



European School Bergen

2017.11.04

Complaints

For all complaints and appeals it is necessary for all concerned to look at the latest version of the **General Rules of the European Schools** and in all cases the current published version will be taken as the starting point for any actions. In the case of any complaints from seconded teachers the starting point will be the latest version of the **Regulations for Members of the Seconded Staff of the European Schools**. These documents are available on the website of the European Schools.

The procedure - principles

- The basis of this document is that pupils, parents/guardians and staff members have a right to make complaints concerning what they see as a problem or cause for complaint. Many complaints, problems, misunderstandings and issues will be dealt with in the normal course of the school day by a range of formal and informal means.
- The school is committed to providing the best possible response to problems and will do everything possible to resolve these problems in a transparent, fair and appropriate manner within the framework of the above regulations. This means, therefore, that help will be given if necessary to those requiring it to follow the procedure below and to find the relevant regulations.
- Complaints should be based on evidence and not hearsay or rumour.
- It is possible that a complaint can be dealt with orally, but if it is more serious then it should be made in writing if it cannot be resolved between the people concerned (after Step 1).
- The Complaints Form should be used by the person dealing with the complaint.
- All persons making a complaint should be aware that the person who is the subject of the complaint will be informed at every step to ensure fair treatment and transparency.
- In principle the person who is the subject of the complaint should be approached first, although this may not always be possible.
- Child protection must always come first, and the school will act swiftly in any cases where there is not time because of certain situations to follow all the steps below.
- For any oral complaints where, for example, one of the deputies is approached, but it is the wish that the person concerned is not informed, a form will be completed as a matter of record, but no further action can be taken. It is important that anyone making a complaint is informed of these steps and follows them.
- If someone starts at a different level in the procedure, for example, they should be sent or given this document. This is particularly important if parents go directly to the director or deputy; although either are available to provide advice on this procedure

The procedure - practice

If the problem cannot be resolved with the person concerned (step 1), the procedure will be to follow the steps below:

Step	Complaint addressed to:
1	The person concerned
2	The class teacher/educational advisor (secondary), pupil rep, staff rep, or other member of staff. The Complaints Form should be used.
3	The deputy of the appropriate cycle, bursar
4	The director
5	Externally, following the procedures according to the General Rules and Staff Regulations

- If the problem cannot be resolved in steps 1 and 2 it will be passed on to the deputies or the bursar, and they will receive the information collected so far. They will deal with the situation and if it cannot be resolved it will be passed on to step 4, to the director. Written feedback needs to be provided, even if the issue is resolved, and a copy should go to the director. It is expected that only in extreme cases will a complaint go further than this.
- If the problem cannot be resolved in school it will be subject to the procedures under Chapter XI of the General Rules and it can go as far as the Complaints Board in Brussels. The Complaints Board shall have sole jurisdiction in the first and final instance, once all administrative channels have been exhausted (Article 27, Convention defining the statute of the European Schools).

Passing on information to others

- In this procedure the class teacher plays an important role regarding the pupils and it is important that if problems move from the class teacher to the other steps that the class teacher is informed about the outcome of the case once it has been resolved and before it is filed.
- It is then the task of the class teacher to pass on the information to anyone else who requires it (i.e. the other teachers). In the same way others who need to be involved such as the Parents Association, pupil and staff representatives, need to be informed about the outcomes unless there are confidentiality issues.
- If the complaint is about one or more pupils, their respective parents must be involved as well as fully informed in each step of the procedure, unless the pupils is 18 years old or above.

Confidentiality

- On the complaint form if the confidentiality box is ticked with a “yes” it should be the decision of the appropriate member of the management team as to how the information is passed on to others, but the person who is the subject of the complaint and his/her parents if it concerns a pupil below the age of 18 must still be made fully aware of the situation.
- The school will involve external agencies as and when necessary, and will also seek advice from the school lawyer. This could be for advice, support or in a mediation role.

European School Bergen - Complaint Form

To be completed and signed by the person dealing with the complaint in the school.

Step	1	2	3	4				
Name of person making the complaint. If a parent, also name of the pupil								
Status in the organisation (pupil, parent etc)								
Summary of the complaint								
Summary of action taken								
Further action required								
Confidential <table border="1" style="display: inline-table; border-collapse: collapse;"> <tr> <td style="width: 50px;">Yes</td> <td style="width: 50px;">No</td> </tr> <tr> <td style="height: 20px;"></td> <td style="height: 20px;"></td> </tr> </table>	Yes	No			Documents attached			
Yes	No							
Name of the person dealing with the complaint								
Status in the organisation (class teacher etc.)								
Date	Signed (Person responsible in the school)							