



INTERNATIONAL SCHOOL
Ikast - Brande

Complaints Policy

Current Policy	August 2026
Next Review	August 2028

Mission

At the International School Ikast-Brande, we are committed to the happiness and sustainability of our community. With strong values and high expectations, we focus on excellent academics and developing individual skills and attributes we prepare students for the challenges of an ever-changing world.

Who can make a complaint?

This complaints procedure is not limited to parents or carers of children that are registered at the school. Any person, including members of the public, may make a complaint to International School Ikast-Brande (ISIB) about any provision of facilities or services that we provide. Unless complaints are dealt with under separate procedures, we will use this complaints procedure.

The difference between a concern and a complaint

A **concern** may be defined as *'an expression of worry or doubt over an issue considered to be important for which reassurances are sought'*.

A **complaint** may be defined as *'an expression of dissatisfaction however made, about actions taken or a lack of action'*.

It is in everyone's interest that concerns and complaints are resolved at the earliest possible stage.

Many issues can be resolved informally, without the need to use the formal stages of the complaint's procedure. International School Ikast-Brande (ISIB) takes concerns seriously, and we will make every effort to resolve the matter as quickly as possible.

If you have difficulty discussing a concern with a particular member of staff, we will respect your views. In these cases, the Head of School will refer you to another staff member. Similarly, if a member of staff directly involved feels unable to deal with a concern, the Head of School will refer you to another staff member. The members of staff may be more senior but do not have to be. The ability to consider the concern objectively and impartially is more important.

We understand, however, that there are occasions when people would like to raise their concerns formally. In this case, ISIB will attempt to resolve the issue internally, through the stages outlined within this complaint's procedure.

How to raise a concern or make a complaint

A concern or complaint can be made in person, in writing or by telephone. In the first instance, concerns should be raised with the relevant homeroom teacher or subject teacher. If the issue remains unresolved, the next step is to make a formal complaint to the senior leadership team.

An example form is in Appendix A of this document.

You must raise any complaint within three months of the incident taking place.

What this policy covers

This policy covers all complaints about any provision of community facilities or services by ISIB, other than complaints that are dealt with under other legal procedures.

Exceptions	Who to contact
Matters likely to require a Child Protection Investigation	Head of School - Complaints about child protection matters are handled under our Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy and in accordance with relevant statutory guidance.
Whistleblowing	Head of School - We have an internal whistleblowing procedure for all our employees, including temporary staff and contractors. Volunteer staff who have concerns about our school should complain through the school's complaints procedure.
Staff conduct	Head of School - Complaints about staff will be dealt with under the school's internal disciplinary procedures, if appropriate. Complainants will not be informed of any disciplinary action taken. However, the complainant will be notified that the matter is being addressed.
Complaints about services provided by other providers who may use school premises or facilities	Head of School - Providers should have their own complaints procedure to deal with complaints about service. Please contact them directly.

Note:

If other bodies are investigating aspects of the complaint, for example the police or local authority, this may affect our ability to adhere to the timescales within this procedure or result in the procedure being suspended until those public bodies have completed their investigations.

If a complainant commences legal action against ISIB in relation to their complaint, we will consider whether to suspend the complaints procedure in relation to their complaint until those legal proceedings have concluded.

Formal Process (against the Chair or any member of the board)

Write directly to the Secretary of the Board via the school office mail; mark all correspondence as Private and Confidential. (office@isib.dk)

Formal Process (against the Head of School)

Complaints that involve or are about the Head of School should be addressed to the Chair of the Board, via the school office. Please mark them as Private and Confidential. (office@isib.dk)

Formal Process (against any other member of staff)

Complaints against school staff (except the Head of School) should be made in the first instance, to the Head of School via the school office (office@isib.dk). Please mark them as Private and Confidential.

Anonymous complaints

We will not normally investigate anonymous complaints. However, the Head of School or Chair of the Board, if appropriate, will determine whether such a complaint warrants an investigation.

Resolving complaints

At each stage in the procedure, ISIB wants to resolve the complaint. If appropriate, we will acknowledge that the complaint is upheld in whole or in part. Dependent on the outcome of any investigation we may decide on further actions based on the findings.

Withdrawal of a Complaint

If a complainant wants to withdraw their complaint, we will ask them to confirm this in writing.

