

# Parent or legal guardian and student complaints procedures

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## Introduction

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The following handbook has been compiled in the interest of providing a detailed guide for parents and students. For new families, it will serve as a reference booklet for the varied questions about school life that may arise in the first weeks of school.

We hope that this booklet will serve as a vehicle to keep the community informed about the various principles, policies and practices that characterise Enko Bonanjo International School (EBIS).

EBIS is an international school covering Form 1 to Upper 6<sup>th</sup>. Cambridge's world class curriculums are taught up to Form 5 and lead to the International Baccalaureate Diploma programme in Lower and Upper 6<sup>th</sup>. More than 2 000 universities in over 75 countries recognize the prestigious IB diploma.

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## Enko Bonanjo International School Vision and Mission

<b>Vision</b>	Embrace the future with confidence
<b>Mission</b>	Our mission is to ensure that all learners' ages 11 to 19 years have access to an array of educational opportunities such that every learner can experience success at university and life beyond. We will achieve this through relevant, engaging and high-quality inclusive education that prepares them for citizenship in a democratic, social, just and sustainable society. <b>(Pending review)</b>

## Complaints and Grievance Procedure for Parents

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At Enko Bonanjo, parents are considered very important stake-holders, we believe that working together and showing care will help towards attaining our mission. To this end, all parents' concerns/ complaints must be treated in an honest, fair and timely manner. We understand that each academic year comes with its

challenges so scenarios of parents' dissatisfaction creeping in are inevitable. In this regard, parents at Enko Bonanjo must understand the following:

- I. Parents who have some concerns/complaints must know how to present them following the guidelines for grievance and complaints
- II. The administration of EBIS does NOT treat complaints with bias
- III. We handle complaints in an efficient and timely manner
- IV. We take appropriate actions and provide feedback whenever it is necessary.
- V. We encourage open communication and mutual respect in resolving issues

### **How to present a grievance**

Grievances may fall under the following categories: Student learning matters, class discipline, friendship issues, homework, issues outside of school that may have an effect on learning, etc...

Complaints can be presented formally or informally;

- ✓ Formal complaints must be documented and forwarded to the school leadership via any prescribed channel of communication between parents and the school.
- ✓ Informal grievances can be expressed verbally through phone calls or parents' conferences.

### **Duration for expected feedback**

Parents should expect feedback 24 hours (one working day) after submitting a complaint. This 24-hour window will permit the quarters that be, to perform a thorough study of the concerns raised.

### **Actions to be taken after complaints have been studied**

Complaints can be resolved following two possible routes: the formal and informal routes. The decision to use a formal or informal route will be determined by the nature of the grievance itself (whether it was presented as formal or informal). Notwithstanding, if an informal remediation does not suffice, the grievance automatically translates to a formal one and is subsequently treated as such.

**Informal grievances** are resolved by:

a. **Self-Resolution**

In this approach, the parties concerned are brought together to reflect on their actions and make meaningful conversations that may clarify any issues at stake.

b. **Assisted Self-Resolution.**

In assisted self-resolution, a member of staff of the school is designated to participate in the conversation, playing the role of a mediator and adviser. The mediator provides professional advice and endeavours as much as they can, to avoid taking sides. At the end of this exercise, if a resolution is not taken and all possibilities have been exhausted, the matter is henceforth treated as a formal grievance and forwarded to top leadership of the school.

