCHOOL COMPLAINTS & GRIEVANCE POLICY**

A complaint is widely defined as “dissatisfaction about any factor of the school’s procedures, actions or teaching.” However, complainants and the school need to be clear about the difference between a concern and a complaint. The underlying difference being that, concerns ought to be handled, if at all possible, without the need for formal procedures.

**OUR AIM**

Our aim is to offer the highest quality education and care for all our children. We endeavour to provide a warm welcome and individualistic approach to all our children and families. We believe that children and parents are entitled to expect courtesy and prompt, careful attention to their needs and wishes. Our intention is to work in partnership with parents and the Dauin/Atmosphere community.

**MAKING COMPLAINTS/CONCERNS KNOWN:**

A parent who is uneasy about any aspect of ONE I.S. provision should first talk over any worries or anxieties with their child’s class teacher. If this does not have an outcome that is satisfactory to the parent within 14 days of the report, or if the problem reoccurs, the parent should put the concern or complaint in writing and request a meeting with the Head Teacher. Parents, teachers and the Owners will keep a signed written record of the discussion, where warranted.

Most complaints should be resolved informally or at this initial stage. If the complaint remains unsolved, the parent should again contact the Head Teacher. We believe that most complaints are made constructively and can be sorted out at an early stage. We believe that it is in the best interests of the school and parents that complaints should be taken seriously and dealt with fairly and in a way that respects confidentiality.

**RESOLVING COMPLAINTS**

Throughout each stage in the procedure ONE International School will to try and resolve the complaint. In view of this, ONE International School may acknowledge that a complaint is valid, as a whole or in part. In addition, it may offer one or more of the following, as means to resolving the issue:

* an explanation;
* an apology
* admission that the situation in question could have been handled differently;
* an undertaking to review policies in light of the complaint.

It is important to note that an admission that the school could have handled the situation better, is not the same as an admission of negligence.

**NOMINATED PERSONNEL**

The nominated person for investigating complaints is the Lead Complaints Coordinator, Miss Jennifer Hoggard or in the absence of the lead coordinator Ms. Stephanie Bentley. Their role, in this regard, is to ensure that they:

* Establish who has been involved and what has happened so far;
* Clarify the nature of the complaint and what remains unresolved;
* Contact or arrange a meeting with the complainant and clarify what they feel to be the appropriate action to put things right;
* Conduct interviews with an open mind with those involved and/or those complained of, allowing them to be accompanied if they wish;
* Keep written records of all proceedings.

**INTERNAL GRIEVANCES**

ONE I.S.understands that on occasions, employees may want to raise a grievance related to their employment. This policy is to encourage communication between employees and their Head Teacher to ensure that problems arising during the course of employment can be expressed and acted upon without fear of recrimination, in accordance with the school’s Whistleblowing Policy and Procedure.

Most grievances will be resolved through informal discussions with the Head Teacher. Employees are therefore expected to approach their Head Teacher with any concerns they have related to their employment.

Employees raising a grievance should be able to do so without fear of victimisation. All those involved in a grievance have a duty to act honestly and without malice to anyone else. Individuals raising complaints maliciously will be subject to disciplinary action.

All cases will be dealt with in a non-discriminatory and consistent way. In a formal Grievance Procedure process the Investigating Officer and the Chair of the Grievance Hearing will be responsible for ensuring this.

The employee has the right to be accompanied by a work colleague or a family member during all stages of the procedure.

ONE I.S.may vary its Grievance Policy and/or Grievance Procedure Guide, where it is appropriate to do so, and in order to comply with its statutory duty.

**DEFINITION OF A GRIEVANCE**

There is no statutory definition of what amounts to a statement of grievance but normally it can be described as: -

“A matter for concern connected with the application and interpretation of terms and conditions of employment or working arrangements that affect an individual directly or affect their personal dealings or relationships with other staff.”

Grievances generally fall into two categories:

**IN REMIT**

ONE I.S. Grievance Policy applies to all school employees.

This policy also applies to a grievance raised by two or more employees.

Areas dealt with using the grievance procedure:

* Terms and conditions of employment
* Health and safety
* Difficult working relationships
* Bullying and harassment
* New working practices
* Working environment
* Discrimination/unfair treatment

This list is not exhaustive.

**OUT OF REMIT**

The Grievance Policy does not apply in the following cases:

* Where alternative appeal processes exist.
* Where the employee has not submitted their grievance following policy requirements.
* Where the case has already been heard and there is no new evidence.
* Where the matter relates to the application of conditions of service laid down by the Philippines Department of Education arising from national, provincial or local agreements.
* pay issues;
* Other employee related procedures with their own appeals process i.e. capability, disciplinary, redundancy or sickness absence;
* Malpractice or corruption i.e. “whistle – blowing”;
* Child protection;
* Incidents which occurred and ended more than 1 month ago;

**PRINCIPLES**

Grievances will be handled as quickly and fairly as possible and informal grievances will be resolved by the Head Teacher.

**PROCEDURAL TIME LIMITS**

There will be occasions when it is not possible to comply with the time limits given in this procedure, for example, school holidays may make it difficult to conduct an investigation into the grievance or to hold a hearing. In such cases, arrangements need to be agreed by both parties so that the issue can be taken forward in a sensible manner with a mutually agreed time framework so that everyone will know what is happening and be able to make preparations for same. To support this there must be an agreement by both parties that they will not exploit the situation.

