

# The Central School Dubai

*Al Nahda 2 Dubai, United Arab Emirates*

## 1]. Section-A

<i>Title of the Policy</i>	<b>Communication Policy</b>	<i>Designation</i>	<b>Principal</b>
<i>Name of Policy Writer</i>	<b>Mala Mehra</b>	<i>Date of Next Revision</i>	<b>28<sup>th</sup> March 2019</b>
<i>Date of Policy Revision</i>	<b>29<sup>th</sup> March 2018</b>	<i>Department/Section</i>	<b>Principal</b>
<i>Policy Code</i>	<b>TCS/PC/1819/01</b>		

## 2]. Section-B

<i>Purpose</i>	The Central School strives to be an open, professional organization in which all members of the community feel valued and able to play a full and active part in its development.
<i>Rationale</i>	<p>Communications can take a variety of forms. Verbal (meetings/telephones), written (through letters, notes in Almanac, e-mail, website). Occasionally a communication maybe received second hand.</p> <p>Effective telephone communication can sometimes be a problem in a school, where teachers maybe teaching full time and running afternoon activities /clubs. Quite often, staff will be working with students at break, lunch and after school. Parents maybe exasperated if they feel that a message elicits no immediate reply, when in fact there has been no available opportunity for the member a staff to reach a telephone and return a call.</p> <p>For this reason, the school is proactive in encouraging the use of modern communication network. All staff email contacts are frequently publicised with all parents being encouraged to give an email address for prompt and effective communication. However, this does not mean that communications are always effective nor appropriate. This policy aims to ensure we are striving for this. Communication should be <b>acknowledged</b> within <b>24</b> hours.</p> <p>Communication should be <b>resolved</b> within <b>5 working</b> days. If this is not possible, the school should continue to keep the parent updated and agree a final date. It is agreed that the following means of communication will be used for the situations identified below. This is not an exhaustive list and common sense and professional courtesy should prevail.</p>

## *Definitions & Context*

### **Internal Communications**

We are striving to create a School where communications are characterised by the following attitudes and practices, a School where:

- There is an understanding of mutual responsibility.
- Individuals and terms contribute to planning and policy.
- Decisions are by those who will implement them.
- All staff contribute to decision making based on knowledge and skill.
- The opinions of all colleagues at all levels are respected.
- Staff feel free to discuss challenges as a means of solving problems.
- Staff feel free to come and ask for help.
- Staff celebrate strength and success and challenge inadequate performance.
- Discussions are open and professional. This is a normal feature of the life in complex organization.
- Feedback on performance is welcomed by all staff.
- All staff feel free to questions and propose change and innovation.
- All communications must be clear.

Parents, who wish to speak with members of staff, should contact the school to arrange a mutually convenient time to meet.

Communication will be **acknowledged** within **24 hours** with a full **response** within **5 working** days.

As a part of our communications plan, Central School believes that students achieve their best when the school and family work together. All parents will receive:

#### **PARENTS**

- 3 reports on their child's progress and performance in each subject, including evaluation at the end of the year
- Detailed assessment data 3 times a year
- 3 opportunities to meet subject staff and the Class Teacher (PTM)
- Parents who are concerned for any reason about their child's progress/welfare need not of course wait for these meetings, but are encouraged to make an appointment to see the appropriate member of staff as soon as possible
- 3 Parent Information Meeting (PIMs) per year
- Access to the school profile including inspection documents
- Regular, structured opportunities to give their view on the School, its policies and future developments

- A Parent/ Student Handbook
- Other occasional letters pertinent to your child's education
- Communications from the school – Educare/RIMS
- The school website/ Facebook Page
- Parent Orientation for new families
- Annual Parent questionnaires
- Monthly Principal Drop Ins
- Annual Report to Parents
- Termly Updates
- CPDs with parents of SWDs

### **MANAGING COMPLAINTS:**

#### **Principles:**

An effective Complaints Procedure will:

- Encourage informal resolution wherever possible and practicable
- Be easily accessible and publicized
- Be simple to understand and use
- Be impartial
- Be non – confrontational
- Allow swift handling with established time limits for action and keeping people informed of progress
- Ensure a full and fair investigation
- Respect and ensure confidentiality
- Address all the issues and provide an effective response and appropriate redress wherever necessary
- Provide information to the School's senior management team so that services can be improved.

#### **WHAT IS A COMPLAINT?**

The expression of dissatisfaction may be about an event that has happened, failed to happen, or the way in which something was handled. Taking informal concerns seriously at the earliest stage will reduce the numbers that develop into formal complaints.

In most cases, concerns or issues raised can be resolved through discussion and good communication.

