

YASMINA BRITISH ACADEMY

Complaints Policy

Policy first issued	January 2023
Policy amended	AY 2026/27
Next policy review	AY 2028/29, or earlier if the Aldar Education guideline changes
Lead professional	Executive Principal
Aligned with	Aldar Education Complaints Management Service Guideline (SG-OP-ME-020) and ADEK policy guidelines
Signature	
Date	August 2026

1. Rationale

This policy explains how Yasmina British Academy (YBA) receives, records, investigates and resolves concerns and complaints from parents. It applies the Aldar Education Complaints Management Service Guideline as the minimum standard of service, and follows ADEK policy guidelines.

YBA aims to be an open, professional school in which every member of the community feels valued and able to play a full part in its development. Students achieve their best when the school and family work together, and handling complaints well is central to that relationship.

2. Objectives

- To keep an accurate record of every complaint, for future reference and analysis.
- To strengthen communication between school staff and parents.
- To respond to and resolve complaints within the timescales set out in this policy.
- To treat every parent with compassion, empathy and respect, so that they feel heard and reassured that the school is acting on their feedback.
- To use complaints and feedback to improve the school's services and the parent experience.

3. Guiding principles

- Every concern and complaint is treated as important and is dealt with promptly, objectively and professionally.
- Wherever possible, issues are resolved informally, quickly and sensitively, to the satisfaction of the person concerned.
- Every concern or complaint raised with any member of staff is recorded, whichever way it is received and however informal it is.
- Every parent receives a first response within 24 hours (see Section 6) and is kept updated on progress without having to ask.
- All staff represent the school and Aldar Education, and assist parents with feedback and complaints in a professional manner.
- The school builds relationships with parents, students and the community on mutual respect and a willingness to listen and respond constructively, in the best interests of the child.

4. What is a complaint?

A complaint is any expression of dissatisfaction about the school's services, staff or provision. Taking informal concerns seriously at the earliest stage reduces the number that become formal complaints.

Staff should be clear whether a parent is asking a question, giving an opinion or making a complaint. Whichever it is, the details are recorded (see Section 8). A concern becomes a formal complaint when it is set out in writing to the relevant Assistant Principal (Stage 3 onwards).

Complaints about child protection or safeguarding are not handled under this policy. They follow the school's Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy.

5. How to raise a concern or complaint

Parents can raise a concern or complaint in any of the following ways:

- in person, by visiting the school
- by telephone (025089500)
- by email, including to the Parent Relations Executive (PRE) at pre@alyasminaacademy.sch.ae
- through the parent portal or app, the online form on the school website, or the school hotline
- through school communication platforms (for example Class Dojo, the school app, Seesaw or Teams)

Parents who wish to speak to a member of staff other than their child's class teacher should contact the school to arrange a convenient time to meet. Any member of staff who receives a concern or complaint, through any channel, must follow Section 8.

Should anyone experience problems with this procedure, they should contact the PRE on pre@alyasminaacademy.sch.ae or 025089500.

6. Response timescales

These timescales apply to every stage. "Working day" means a school working day. If a concern is received on a Friday or a public holiday, the timescale runs from the next working day.

Step	Timescale
First contact or acknowledgement	Within 24 hours of the concern or complaint being received.
Informal stages (Stages 1 and 2)	Regular communication with the parent until the matter is closed. The aim is to resolve within 5 working days.
Formal stages (Stages 3 to 6)	Acknowledged within 24 hours. Full written response within 5 working days. If that is not possible, the parent is told in writing why and given a revised date, which should not be later than 10 working days from receipt.
Overall target	Wherever possible, cases are closed within 5 to 7 working days of being opened, or sooner.
Right to move to the next stage	The parent has 10 working days from the date of a decision letter to ask for the matter to be considered at the next stage.

Contact is made and progress updates are given even when a resolution has not yet been confirmed.

7. Complaints procedure and stages

YBA follows a seven-stage procedure. Stages 1 and 2 are informal. Stages 3 to 6 are formal, and Stage 7 is the final appeal.