**INFORMAL PROCEDURE**

**DISCUSSION OF GRIEVANCE**

Employees should discuss their concerns in the first instance with their Head Teacher. If they are unable to approach the Head Teacher, then they can informally approach the Owners.

**RESOLUTION OF GRIEVANCE**

The Head Teacher will seek to resolve the grievance on an informal basis, taking advice, if necessary from other parties. The Head Teacher and employee will work together to resolve the problem. Once resolved, the Head Teacher will make a note of the outcome on the employee’s file.

If a grievance cannot be resolved via informal discussions, the formal procedure may then be used.

**FORMAL PROCEDURE**

**STATEMENT OF GRIEVANCE**

An employee who wishes to raise a formal grievance should put their grievance formally, in writing without unreasonable delay (within one week of any incident), to the Head Teacher specifying the nature of their grievance. Where the grievance is about the Head Teacher, the grievance should be forwarded directly to the Owners.

The employee should indicate, as part of their formal written statement, what solution they seek.

**INVESTIGATION**

An investigation will be undertaken. The appointment of an Investigating Officer (independent person) should ensure they can act impartially and have no conflict of interest.

**GRIEVANCE HEARING**

Hearings may be conducted by the Head Teacher, except in cases where the Head Teacher is the:

* Investigating Officer
* Witness to the investigation
* Subject of the complaint

In this case a panel of three appointed, independent persons must conduct a hearing.

The Head Teacher will write to the employee with a date for a Hearing, normally within 10 working days of the investigation being completed. If the grievance raised is against the Head Teacher, the Owners will arrange for a panel of independent persons to meet to hear the grievance.

If the Head Teacher has been the Investigating Officer the matter will be referred to a panel of independent persons.

The employee must attend the Grievance Hearing or the grievance will be dismissed with prejudice and will not be accepted for resubmission.

The employee has the right to be accompanied by a work colleague or family member.

At the Grievance Hearing the employee will be given an opportunity to discuss their grievance.

After the Hearing, the Grievance Committee Chairperson will write to confirm the outcome of the grievance, normally within five working days.

The Chair of the Grievance Committee will ensure that: -

* Both parties will have the opportunity to state their case, ask questions, present evidence and call witnesses;
* Both parties keep to a sensible time framework;
* Sufficient time is devoted to questioning and discussion, using an adjournment if necessary, to ensure so far as is practicable, all the facts are established;
* All persons present at the hearing are treated with respect;
* The main points are summarised to ensure that nothing has been missed;
* The decision is based upon an assessment of all matters raised having regard to the circumstances; and
* The matters of fact that have been relied on are clearly recorded.

**HEADTEACHER GRIEVANCE**

Where the Head Teacher has a grievance, the Owners should seek to resolve the problem personally. Where this fails to resolve the grievance the matter should be referred to the Grievance Committee. The Head Teacher will have the right to be accompanied at these hearings by a work colleague or a family member.

**KEEPING RECORDS**

Written records will be kept in accordance with the ONE I.S. ‘Data Protection Policy – Retention of Documents’ and the Philippines Data Protection Act 2012. Records should include:

* Name of the complainant
* A copy of the written grievance.
* Date and time at which complaint was made
* Details of the nature of the complaint
* Desired outcome of the complainant
* How the complaint is being investigated (including written records of any interviews held)
* Results and conclusions of investigations
* Any action taken
* The complainant’s response
* Record of any subsequent action if required

All records will be treated as confidential. Copies of notes will be given to the employee. In certain circumstances, for example to protect a witness, ONE I.S. might withhold some information. If witnesses’ request to remain anonymous, all practical steps will be taken to protect the identity of employees, however in some circumstances it may be inevitable that their identity is revealed. Confidentiality of the employees’ identity therefore cannot be guaranteed.

**PROCEDURE FOR GRIEVANCE HEARING**

1 The employee (or his/her representative) to put his/her case in the presence of the Head Teacher (and his/her representative) and to call such witnesses as s/he wishes.

2 The Head Teacher (or his/her representative) to have the opportunity to ask questions of the employee and his/her witnesses.

3 The employee (or his/her representative) to have the opportunity to re – examine his/her witnesses.

4 The Committee may ask questions of the employee (or his/her representative) and his/her witnesses.

5 The Head Teacher (or his/her representative) shall reply to the grievance(s) raised, in the presence of the employee (and his/her representative) and may call witnesses.

6 The employee (or his/her representative) to have the opportunity to ask questions of the Head Teacher and his/her witnesses.

7 The Head Teacher (or his/her representative) to have the opportunity to re – examine his/her witnesses.

8 The Committee may ask questions of the Head Teacher (or his/her representative) and his/her witnesses.

9 The employee (or his/her representative) to have the opportunity to sum up his/her case.

10 The Head Teacher (or his/her representative) to have the opportunity to sum up his/her case.

11 The employee and the Head Teacher (and their representatives) and any witnesses to withdraw.

12 The Grievance Committee, with the Officer appointed as Secretary, to deliberate in private only recalling the employee and the Head Teacher to clear points of uncertainty on evidence already given. If recall is necessary, both parties are to return notwithstanding only one is concerned with the point giving rise to doubt.

13 The Grievance Committee to announce the decision to the parties personally or in writing as may be determined, but in any case, written confirmation is to be sent within seven working days of the hearing.

**POTENTIAL OUTCOMES**

* That the complaint is upheld (in part or full) and where appropriate some form of action is taken **OR**
* That the complaint is not upheld and reason(s) for this, where appropriate, are clearly given