Inevitably, however, some people may not be satisfied with the outcome and under such circumstances a formal procedure needs to be followed to ensure all involved are treated fairly and that the situation may be resolved.

It is important to note that maximum complaints cannot be dealt with.

#### **WHAT PEOPLE WANT**

When a complaint has been made most people want:

- To be dealt with immediately and with a sense of urgency
- To be taken privately to discuss the matter
- The complaint to be listened to
- To receive a sincere apology
- To be told what action is to be taken
- Confident assurances that the error won't recur

### **Resolving Complaints**

At each stage in the procedure, efforts must be made to keep in mind ways in which complaints can be resolved. It might be sufficient to acknowledge that the complaint is valid in whole or in part. In addition, it may be appropriate to offer one or more of the following:

- An apology;
- An explanation;
- An admission that the situation could have been handled differently or better
- An assurance that the event complained of will not recur;
- An explanation of the steps that have been taken to ensure that it will not happen again
- An undertaking to review school policies in light of the complaint

It may also be the case however that the complaint may not have any substance and is therefore considered to be unfounded or unsubstantiated. Except in exceptional circumstances present stages of the complaints procedure should be exhausted before a Complaint is referred to the next stage.

### **DEALING WITH COMPLAINTS**

Central School follows a four stage procedure

Stage 1 – Informal Stage.

Stage 2 – Formal Complaint to the Heads of Section

Stage 3 – Formal Complaint to Principal.

Stage 4 – Formal Complaint to NIMS, Corporate Office.

Stage 5 – Investigating Complaints

#### **Stage 1 – Informal Stage**

Most concerns can be easily resolved informally by discussion and good communication with the school staff. Clarity is necessary in ascertaining whether a parent is asking a question, or expressing an opinion, rather than making a complaint. Parents may approach the members of staff directly with a concern to

attempt to resolve the matter.

Should the parent remain unhappy despite best efforts, they should be asked to state their views in writing to the relevant staff members.

### **Stage 2 – Complaint**

Once a concern has been received in writing it becomes a complaint, it will be acknowledged within 24 hours and dealt with 5 school days.

The Head of Section will investigate the complaint and will reply in full within 5 school days. If it is not possible to reply within this timescale a letter will be sent to this effect with a brief explanation for the delay and an indication as to when the complaint is likely to receive a full response.

The Head of Section may provide an opportunity for the complainant to meet him/her to supplement any information provided previously

When a decision has been reached, the Head of Section will make sure that the complainant is clear about the action taken. The letter will state clearly the right of the complainant to reply to the Head of Section within 5 days of the decision.

### **Stage 3 – Formal Complaint to Principal**

The complainant may appeal against the decision of the Head of Section to the Principal within 10 days of the decision from the school.

Within 3 days of a written appeal, the Principal will write to the complainant to acknowledge receipt of the written request. The letter should also explain that the complainant has the right to submit any further documents relevant to the complaint.

There will be a meeting with the Principal, which will be minuted and a time frame for resolution will be set.

### **Stage 4 – Formal Complaint to NIMS Corporate Office.**

Corporate Office will hear the case and minute of the meeting. The aim of the meeting should be to resolve the complaint and achieve reconciliation between the school and the complainant. A written statement outlining the decision will be sent to the complainant and the Principal with 5 school days.

All members of the school community are required to follow this “Staged” approach.

### **Remit of The Complaints Panel is Final**

Management sitting on the Complaints Panel need to be aware, and have a copy, of the Complaints Procedure:

The Complaints Panel should:

⊗ Consider the complaint in an independent and impartial way and must be seen to do so

⊗ Consider the complaint in private and confidentially

- ⊗ Resolve the complaint and achieve reconciliation between the school and the complainant
- ⊗ Recognize the complainant might not be satisfied with the outcome if they don't find it in their favour
- ⊗ Establish the facts and make recommendations which will satisfy the complainant that the complaint has been taken seriously
- ⊗ Acknowledge that a complainant may feel nervous and inhibited in a formal setting. Also that parents often feel emotional when discussing an issue that affects their child
- ⊗ Ensure that the proceedings are as welcoming as possible and that the layout of the room will ensure the setting is informal and not adversarial
- ⊗ Take extra care when the complainant is a child, so the child does not feel intimidated
- ⊗ Give the views of children equal consideration to those of adults
- ⊗ Give the parent(s) of a child the opportunity to say which parts of the hearing, if any, their child needs to attend.

