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INTRODUCTION

Dulwich College Shanghai Minhang considers parents to be partners in the education and development of the students, and firmly believes that communication is essential to the success of this partnership. The College is committed to keeping parents fully informed of both general and specific matters relating to their children. In return, the College asks that parents share their thoughts and views as early as possible to allow the College to address any concerns before they become problems.

With regard to dealing with concerns and complaints, the College believes that:

- the needs of the students come first
- all parties have the right to express a view
- all views should be heard and valued
- concerns should be raised and addressed with courtesy and consideration
- confidentiality and communication are key

Raising a concern or complaint will not reflect adversely on a student or his or her opportunities at the school. This policy allows for complaints to be raised and resolved in an informal manner as well as setting out the formal procedures where an informal resolution is not possible or not appropriate.

This Policy should be considered along with the DCSM Safeguarding Policy.

RAISING A CONCERN

If parents have any concerns about their children, they should speak to someone. In the first instance this will usually be the Class Teacher or Form Tutor, Subject Teacher or School Counsellor, depending on the nature of the concern. Depending upon the gravity of the issue, or where parents are not satisfied with the initial response, they may wish to speak to a more senior member of staff, such as a Deputy Head or Head of School. In particularly grave cases, or where parents are dissatisfied with the response of a senior member of staff, they may wish to arrange an appointment with the Headmaster. The table below provides guidance. Normally, parents should expect to receive a response, either verbally or in writing, within 48 hours of contacting the school. This may take the



form of an acknowledgement to indicate that the concern has been received and is being looked into, or a direct response to the matter raised if it has been possible to investigate and act before replying. Please bear in mind, though, that it may not always be possible to meet this outside of term time or if a particular member of staff is absent for a prolonged period. Where the latter circumstance arises, we will always ensure that an appropriate member of staff is asked to look into your concern.

Type of concern		Contact
Teaching and Learning	Class Work or Homework	Early Years (EY)/ Junior (JS): Class Teacher
	Curriculum/ Programme Content	EY/ JS: Year Leader SS: Subject Leader
	Quality of Teaching	Head of School
	Activities, Trips and Events	Head of School
Pastoral	Behaviour and Personal Wellbeing	EY/JS: Class Teacher or Year Leader SS: Form Tutor, Head of Year or School
	Child Protection and Safeguarding	Head of School
General	Enrollment	Admissions Manager
	School Fees	Head of Business Administration
	Overall College Policy	Headmaster
	Allegations against Members of Staff	Headmaster
	Appeals against Permanent Exclusion	Chair of the Board of Trustees (via Headmaster s PA). Please see Exclusion and Exclusion Appeals policies. [Note: Presumably the complaints and appeals procedure in this policy does not apply to

Whilst the College recognises that the source of a concern or complaint may be emotive and stressful, the College does not tolerate threatening or abusive behaviour towards staff. The College will handle concerns and complaints with courtesy and consideration, and asks that they be raised in the same way.

MAKING A FORMAL COMPLAINT

The process of registering and investigating a written complaint is more formal than expressing a concern. Most issues can be resolved without resort to this process.

If, however, parents decide to make a formal complaint, they should submit their complaint in writing by letter or email to the Headmaster (headmaster@dulwich-shanghaiminhang.cn).



The College will acknowledge receipt within 24 hours (or within three working days if submitted by post), and will state the action to be taken and the likely timescales for investigation and resolution. If appropriate, the Headmaster may ask another member of staff to investigate the complaint, in which case that staff member will communicate directly with the parents. Timescales for the management and resolution of the complaint will vary according to the nature of the complaint but, normally, we would hope to reach a resolution within three working weeks from receipt of the complaint.

Written Records

All complaints received will be recorded and monitored by staff to help ensure that the procedure is efficient and appropriate. Where an informal resolution was not achieved and a written complaint followed, the Headmasters PA will be responsible for maintaining records of complaints and their resolution. The record shall reflect whether the written complaint was then resolved informally, at a preliminary stage, or if an investigation and/or a hearing by a Panel (see below) was instituted. The record shall indicate actions taken by the College as a result of the complaint (regardless of whether the complaint was upheld).

The College will try to resolve all complaints quickly; unless the matter is particularly complex, the aim is to reach a resolution within three working weeks. The resolution of the complaint shall be set forth in writing and provided to the complaining party.

The College does not respond to anonymous complaints.