**Formal grievances** on the other hand are addressed in a different way. Cases are also considered formal when the informal means of resolution have failed. However, depending on the severity of the issue; parents may directly file in a formal complaint as earlier indicated. We may provide resolutions to this type of grievance through:

a. **Investigation.** When the issue reported is against a stakeholder or a serious breach of policy, we may proceed to:

- i. Studying the nature of the breach
- ii. Gather material evidences that may help in decision making
- iii. Apply documented procedures in fairness
- iv. Facilitate final decision making.

b. **System Improvement.** When the complaint/grievance is targeting the school and its policies, the school will study the possibility of reviewing the policy in order to accommodate the complaint. This procedure is usually initiated by the school's leadership-the HOS, a meeting is then scheduled whereby contributions from each member of staff is taken into consideration and an updated version of the policies is documented.

c. **Possibility of involvement of the forces of law and order.** Although it is not our wish at ENKO to involve the forces of law in any internal issues of the school, ENKO is NOT eliminating the possibility of inviting the forces of law in extremely serious cases that may be deemed as life threatening or criminal.

## What if a parent does not find the resolutions satisfactory?

A dissatisfied parent may further transmit their concern to a quarter one step higher in the organizational chart of the school. For example, if resolutions were reached at the level of the department for concerns of learning progress of a particular student, a parent may push the complaint further to the programme coordinator if he/she is not satisfied with the outcome.

## Confidentiality

We strongly align with the privacy and confidentiality values of the IB as these are vital components of ethics. We therefore strive to limit knowledge of parent's complaints and concerns to leadership of the school and any individual directly concerned. The attention of the head office and/or CEO shall be solicited for exceptional cases.

## Channels of Communication

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Parents are requested to channel questions regarding their children's learning to the class or subject teacher in the first instance, through the appropriate means of communication. The prescribed means of communication include:

- ❖ Parents can reach out to any staff of the school through the Parents Relations Officer (Email, phone calls, WhatsApp,).
- ❖ The **Ed-admin communication** platform gives the possibility to parents to reach out as well to all teachers by E-mail, which is the highly encouraged means of communication at ENKO. However, parents may call teachers directly in cases of emergency

## Parent Involvement

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The school believes that the best student learning is achieved by developing a home-school partnership. Parents are therefore encouraged to attend information evenings and social events. Teachers participate in these events and also make direct contact with parents when there are concerns to be shared. Parents are equally encouraged to support the school in its endeavour to improve school's performance in external exams, by allowing their children to participate in support programs. These support programs are extended periods of supervised studies for all examination classes.

## Complaints and Grievance Procedure for students

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### Introduction

It is the policy of Enko Education and the School to practice reasonable and effective means of resolving difficulties that may arise among employees, parents or legal guardian and students to reduce potential areas of grievance, and to establish and maintain recognized channels of communication between all stakeholders

The School believes all partners shall have the right to present for solution problems arising within his/her employment situation and shall be encouraged to do so without fear of recrimination.

It is also the belief of the School that every effort should be made to ensure that all stakeholders receive fair and impartial treatment. Any student who has a grievance is encouraged to follow the procedure outlined in this document for a timely and peaceful resolution of their problem. The initial approach to settling any issue is open communication. If such a discussion does not resolve the matter informally, and the student believes that his/her complaint was not properly addressed, then they can follow the more formal procedure detailed in this document. The goal is for the complaint of any student to be resolved as quickly as possible. Hence, the school has established this grievance procedures that are intended to facilitate the handling of complaints and the resolution process.

### Scope

- The word “student” is used to designate a duly registered student of Enko Bonanjo. The word “parent” is used in this document to designate a parent, grandparent or legal guardian of a duly registered student.
- A “Grievance” is any feeling on the part of a student (or group of students) of dissatisfaction, injustice, unfairness, or victimization related to any specific aspect of the schools management and/or operation or academics.

- “Grievance Procedure” is a method that may be used by any student to discuss and resolve a grievance, jointly with management.
- A grievance may be filed through an email, a letter or made in person. In any case the it must clearly stated.
- The “homeroom teacher” is a teaching staff assigned to a specific class as class master. He is responsible for the general well being of the students in the class and is also the first contact person in case of any problem in the class.

