



This policy applies to complaints from parents/carers, pupils, staff, governors, contractors and visitors regarding the provision of services at the British School of Tenerife, including curriculum delivery, pastoral care, safeguarding concerns, staff conduct, facilities and finance. A 'complaint' is defined as an expression of dissatisfaction that requires a response. Complaints alleging abuse or safeguarding concerns will be handled under the school's Safeguarding Policy and reported immediately to the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) and, where required, to the relevant statutory authority.

IF YOU HAVE A COMPLAINT OR CONCERN

At the British School of Tenerife, we aim to ensure that our students get the best out of their time at school. We want them to be happy and eager to learn.

To keep you involved in your child's education we have two parent/teacher meetings a year, issue 1 report a year in Primary and 3 reports a year in Secondary and throughout the year arrange as many individual meetings as you feel necessary with teachers.

During the year if you are concerned about any aspect of your child's education, we would ask you to follow the protocol for complaints we have implemented. This Policy advises all persons on how to direct a complaint and the potential escalation procedures around this.

Safeguarding exceptions

Safeguarding and child protection: Allegations that a member of staff has harmed a pupil or where there are safeguarding concerns must be reported immediately to the DSL. In such cases, the Complaints Procedure may be paused while statutory safeguarding investigations take place; complainants will be informed of this and given an expected timeline for any updates permitted. The Complaints Procedure does not replace statutory reporting obligations or the school's disciplinary procedures.

Accessibility and communication for EAL families

Accessibility and communication: The school will make reasonable adjustments to support people making complaints, including providing translations or interpretation for families who require them, and offering help to complete the complaint form. Communications will be written in clear English and, where necessary, key documents may be translated into Spanish on request. Timelines may be adjusted to allow for translation; the school will notify the complainant of any changes.



Feedback procedure

We want to understand what our parents and visitors see as our strengths and what improvements they would like to see. This can be achieved in the following ways:

- Email or verbal conversation with our reception on either site.
 - Email or verbal conversation with the relevant class or departmental representative. •
- Feedback via the generic school email address found on our website.

Informal resolution and mediation: Wherever possible, raise concerns first informally with the relevant teacher/manager. The school will encourage mediation and restorative approaches for interpersonal or relationship-based complaints. Mediation may involve a neutral senior leader or trained mediator and can be requested by either party before formal escalation. If the matter is not resolved informally, or the parent remains unsatisfied with the outcome, they may escalate the complaint to the formal written procedure set out below.

Investigation Timescales

All formal complaints will be acknowledged in writing within three working days of receipt.

Wherever possible, complaints will be resolved within the following timescales:

- Stage 1: Response within **10 working days**.
- Stage 2: Response within **10 working days**.
- Stage 3: Response within **15 working days**.
- Stage 4: Final internal response within **15 working days**.

Where these timescales cannot be met, the complainant will be informed in writing of the reason for the delay and provided with a revised timescale.



Complaints procedure

As an educational establishment, there are different categories of service which may warrant complaints. To ensure that the right person deals with the right complaint, it is important to outline the different categories as per the list below. Where a parent is not satisfied with the response received to a complaint raised informally, they may escalate the matter by making a formal complaint in writing. Complaints can be submitted formally in writing and addressed to the relevant person.

Stage 1 - Initial complaint directed to the class teacher or subject teacher to be resolved and feedback provided. The class teacher or subject teacher should copy in the relevant tutor, and Senior Leader at this stage. Do not leave worries for long before discussing them first with the subject teacher concerned. After meeting with the teacher please allow time for problems or concerns to be resolved.

Stage 2 - Initial complaint directed to the Head of Department or Head of Key Stage to be resolved and feedback provided. Head of Department or Head of Key Stage should copy in the relevant Heads of School at this stage.

Stage 3 - Forwarded to the relevant Head of School for investigation and feedback. Copy in the Academic Director at this stage.

Stage 4 - Forwarded to the Academic Director for final resolution.

Operations/Facilities/External Services

Stage 1 - Initial complaint directed to the school offices to be resolved and feedback provided.

Stage 2 - Initial complaint directed to the Finance Manager to be resolved and feedback provided.

A member of Staff

Stage 1 - Forwarded to the Head of School - Primary Phase or Secondary Phase for investigation and feedback.

Stage 2 - Forwarded to the Academic Director for final resolution.



Systemic issues

If a complaint highlights systemic problems (curriculum, assessment, SEND provision, EAL provision, or health & safety), the school will ensure findings feed into the school improvement plan and governance reports. The Academic Director will report anonymised complaint trends to the Board termly.

A Member of the Executive Leadership Team

To be directed to the Academic Director for investigation feedback and final resolution

The Academic Director or Finance Manager -To be directed to the Board of Governors

Record-keeping and confidentiality: The school will keep a record of all complaints, correspondence and outcomes for a minimum of 7 years or in accordance with the school's Data Retention Schedule, whichever is longer, stored securely and in line with GDPR. Only those who need to know will have access to complaint files. Notes of meetings, recordings or statements will be retained as part of the confidential file in the Academic Director's office. The complainant's personal data will be processed in accordance with the school's Data Protection Policy.