**The Complaint Panel can:**

- ⊗ Dismiss the complaint in whole or in part
- ⊗ Uphold the complaint in whole or in part
- ⊗ Decide on the appropriate action to be taken to resolve the complaint
- ⊗ Recommend changes to the School's systems or procedures to ensure that problems of a similar nature do not recur.
- ⊗ The Corporate office and Complaints' Panel decision is FINAL

**Stage5 - Investigating Complaints**

The Investigating Officer (as named by the Principal) should adhere to the following process:

- ⊗ Establish **what** has happened so far, and **who** has been involved;
- ⊗ Clarify the nature of the complaint and what remains unresolved;
- ⊗ Meet the complainant or contact them (if unsure or further information is necessary);
- ⊗ Clarify what the complainant feels would put things right;
- ⊗ Interview those involved in the matter and/or those complained of, allowing them to be accompanied if they wish;
- ⊗ Conduct an interview with an open mind and be prepared to persist in the questioning;
- ⊗ Keep notes of any interview for record

### **DEALING WITH UNREASONABLE PERSISTANT COMPLAINTS**

It is vital that such people are dealt with effectively and where genuine complaints are raised they should be dealt with fairly, honestly and properly, but where behavior is characterized by:

- ⊗ Actions that are obsessive, persistent, harassing, prolific, repetitious and / or
- ⊗ An insistence upon pursuing meritorious complaints and / or unrealistic outcomes beyond all reason
- ⊗ The individual should be made aware of their behavior and processes initiated to stem excessive and unreasonable complaints from such individuals.

### **RECORDING COMPLAINTS:**

The Principal/ Head of School should arrange for a confidential record to be kept in a complaints file of the nature and progress of all complaints, when they were made, and their final outcome. The record should include notes of all meetings and what was discussed and agreed. Notes of telephone calls and conversations should be kept along with a copy of any verbal or written response included in the record. The purpose of the Record is for monitoring purposes only and not as a source of information for future references or other issues.

### **COMPLAINTS / COMMUNICATION PROCEDURE**

#### **INTRODUCTION:**

Central School is committed to listening to the views of stakeholders in order to improve our provision.

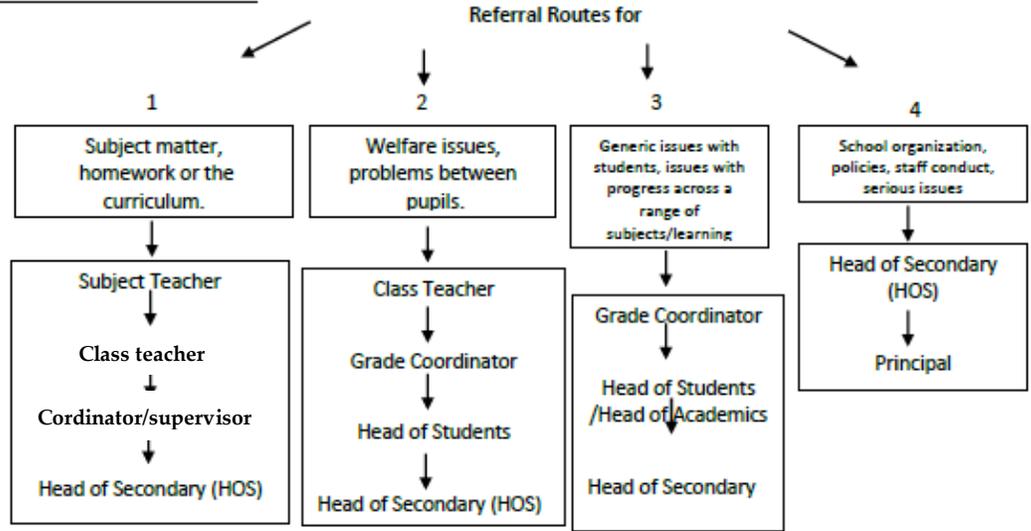
Central School believes that all complaints should be seen as positive as they help to resolve problems quickly and efficiently.