### **Procedure Statement**

Enko Bonanjo understands that conflicting interests, disagreements, misunderstandings, and disputes do arise on occasion within any organization. Through the adoption of this grievance procedure Enko Bonanjo will ensure that:

- Any complaint from a student is treated with fairness, open mindedness and respect with the aim of timely resolution of the problem;
- All procedures and laws are strictly followed when dealing with any complaint from a student;
- Students are provided with all necessary document required to file a complaint or an appeal.
- A complainant receives constant updates on the resolution of a complaint submitted or appeal process.
- Records of all meetings with parents and/or student to resolve a formal complaint will be kept.

### **Guarantees**

EBIS undertakes to guarantee and ensure that:

- No student will be prejudiced in any way as a result of the raising or resolving of a grievance.
- No student will lose any privileges or services due to them as a result of bringing up grievance. In a case where a student has to take out time to

resolve an issue, the school will do its best to provide catch-up lessons for the student.

### **Grievance procedure (Student)**

Every student is encouraged to bring up any concern they may have be it academic or not. A grievance brought up by a student will be treated with utmost importance urgency and resolved as fast as possible. This is to ensure that complaints are not accumulated as it could weigh negatively on the student and even on the school community. Student complaints may be classified in the following stages representing the severity of the situation and possible solutions.

#### **Stage 1**

Enko Bonanjo understands that minor issues are very recurrent among students and also between students and teachers. In general, the homeroom teacher is the students first contact person in case of any problems. In case of any grievance, the student first talks to their homeroom teacher. Most student grievances are usually resolved at the level of the classroom, usually through informal discussions with the homeroom teacher or informal discussions mediated by the homeroom teacher.

#### **Stage 2**

In case where the student's problem is not resolved in stage 1, the student is required to put the complaint in writing and submit to the homeroom teacher and will receive a response after two school days. With these two the homeroom teacher will investigate the situation and come up with possible solution.

#### **Stage 3**

In case where the student does not received any feedback from the homeroom teacher or the solution provided by the homeroom teacher is not satisfactory. The student can forward the written complaint to the relevant head of department and/or coordinator. The head of department or coordinator will convene the homeroom teacher, and any other person of interest in the



complaint. Together they will investigate the situation and try to resolve it. This should happen with two school days.