The written record will indicate whether the complaint was resolved following the formal procedure or proceeded to a panel hearing and will record the action taken by the school as a result of the complaint, regardless of whether the complaint was upheld.

Monitoring and governance: The Academic Director will provide the Board with a termly anonymised report of complaints including numbers, categories, outcomes, timescales and actions taken to prevent recurrence. The Board will review complaint trends annually as part of quality assurance.

Complaints Register

Record Keeping

The school will maintain a written register of all formal complaints. The register will record:

- The date the complaint was received;
- The nature and category of the complaint;



- Whether the complaint was resolved through the formal procedure or proceeded to a Panel Hearing;
- The outcome of the complaint;
- Any findings and recommendations;
- The action taken by the school as a result of the complaint, regardless of whether the complaint was upheld.

The Academic Director shall be responsible for ensuring that the register is maintained accurately and reviewed periodically for quality assurance and school improvement purposes.

Confidentiality

Correspondence, statements, records, notes, recordings and reports relating to individual complaints shall be kept confidential except where:

- Disclosure is required by law;
- Disclosure is required during safeguarding, child protection or criminal investigations; •

A regulatory authority has a lawful right of access;

- All relevant parties have given informed consent.

Complaint records shall be stored securely in accordance with the school's Data Protection Policy and Records Retention Schedule. Access shall be restricted to those with a legitimate need to know.

IF YOU ARE STILL UNHAPPY

If you are still unhappy with the outcome, please fill out this Complaint Form and hand it into one of the school offices.



British School of Tenerife Complaint Form

Your name:

Pupil's name (if relevant):

Your relationship to the pupil (if relevant):

Please give details of your complaint.

What action, if any, have you already taken to try and resolve your complaint? Who did you speak to and what was the response?

What action do you feel might resolve the problem at this stage?

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

Signature:

Date:

Official use

Date acknowledgement sent:

By whom:

Complaint referred to:

Date

Please ensure that you receive a stamped copy of this form.

Constitution of the Panel

Where a complainant remains dissatisfied following completion of the formal complaints process, they may request that the complaint be referred to a Complaint Review Panel.

The Complaint Review Panel shall:

- Consist of **at least three persons**.
- Include individuals who have **not been directly involved** in the matters detailed in the complaint.
- Include **at least one member who is independent of the management and running of the school**.
- Be appointed by or on behalf of the Proprietor or Board of Governors.

Panel members must declare any actual or perceived conflict of interest before participating in the hearing.

Arrangements for the Hearing

The Panel Hearing will normally take place within **20 working days** of receipt of the request for escalation.

The complainant shall be given reasonable notice of the hearing date and provided with copies of any documentation that the panel will consider.

Attendance and Representation

The complainant is entitled to attend the Panel Hearing and may be accompanied by a friend, relative, interpreter, advocate or adviser of their choosing.

Where the complaint concerns a member of staff, the individual concerned may also be accompanied during any part of the hearing relevant to their involvement.

The Chair of the Panel may determine reasonable arrangements for the conduct of the hearing to ensure fairness to all parties.

Findings and Recommendations

Following the hearing, the Panel shall consider all evidence presented and make:



- Findings in relation to each aspect of the complaint; and
- Recommendations, where appropriate, for resolving the complaint and improving school procedures.

The Panel's decision will normally be issued in writing within **10 working days** of the hearing.

Distribution of Findings

A copy of the Panel's findings and recommendations shall be provided to:

- The complainant;
- The person complained about (where relevant);
- The Academic Director;
- The Proprietor and/or Board of Governors.

A copy shall also be made available for inspection on the school premises by the Proprietor and Academic Director, subject to applicable confidentiality and data protection requirements.

If you are not happy with this final decision, you are within your rights to take any legal actions you think appropriate.

Representation and conduct:

- Complainants may be accompanied by a friend or adviser (but not a legal representative unless by prior agreement). Meetings and hearings are not legal proceedings; the school expects all participants to behave respectfully. The school reserves the right to postpone or terminate meetings in cases of unreasonable behaviour and will provide summary reasons in writing.

Complaints about governors or board members:

Complaints alleging misconduct by a governor will be referred to the Chair of the Board. If the complaint is about the Chair, it will be referred to another independent board member or an independent investigator. Governors who are the subject of a complaint will not sit on the complaint committee considering their case.

**External referrals:**

- If the complainant remains dissatisfied after the Board's decision, they may pursue resolution through relevant external bodies (e.g. Canary Islands education authority or national independent school adjudicator equivalent, or via legal channels). The school will advise complainants on the correct external body when relevant. For safeguarding complaints, complainants may contact the police or child protection agency directly.

Operational process and templates:

The school will maintain templates for acknowledgements, investigation letters, meeting minutes and outcome letters. These will include a clear audit trail and be stored centrally. Staff responsible for complaint handling will receive annual training on the procedure, customer care and cultural sensitivity.

To be reviewed December 2026