



**MALEK FAHD  
ISLAMIC SCHOOL**

## **Complaints Handling Policy and Procedures**

**Version 3.0**

**10 November 2025**

## Contents

|   |   |
|---|---|
| Policy Custodian .....                            | 2 |
| Version Control .....                             | 3 |
| Policy review .....                               | 3 |
| Introduction .....                                | 3 |
| Relevant Strategic Aspiration:.....               | 3 |
| Prophetic Communication Principles: .....         | 3 |
| Purpose and scope.....                            | 4 |
| Whistleblowing complaints.....                    | 4 |
| Related policies .....                            | 4 |
| Confidentiality.....                              | 5 |
| Complaints .....                                  | 5 |
| Raising a complaint.....                          | 5 |
| When to Raise a Complaint. ....                   | 5 |
| What to Include in a Complaint.....               | 6 |
| Handling complaints.....                          | 6 |
| Acknowledgement.....                              | 6 |
| Assessing a complaint.....                        | 6 |
| Managing a formal complaint.....                  | 6 |
| Support Person.....                               | 7 |
| Information Not Provided to the Complainant ..... | 7 |
| Notification of Closure .....                     | 7 |
| Appeals.....                                      | 7 |
| Timeframes .....                                  | 7 |
| Recordkeeping .....                               | 7 |
| Responsibilities.....                             | 7 |
| What Is Recorded .....                            | 7 |
| Storage .....                                     | 8 |
| Duration .....                                    | 8 |

## Policy Custodian

- Deputy Principal Wellbeing & Community

## Version Control

| Version No | Date             | Details  | Approved by                       |
|------------|------------------|--|-----------------------------------|
| V1.0       | 2020             | MFIS - Parents & Community Members: Procedures for Raising a Concern or Making a Complaint - Greenacre Secondary V1.0 May 2020 | The School Board                  |
| V2.0       | 24 October 2022  | Revision and renamed. MFIS Complaints Handling Policy and Procedures (based on the AISNSW sample policy of June 2022)          | Principal (Dr Zachariah Matthews) |
| V3.0       | 10 November 2025 | Revised based on AISNSW gap analysis (Deputy Principal Wellbeing & Community, Mr Aiyub Ahmed)                                  | Principal (Dr Zachariah Matthews) |

## Policy review

This policy will be reviewed every three years if not earlier to take account of any changed technology, legislation, expectations or practices.

The next review date is November 2028.

## Introduction

### Relevant Strategic Aspiration:

“The School environment engenders a sense of belonging, respectful engagement and enhanced wellbeing.”

### Prophetic Communication Principles:

It is recommended that complainants and supervisors adhere to these principles when making or managing a complaint.

- Smile: This helps to start a face-to-face conversation positively and may minimise or remove any past ill feelings. “Your smiling in the face of your brother is charity” (Prophet Muhammad).
- Pay attention to tone and volume: Tone determines whether the communication is enhanced or broken. Any loudness or aggression in voice could put people off and make any further attempts to communicate difficult. “And be moderate in your pace and lower your voice; indeed, the most disagreeable of sounds is the voice of donkeys” (Quran 31:19).
- Start with the greeting of peace: Saying ‘*Assalaamu alaykum*’ (peace be upon you). It helps to set a positive start to the communication.
- Inquire about the person: Ask them how they are doing and inquire about their health and well-being. They will feel the care and concern.
- Not all are the same: Consider people’s differences while communicating. Keep in mind

their age, status, temperament, etc. Maintaining each person's dignity.

- Correct with gentleness: If there is an opportunity to correct a misunderstanding, etc., then do so gently.
- Avoid the harms of the tongue: Communicate politely with respect and stay away from being harsh, rude, slandering, lying, insulting and cursing.
- Choose concise words: Avoid complex language and sophisticated terms. Instead, use concise words and phrases that assist in being understood. The Prophet (P) spoke with clarity and made people comprehend easily, sometimes by repeating his words.
- Avoid argumentation: When having difficult conversations, avoid falling into disputes and argumentation. "And obey Allah and His Messenger, and do not dispute (with one another) lest you lose courage and your strength depart, and be patient; surely, Allah is with those who are the patient ones" (Quran 8:46).
- End with the greeting: Before departing or concluding, greet warmly with peace once again.

*[Extracted from <https://productivemuslim.com/sunnah-communicate-effectively/>]*

### **Purpose and scope**

This policy applies to Malek Fahd Islamic School (MFIS) in handling complaints made in respect of services provided by the School or against staff members, which includes employees, contractors and volunteers. Complaints can be made by parents, carers, students, or staff.

MFIS (the School) aims to foster a safe and supportive environment for its students, staff, parents/carers, and community members.

This policy does not extend to personal grievances between parents/carers or other members of the school community.

### **Whistleblowing complaints**

This policy does not extend to complaints which are whistleblowing disclosures. The procedure for processing whistleblowing complaints are dealt with in the school's whistleblowing policy.

In summary a whistleblowing disclosure is a disclosure which:

- is made by a board member, staff member, a person who supplies goods or services to the School, including a volunteer, an employer of a supplier or a relative of any of these people;
- involves alleged misconduct, an improper situation or circumstances, or illegal activity, and
- is made to a senior staff member, or officer of the School, the School's auditor or a person who the School has authorised to collect such disclosures.

### **Related policies**

- **Parent Code of Conduct:** General communication between a parent/carer and a staff member of MFIS is outlined in the Parent Code of Conduct.
- **Child Protection Policy:** Complaints about reportable conduct will be addressed in accordance with the School's Child Protection Policy.
- **Staff Grievance Policy & Procedure:** Complaints regarding a grievance between staff members about work matters, including work relationships and decision made by other

staff members which impact on their work, will be addressed in accordance with the School's Staff Grievance Policy.