#### **Stage 4**

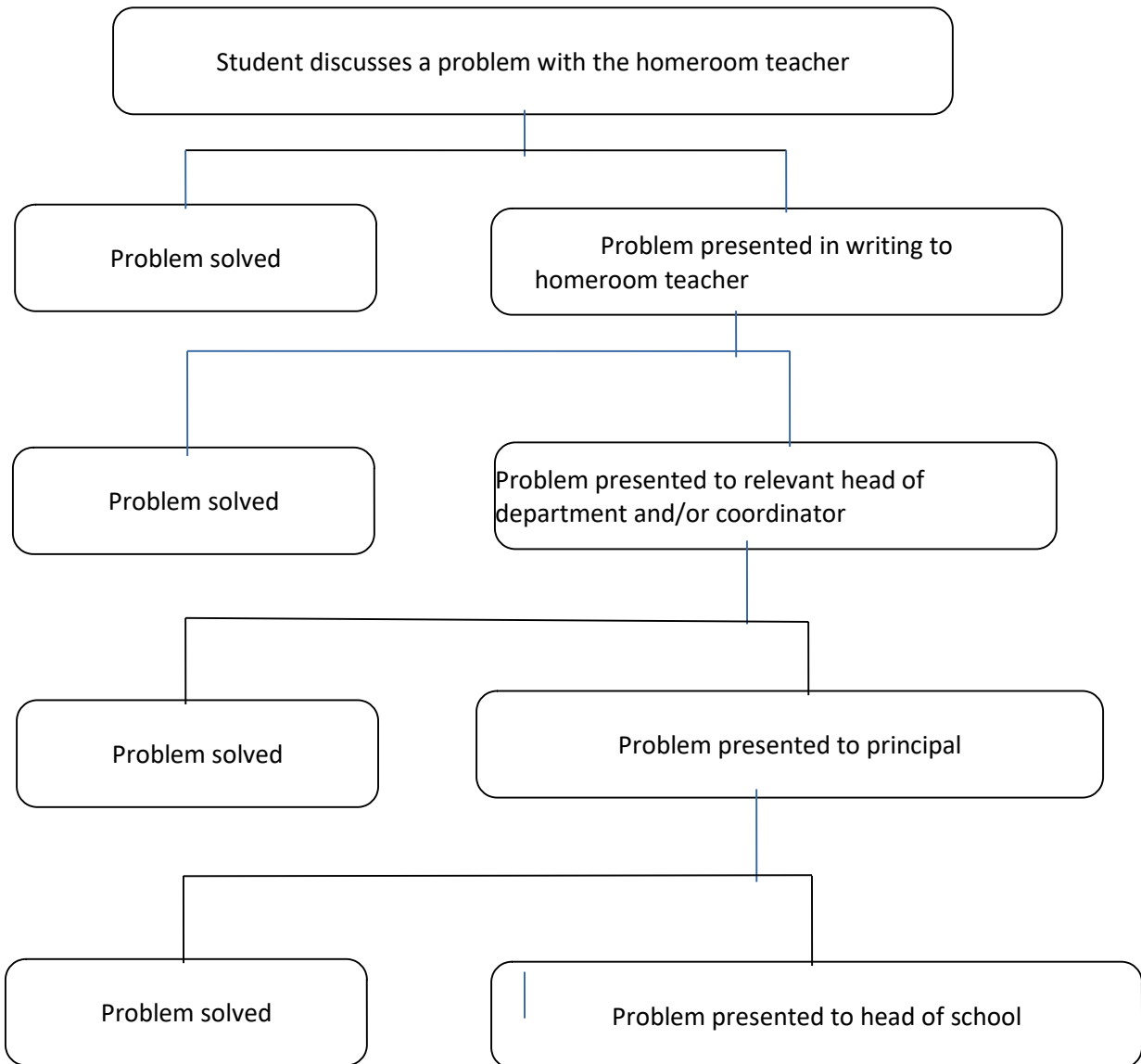
In case of no feedback or if the student feels that the response is unsatisfactory, then can escalate the complaint to the principal of the school. When this happens, the principal convenes the relevant head of department and/or coordinator, homeroom teacher, the student and any other person of interest to discuss the problem. In such meetings, the student is asked to reiterate the complaint verbally, then the head of department and/or coordinator and the homeroom teacher will each say how they handled the situation at their level why they couldn't provide a satisfactory solution. The principal will do a deeper investigation of the problem and then convene all parties again to present his/her findings and solutions discussed. These should happen within five school days. Most student grievances are usually resolved by stage 4.

#### **Stage 5**

In some rare cases, the student may still not be satisfied with the solution provided to their grievance. In this case, the student may take up their problem to the head of school. The head of school will convene the principal, the student and the parent of the student. The principal will present all findings and then discussions will follow and the head of school will make a final judgment. This should happen within five school days.

Enko Bonanjo puts all necessary resources together to resolve student grievances, however, in some very rare cases despite all the stages haven been followed and procedure duly respected, a student may still be unsatisfied with the outcome. In this case, the school reserves the right to adopt a unilateral solution, inform the student and parent in writing and then close the matter.

## Flowchart of student grievance policy



## References

- Experience from the past years
- <https://www.nordangliaeducation.com/our-schools/vietnam/ho-chi-minh-city/bis/complaints-procedure>
- <https://eifaschool.com/wp-content/uploads/2019/11/EIFA-Parent-Grievance-Procedure-April2019.pdf>
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- Parents' Complaints Policy, Parklane International School
- Parent Complaints Policy and Procedures, Cambridge International school, Dubai
- Parent Grievance Procedures and Guidelines, Catholic education, Diocese of Rockhampton