Stage	Who deals with it	Type	How it works
1	Class teacher or subject teacher	Informal	Most concerns can be resolved by discussion and good communication. The teacher records the concern and passes it to the PRE (Section 8).
2	Year Leader (Secondary), Head of Year (Primary), Curriculum Team Leader or Subject Leader	Informal	Used if the parent remains unhappy after Stage 1. If the concern is still unresolved, the parent is asked to state their views in writing to the relevant Assistant Principal.
3	Directors / Assistant Principal	Formal	A written concern becomes a formal complaint. The Assistant Principal investigates and may meet the parent. The decision letter explains the action taken and the parent's right to move to Stage 4.
4	Head of Secondary / Primary	Formal	Reviews the Stage 3 decision and any further documents the parent submits. Replies in full within 5 working days of the request.
5	Head of School / Executive Principal	Formal	Reviews the Stage 4 decision and any further documents. Replies in full within 5 working days of the request.
6	Director of Education	Formal	Hears the case and minutes the meeting. The aim is to resolve the complaint and reconcile the school and the parent. A written decision is sent to the parent and the Executive Principal within 5 school days.
7	CEO	Appeal	Hears appeals against the Director's decision. The CEO's decision is final and no further hearings take place.

Moving between stages

- A parent who remains dissatisfied must set out in writing, within 10 working days of the decision letter, in what way they remain dissatisfied.
- Each formal stage acknowledges the request within 24 hours, confirms the parent's right to submit further documents, and replies in full within 5 working days.
- If a complaint is about the person who would normally deal with a stage, it is passed to the next level.
- A parent who remains dissatisfied after Stage 5 may request a Stage 6 Complaints Panel hearing by writing to the school within 10 working days of the Stage 5 decision letter. The school acknowledges the request within 24 hours, arranges the panel and confirms the hearing date with the parent.
- No member of the panel will have been involved in the complaint at an earlier stage and there will be one independent member from the school. The parent may attend the hearing and be accompanied. The panel's written findings and recommendations are sent to the parent, the Executive Principal and, where relevant, the person complained about, within 5 working days of the hearing.
- A parent who remains dissatisfied after the panel hearing may appeal to the CEO (Stage 7) by writing to the school within 10 working days of the panel's decision. The CEO's decision is final and no further hearings take place.
- Parents may also raise a complaint with the Abu Dhabi Department of Education and Knowledge (ADEK) at any time. Where ADEK contacts the school about a complaint, the school will cooperate fully.

8. Recording and tracking complaints

- The PRE logs the cases on the school's case management system (Salesforce Service Cloud). The parent automatically receives an email with their case number and this is tracked through the school's process.

The detailed staff procedure is in Appendix A.

9. Resolving complaints

When a complaint has been made, most people want:

- to be dealt with immediately and with a sense of urgency
- to discuss the matter
- to be listened to
- to receive a sincere apology
- to be told what action will be taken or to be offered a resolution
- to be reassured that all measures will be taken to prevent the concern happening again

It may be enough to acknowledge that the complaint is valid in whole or in part. It may also 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 taken to make sure it will not happen again
- an undertaking to review school policies in light of the complaint

After investigation, a complaint may be found to have no substance and be considered unfounded or unsubstantiated.

Staff cannot offer fee reductions, discounts or other concessions in response to a complaint unless authorised. Some resolutions, such as those involving action about staff or other students, fees, transport, school structure or facilities, need approval from Aldar Education before they can be offered to a parent.

10. Investigating complaints

Every investigation must be objective and follow this process:

1. Establish what has happened so far and who has been involved.
2. Clarify the nature of the complaint and what remains unresolved.
3. Meet or contact the complainant if there is any doubt or further information is needed.
4. Clarify what the complainant feels would put things right.
5. Interview those involved in the matter or complained of, allowing them to be accompanied if they wish.
6. Conduct interviews with an open mind and be prepared to persist with questioning.
7. Keep notes of every interview for the record.

11. Unreasonable or persistent complaints

Genuine complaints are always dealt with fairly, honestly and properly. Where a complainant's behaviour is characterised by any of the following, it must be managed effectively:

- actions that are obsessive, persistent, harassing, prolific or repetitious

- insistence on pursuing unmeritorious or unrealistic outcomes beyond all reason
- insistence on pursuing meritorious complaints in an unreasonable manner

The individual is made aware of the behaviour and of the steps the school will take to limit excessive and unreasonable complaints.