- **Workplace Respect Policy:** Complaints regarding unlawful discrimination, harassment or bullying between staff are generally addressed in accordance with the School's Workplace Respect Policy.

### Confidentiality

All parties involved in complaints handling are required to maintain appropriate confidentiality, including in relation to handling and storing records.

## Complaints

A complaint or grievance is an expression of dissatisfaction made to the School about an educational and/or operational matter relating to services provided by the School or the behaviour or decisions of a staff member, contractor or volunteer, including misconduct.

If a parent/carer or student has a concern about the conduct of a staff member, they should raise their concern with the School in accordance with section 3. If a complaint that concerns the behaviour of a staff member may constitute reportable conduct, the matter will be addressed in accordance with the school's Child Protection Policy. Complainants are not required to assess whether their concern meets the threshold of reportable conduct before making a complaint. Any concern about a child's wellbeing may be reported under this policy.

The school will seek to resolve complaints informally where possible but acknowledges that in some cases a person may wish to make a formal complaint.

### Raising a complaint

Informal complaints may be raised by a complainant directly with the person involved. However, if the complainant does not feel comfortable doing so or the matter is one where it may not be appropriate to do so a complaint can be made to the Head of Campus. Any complaint about the conduct of a staff member should be raised directly with the Head of Campus in the first instance.

Should the matter not be resolved through informal processes, the complainant may raise the matter formally with the School. A formal complaint can be made in writing to the Principal, via email [principal@mfis.nsw.edu.au](mailto:principal@mfis.nsw.edu.au). This includes where a person wishes to make a formal complaint concerning the Head of Campus.

Where a person wishes to make a formal complaint concerning the Principal the complaint should be made in writing to the Chair of the Board, via email [chair@mfis.nsw.edu.au](mailto:chair@mfis.nsw.edu.au). In this situation, the references in this policy relating to the role of the principal should be read as references to the Chair of Board.

### When to Raise a Complaint.

Complaints should be made as soon as practicable after the issue arises.

- There is no strict time limit, but timely reporting is encouraged.

- Historical allegations of reportable conduct will be accepted and investigated in line with statutory obligations.

### **What to Include in a Complaint**

A complaint should contain:

- Description of the concern or incident
- Relevant dates, locations, and individuals involved.
- Supporting evidence (e.g. screenshots, reports) if available.
- Contact details (anonymous complaints are accepted but may limit response options)

## **Handling complaints**

### **Acknowledgement**

The Head of Campus or Principal (or Principal's delegate) will acknowledge receipt of a formal complaint in writing within two business days if practical.

### **Assessing a complaint**

The Head of Campus generally will assess the formal complaint and determine:

- whether the complaint is one to be addressed under this policy or is a staff grievance or reportable conduct matter which are dealt with by the relevant policies; and
- the priority of the complaint in accordance with the urgency and/or seriousness of the matter raised; and
- whether the School may be required to report the matter to the Office of the Children's Guardian, Police, Department of Communities and Justice or other relevant authorities should the complaint relate to possible unlawful conduct or other reportable matters.

### **Managing a formal complaint**

The Head of Campus in consultation with the Deputy Principal Wellbeing & Community will manage a formal complaint by:

- a) advising the complainant of the likely steps that will be undertaken by the School in relation to the complaint;
- b) if appropriate, advising the relevant parties of the complaint at the relevant time and providing them with an opportunity to respond;
- c) collecting any additional information the School considers necessary to assess the complaint;
- d) making a decision about how the complaint will be resolved ("resolution decision"); and
- e) advising the complainant in writing, and any other relevant parties as appropriate, of the resolution decision of the Head of Campus and if appropriate, any proposed action to be taken.

There may be circumstances where some of the steps outlined above are not appropriate and the School will determine, on a case-by-case basis the most appropriate method of handling the complaint.

## Support Person

A complainant and the relevant parties that the complaint is about may choose to have an appropriate support person present at any meeting with representatives of the School about the complaint. However, the School maintains the right to determine whether the person's preferred support person is appropriate and may not approve the attendance of a support person where they are determined by the School to be inappropriate.

## Information Not Provided to the Complainant

The following types of information must not be disclosed to the complainant:

- Disciplinary actions taken against other individuals
- Personal or identifying details of others involved
- Legal advice or internal confidential communications

This ensures privacy, legal compliance, and procedural integrity.

## Notification of Closure

Upon closure of a complaint, a written summary should be provided to the complainant. This summary must include:

- Key findings of the investigation
- Final outcomes or decisions
- Any next steps or follow-up actions
- Information on the right to appeal

## Appeals

Complainants have the right to request a review of the outcome. Options include:

- Internal review by the Executive Principal (or delegate) or the Board Chair
- External recourse, such as lodging a complaint with the NSW Ombudsman or other relevant bodies

## Timeframes

- Most complaints should be resolved within 20 school working days
- If delays occur, the complainant must be informed and provided with a revised timeline

## Recordkeeping

### Responsibilities

Formal complaint records must be maintained by the Head of Campus and the Principal (or their delegate).

### What Is Recorded

The following details must be documented:

- Date the complaint was received
- Names of parties involved
- Nature and summary of the complaint
- Actions taken during the investigation
- Final outcome and any follow-up
- Communication history with the complainant

### **Storage**

Records must be stored securely and confidentially using:

- Sentral
- OneDrive

Access should be restricted to authorised personnel only.

### **Duration**

All complaint records must be retained for a minimum of 7 years, in accordance with regulatory requirements.