#### **Principles:**

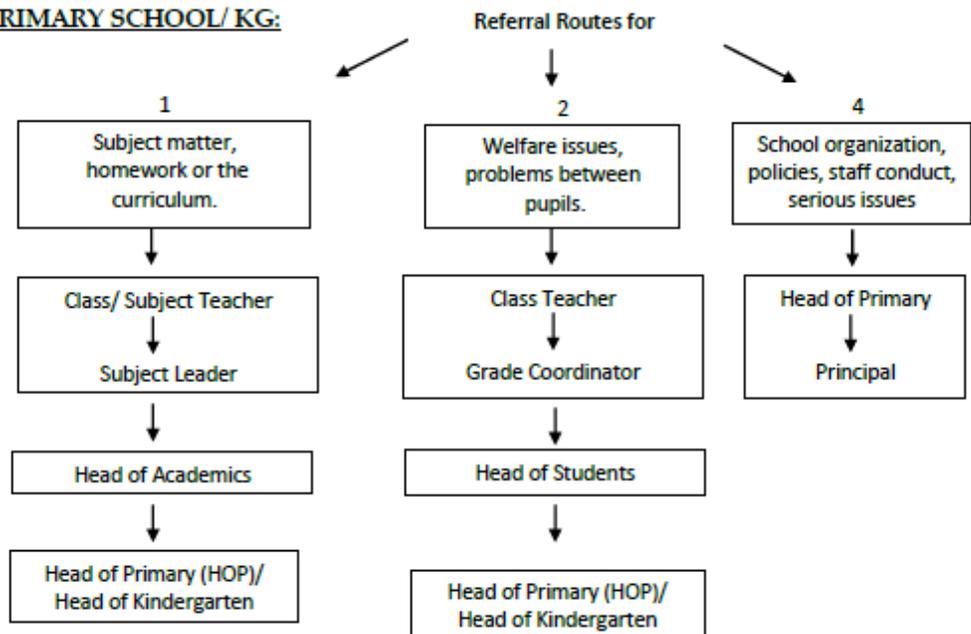
The guiding principles behind the School's Communication and Complaints Procedure are:

- ⊗ All communications are dealt with promptly, efficiently, objectively and professionally.
- ⊗ We aim to respond to specific issues in an informal manner and resolve them quickly, sensitively and to the satisfaction of the person concerned.
- ⊗ Communications can be received by post, by telephone, in person and by e-mail.
- ⊗ Contact will be made with individuals within 24 hours.

**FOR SECONDARY SCHOOL:**



**FOR PRIMARY SCHOOL/ KG:**



**Opportunity  
and  
Community**

**Abusive Complaints:**

All parties have a right to be treated courteously and with respect. If staff feel threatened they should report their concerns to the Principal who will consider:

- Ⓢ Writing to the complainant requesting that the behavior ceases
- Ⓢ Setting restrictions for further contact with staff
- Ⓢ Reporting violent or aggressive incidents to the relevant authorities

**Email Etiquette:**

Ⓢ Make sure your email includes a courteous greeting and closing. It Helps to make your e-mail not seem demanding or terse.

Ⓢ If your email is emotionally charged, walk away from the computer and wait to reply. Review the Sender's email again so that you are sure you are not reading anything into the email that simply isn't there.

Ⓢ Refrain from using the Reply to All feature to give your opinion to those who may not be interested. In most cases replying to the Sender alone is your best course of action.

Ⓢ Keep emails brief and to the point. Save long conversations for the old fashioned telephone.

Ⓢ Always end your emails with "Thank you," "Sincerely," "Best regards"

Ⓢ Convert to PDF before sending attachments or they may not be able to open your attachment.

Ⓢ Include addresses in the To: field for those who you would like a response from.

Ⓢ Include addresses in the Cc: field for those who you are just FYI'ing.

Ⓢ Remove addresses from the To: CC; field that don't need to see your reply.

Ⓢ Always include a brief Subject. No subject can get your email flagged as spam.

Ⓢ We do not subscribe. To send BCC: copies to others as a way of talking behind someone's back is inconsiderate.

Ⓢ When forwarding email, if you cannot take the time to type a personal comment to the person you are forwarding to--then don't bother.

Ⓢ Don't forward anything without editing out all the forwarding >>>>, other email addresses, headers and commentary from all the other forwarders.

Ⓢ Be careful when forwarding email on controversial issues. The recipient may not appreciate your POV.

Ⓢ Try not to make assumptions when it comes to email. Always ask for clarification before you react.

Ⓢ When replying to emails always respond promptly and edit out unnecessary information from the post you are responding to.

Ⓢ Multiple recipients noted in the To: or Cc: fields, remove the addresses of those

	<p>who your reply does not apply to.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>⊗ Before getting upset because you perceive someone didn't respond, check to see if their reply was inadvertently deleted or sent to your Trash or Junk folder.</li> <li>⊗ Feel free to modify the Subject: field to more accurately reflect a conversation's direction.</li> <li>⊗ Take the time to review each email before clicking Send to ensure your message is clear and you are relaying the tone that you desire.</li> <li>⊗ And finally... <i>Type unto others as you would have them type unto you</i></li> </ul>
<b>Policy Committee Members</b>	<b>Policy Incharge: Mala Mehra</b>
<b>Date:</b>	<p><b>Approved by: Mala Mehra</b></p>  <p><i>Mala Mehra</i> 30/3/18 <i>Signature of Principal</i></p>