This complaints procedure does not apply to past pupils unless it involves a complaint made when the student was still registered at the College. This procedure does not cover exclusions, for which there is a separate policy.

APPEALING THE RESOLUTION OF A COMPLAINT

Parents who are dissatisfied with the outcome of their written complaint may appeal to a formally constituted panel in accordance with the procedures set out below.

Notice of Intent to Appeal

Parents who wish to appeal the resolution of a complaint must notify the Headmaster in writing of their intent to appeal within two weeks of receipt of the written description of the resolution of the complaint. This period may be extended by written agreement of the parents and the College.

Appointment and Constitution of Panel

Upon receipt of the notice of appeal, the Headmaster shall notify the Director of Schools of Dulwich College International (DCI) as soon as practicable. The Director of Schools shall be a member of the panel (the "Panel") charged with deciding the appeal of the resolution of the complaint and shall, in consultation with the Executive Committee of DCI, appoint two more people



to the Panel. At least one member of the Panel shall be independent of the management of the College, and none may have been directly involved in the matters related to the complaint.

The Panel shall be appointed within two weeks of the Headmaster's receipt of the notice of appeal, and sooner where practicable.

Investigation and/or Hearing

The Panel may proceed by conducting a fresh investigation and then a hearing by the Panel, or may proceed directly to a hearing by the Panel.

Within one week of its appointment, the Panel shall notify the parents and the College of the estimated date by which it expects to make a final decision on the appeal.

Hearing Procedures

Should the Panel decide to conduct a hearing, it shall do so pursuant to the following procedures.

Notice

The Panel shall give the parents and the College at least two weeks notice of any hearing. The notice shall indicate the time, date and venue of the hearing.

Attendance

Complainant(s) shall be permitted to attend the hearing, and to be accompanied by one other person.

Minutes

The Panel may appoint someone outside the Panel to take minutes of the hearing. Minutes shall be reviewed and approved by the Panel as soon as practicable after the hearing, and distributed to the College and the complainant(s) within one week of approval.

Witnesses

The parents and College may suggest the names of witnesses for the Panel to interview, but the Panel is not obligated by these suggestions. Whether or not a particular witness is interviewed rests entirely within the discretion of the Panel.

Parents and the College are responsible for ensuring that their suggested witnesses are available for interview at the hearing; the Panel is not required to make any accommodation for absent witnesses but has discretion to do so.

The child of the parents making the complaint may be interviewed at the hearing only with the express written permission of the parents. No other student at the College, and no one under age 18, may be interviewed in a hearing. This provision does not prevent the Panel from interviewing these



students in the course of an investigation prior to a Panel hearing.

Witnesses shall be interviewed one by one. When one witness is being interviewed no other witness may be present, apart from the parents. Parents shall not interrupt the process of interviewing the witness or apply any undue pressure on the witness.

Submissions to the Panel

The College and the parents may submit a written statement, with supporting documents, to the Panel regardless of whether a hearing is to take place. In the event of a hearing, the submissions must be made no later than one week before the hearing.

Confidentiality

Panel members, minute taker, parents, persons accompanying the parents, witnesses and all other persons present at the hearing (if a hearing takes place) are required to keep confidential all information obtained in the course of the appeal, unless that information is already in the public domain. Correspondence, statements and records of complaints shall be kept confidentially by the College and in accordance with restrictions by local authorities, except where local or international legal requirements permit access or access is required by a body authorised to conduct an inspection.

Decision of the Panel:

Vote

The decision to either uphold or change the resolution of a complaint must be supported by a majority of the Panel.

Notification

The Panel shall notify in writing the Headmaster and the complainant(s) of its decision, with findings and recommendations, as soon as practicable. Written outcomes of the panel will be held at the College where they may be inspected by the Headmaster and the Director of Schools. Where relevant, the findings and recommendations of the panel shall be made available in writing to the person(s) complained about. As indicated previously, the log of written complaints shall indicate actions taken by the College regardless of whether the complaint was upheld or not.

Finality of Decision

The decision of the Panel shall be final.

Written Complaints and Notices

For purposes of this policy, any notice or complaint required to be in writing may be made by post or by email.

Contact Details



Email

To contact a member of staff by email, please use the protocol: firstname.lastname@dulwich-shanghaiminhang.cn

Should you wish to make a formal complaint by email, please send it to headmaster@dulwich-shanghaiminhang.cn

Post:

Dulwich College Shanghai (Minhang)

1935 Shuguang Road,

Maqiao Town,

Minhang District,

Shanghai

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