12. Confidentiality, monitoring and review

- Complaints are handled confidentially and shared only with those who need to know in order to resolve them.
- The school reports complaint data to Aldar Education, and the Executive Principal reviews complaint trends to identify improvements.
- Complaint records and parent feedback are used to improve services and staff training.
- This policy is reviewed as shown in the summary table above.

Appendix A: Staff procedure

For staff use. This appendix contains internal Aldar Education processes and is intended to be removed from any parent-facing version of the policy.

A1. Logging and ownership

1. The employee who receives the complaint records all details, the parent's contact details and requested next steps, and emails them to the PRE.
2. Parents can also raise cases directly through the parent portal or the school's parent experience inbox. The PRE logs cases manually when a parent phones, walks in or raises a concern on social media.
3. If a case relates directly to admissions, the PRE can transfer ownership to the Registrar or Admissions Manager. If it relates to finance, ownership can transfer to the Finance team.
4. All other cases needing support are escalated by the PRE by internal email, following the school's escalation matrix. The PRE moves the case through the system and chases updates against the timescales.

A2. Case status

Status	Use when
Closed	The case has already been resolved.
Escalated	The case requires escalation.
In progress	The school needs to contact the parent to discuss next steps.
On hold	The case is waiting for further information or updates from the parent.

A3. Timescales and outstanding tickets

- New and open cases are contacted within 24 hours, or the next working day if opened on a Friday or public holiday.
- In-progress cases must show a consistent communication thread with the parent. Cases should ideally be closed within 5 to 7 working days.
- A case not responded to within the timescale is flagged to the school management team as an outstanding ticket. If the management team does not respond in time, the ticket remains flagged.
- Outstanding tickets and cases not actioned or updated within timescales affect the school's compliance rating during audits, and warnings may be issued to the team members concerned.

A4. Qualtrics survey tickets

- If a parent rates their experience below 7 in the Parent Survey, a detractor ticket is sent automatically to the school's Qualtrics system (accessible to the PRE, Principal, Operations and School Manager, Registrar and Admissions teams).
- The Admissions team examines the complaint and contacts the parent within 24 hours to help close the ticket.
- If the ticket cannot be closed at first contact, it is escalated under the school's escalation matrix, and if it cannot be resolved at school level, to the Aldar Education Experience Hub.
- After escalation to the Experience Hub, the school can close the ticket in Qualtrics and mark it as unresolved for audit and reporting. Tickets that are resolved are closed once the concern has been resolved.

A5. Escalation to Aldar Education head office (HQ)

Schools must not send parents directly to HQ without official approval or an appointment booking. This would be a breach of the complaint management process. If a case cannot be resolved at school level, the PRE emails myexperience@aldareducation.com with:

- parent name
- case number
- number of children
- complaint details
- date the complaint was first raised
- the people currently involved at school level

The Experience Hub can support the school where the school cannot offer a suitable resolution, the parent has confirmed withdrawal after the school's retention process, the complaint has been through every level of the escalation matrix, or the parent refuses to continue communicating with the school. If the Experience Hub helps resolve a case, it shares all information with the PRE by email.

A6. Approvals and concessions

- Do not offer discounts, fee reductions or retention offers unless stated for the school. Check with the Principal or the Group Head of Marketing and Enrolments.
- Obtain HQ Group Head approval before communicating any resolution involving action against staff or other students, fee reduction, transport options, school structure or school facilities. If unsure whom to contact, ask the Customer Relations Manager or Guest Experience Executive.

A7. Leavers and retention

- If a complaint cannot be resolved at school level (for example demographics, curriculum, location, transport or facilities), the PRE or front-of-house representative should look at suitable options for the family within the Aldar Education network.
- If the family becomes a leaver, tell the Experience Hub immediately so it can support retention. A parent who wants to transfer to another Aldar Education school for the next year should apply through that school's website.

A8. Closure and reporting

- On resolution, update the case with the outcome so that all staff are informed, then close it.
- Complaints handled by the Experience Hub are reported monthly to the Customer Relations Manager and the Aldar Group CX team, and quarterly to the Group Head of Marketing and Enrolments.