



AZBUKA Russian-English Bilingual school

Complaints Policy and Procedures

All the Azbuka Russian-English Bilingual school policies should be read in conjunction with the Equality Policy, Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy

AZBUKA Russian-English School is a learning educational organisation. Feedback of all sorts is welcome, for we aspire to high standards for ourselves as well as for our pupils. Therefore, if anyone wishes to raise a concern, have queries or to make a complaint, they can expect it to be dealt with swiftly and in accordance with the policy and procedures set out in this document.

Informal and Formal Stages

The school will always try to resolve complaints informally and in an amicable fashion. The School's Complaints Procedure is divided into Informal and Formal Stages and it is expected that the majority of complaints will be resolved quickly at the Informal Stage.

Confidentiality

Complaints will be dealt with on as confidential a basis as possible, but it may be necessary for the person who first receives a complaint to discuss it with those who can resolve it, so anonymity and total confidentiality cannot be guaranteed. No one will receive adverse treatment as a result of having raised a complaint, or because someone else has raised a complaint on their behalf.

The School discourages anonymous complaints. However, some complaints which are made anonymously (for example, those raising possible Child Protection issues) do have to be taken seriously. Where an anonymous complaint is received, the Head Teacher will make a judgement on whether it is appropriate to investigate or not.

Where a complaint is made against an individual but not directly to that individual by the complainant, the school recognises the principle that the individual has the right to know the details of the complaint which has been made against them, as soon as possible after the complaint has been received, and, usually, to see any letters of complaint received about them.

It may not always be appropriate for an individual to know the identity of a complainant, or to see the whole of a letter which has been sent and in such circumstances the person complained against will be given verbatim extracts from the letter of complaint received.

People against whom formal complaints are made always have the right to time to consider their response and to take advice if necessary. In addition to any initial discussion, they will be allowed a maximum of five working days to respond in writing to the complaint made against them.

A confidential file will be kept on each individual formal complaint whilst it is investigated. Records of complaints made against members of staff will be removed from their personal file if the complaint is shown to be unfounded after investigation.

Members of staff against whom a complaint has been received will be fully informed of the investigation being made and will be given full written feedback on the conclusion of the investigation once it has been reached.

Complaints procedure for Parents and Pupils

Informal Stage of Complaints Procedure

It is hoped that most complaints and concerns will be resolved quickly and informally. Many concerns arise from misunderstandings and should be resolved by simple clarification.

Therefore, if parents wish to express a concern or make a complaint, they should in the first instance contact the pupil's teacher. In many cases, the matter will be resolved by this mean to everyone's satisfaction. If the relevant teacher cannot resolve the matter alone, he or she may need to consult the relevant member of Senior Management (Deputy head or Head).

If the Head Teacher receives a complaint about a member of staff, she will always inform the member of staff concerned. She will also inform the relevant member of the senior management team of the complaint and of how she will be dealing with the matter.

The relevant member of Senior Management will keep a written record of all complaints and expressions of concern and the date on which they are received. Should the matter not be resolved within seven working days or in the event that relevant member of Senior Management and the person making the complaint fail to reach a satisfactory resolution, then parents will be advised to proceed with their complaint in accordance with the formal stage of this procedure.

Formal Stage of Complaints Procedure

1 Senior Management. If it has not been possible to resolve a complaint informally, this should be addressed in writing to the relevant member of Senior Management (Deputy and/or Head teacher). Investigations will be undertaken as quickly as possible, so that matters can be resolved as soon as possible.

In most cases the Deputy Head, Head Teacher or the person delegated by the Head Teacher to investigate the complaint will meet or speak to the parents or other persons concerned, normally within seven working days of the complaint having been received, to discuss the matter. If possible a resolution will be reached at this stage.

If necessary, the Head Teacher will arrange for further investigation of the complaint.

The Head Teacher will keep written records of all meetings and interviews held in relation to complaints.

The Head Teacher will, if necessary, seek advice and assistance from the Chair of Governors/Trustees or an appointed Governor when dealing with a complaint. It has to be noted that this would exclude the Chair of Governors or the appointed Governor from taking part in any formal procedure which may result from the complaint.

Once the Head Teacher is satisfied that, so far as practicable, all of the relevant facts have been established, a decision will be made and parents will be informed of the decision. However, details of any action which may result in the use of disciplinary or other formal procedures will normally remain confidential.

If parents are still not satisfied with the decision they should proceed to a panel hearing.

2 Panel Hearings. Azbuka Foundation Chairman/Nominated Governor

Whilst it is hoped that all complaints will be resolved internally, people who make complaints and who feel that they have not been adequately dealt with by the school may appeal to a complaints panel.

Parents wishing to evoke this stage of the procedure following a failure to reach an earlier resolution will be referred to the Nominated Governor, who has been appointed to call hearings of the complaints panel.

The matter will then be referred to the complaints panel. This panel will consist of a total of three persons appointed by the Chair of Governors, and possibly including him, who have not previously been involved in the complaint, and one of whom will be a person totally independent of the school or its management.

The Chair of Governors/Nominated Governor (Trustee) on behalf of the complaints panel, will acknowledge the complaint and schedule a hearing to take place as soon as practicable, normally within fourteen working days.

Evidence collected at any previous stages of the complaint will be made available to the panel on a confidential basis.

If the panel deems it necessary, it may require that further particulars of the complaint or any related matter be supplied in advance of the hearing. Copies of such particulars shall be supplied to all parties not later than seven working days prior to the hearing.

The Head Teacher will be provided with copies of all relevant documents given to the panel and will be invited to give written and/or oral evidence to the panel.

The person making the complaint may be accompanied to the hearing by one other person. This will normally be a relative, colleague or friend. Legal representation will not normally be appropriate.

If possible, the panel will resolve the complaint immediately without the need for further investigation.

Where further investigation is required, the panel will decide how it should be carried out. After due consideration of all the facts it considers relevant, the panel will reach a decision and make recommendations. This will normally be completed within fourteen working days of the hearing.

The panel will write to the person making the complaint informing him/her of their decision and the reasons for it. The decision of the panel will be final. The Head Teacher will be informed in writing of the outcome of the appeal as soon as it is known. The panel's findings and recommendations will be sent to the person complained of.

The school will keep written records of all meetings and interviews held in relation to complaints panel hearings.

Other Complaints and Allegations

Any complaint which makes allegations of abuse will be investigated under Child Protection Procedures.

Serious complaints about the professional competence of staff will be investigated by the Head Teacher and/or the AF Chairman/Chair of Governors (or his representative).

Where a member of staff wishes to make a complaint against another member of staff, the matter will be investigated by the Head Teacher and/or the Chair of Governors (or his representative).

Head Teacher – Maria Gavrilova/ Nominated Governor – Taisya Chinina-Kelly