Stages

Stage 1 - The school office will record the date the complaint is received and will acknowledge receipt of the complaint in writing (either by letter or email) within five (5) school working days.

Within this response, the 'investigating person' will seek to clarify the nature of the complaint, determine the event in question, clarify their findings and issue an initial response.

The Head of School OR Chair of the board may consider whether a face-to-face meeting is the most appropriate way of doing this.

Note: The Head of School may delegate the investigation to another member of the school's Senior Leadership Team, but not the decision taken.

During the investigation, the Head of School (or investigator) will:

- ✓ if necessary, interview those involved in the matter and/or those complained of, allowing them to be accompanied if they wish
- ✓ keep a written record of any meetings/interviews in relation to their investigation.

At the conclusion of their investigation, the Head of School (or a Board member) will provide a formal written response which normally would be within fifteen (15) school working days of the date of the original receipt of the complaint.

If they are unable to meet this deadline, s/he will provide the complainant with an update, and a revised response date. They will also advise the complainant of how to escalate their complaint should they remain dissatisfied with the outcome of Stage 1.

Stage 2 - If the complainant is dissatisfied with the outcome at Stage 1 and wishes to take the matter further, they can escalate the complaint to Stage 2 – a meeting with members of the board's complaints committee, which will be formed of the first three, impartial, board members available. This is the final stage of the complaint's procedure.

A request to escalate to Stage 2 must be made to the Secretary, via the school office (office@isib.dk), within five (5) school days of receipt of the Stage 1 response.

The Secretary will record the date the complaint is received and acknowledge receipt of the complaint in writing (either by letter or email) within five (5) school working days.

Requests received outside of this time frame will only be considered if exceptional circumstances apply.

The Secretary will write to the complainant to inform them of the date of the meeting. They will aim to convene a meeting within ten (10) school days of receipt of the Stage 2 request. If this is not possible, the Secretary will provide an anticipated date and keep the complainant informed.

If the complainant rejects the offer of three proposed dates, without good reason, the Secretary will decide when to hold the meeting. It will then proceed in the complainant's absence based on written submissions from both parties.

The complaints committee will consist of at least three board members with no prior involvement or knowledge of the complaint. Prior to the meeting, they will decide amongst themselves who will act as the Chair of the Complaints Committee. If there are fewer than three board members from ISIB available, the Secretary will source some additional, independent people in order to make up the committee. Alternatively, an entirely independent committee may be convened to hear the complaint at Stage 2.

The committee will decide whether to deal with the complaint by inviting parties to a meeting or through written representations, but in making their decision they will be sensitive to the complainant's needs.

If the complainant is invited to attend the meeting, they may bring someone along to provide support. This can be a relative or friend but are NOT allowed to contribute to the investigation. Generally, we do not encourage either party to bring legal representatives to the committee meeting. However, there may be occasions when legal representation is appropriate. (For instance, if a school employee is called as a witness in a complaint meeting, they may wish to be supported by union and/or legal representation.)

Note: Complaints about staff conduct will not generally be handled under this complaint procedure. Complainants will be advised that any staff conduct complaints will be considered under staff disciplinary procedures, if appropriate, but outcomes will not be shared with them.

Representatives from the media are not permitted to attend.

Stage 2 Continued

Any written material will be circulated to all parties at least two (2) school days before the date of the meeting. The committee will not normally accept, as evidence, recordings of

conversations that were obtained covertly and without the informed consent of all parties being recorded.

The committee will also not review any new complaints at this stage or consider evidence unrelated to the initial complaint to be included. New complaints must be dealt with from Stage 1 of the procedure.

The meeting will be held in private. Electronic recordings of meetings or conversations are not permitted unless a complainant's own disability or special needs require it. The consent of all parties to be in the meeting will be recorded in any minutes taken.

The committee will consider the complaint and all the evidence presented. The committee can:

- ✓ uphold the complaint in whole or in part
- ✓ dismiss the complaint in whole or in part.

If the complaint is upheld in whole or in part, the committee will:

- ✓ decide on the appropriate action to be taken to resolve the complaint and prevent further occurrences. The Chair of the Committee will provide the complainant and ISIB with a full explanation of their decision and the reason(s) for it, in writing, within five (5) school working days from the conclusion of the investigation.

Meeting Protocols

- ✓ All meetings must be independent and impartial, and should be seen to be so
- ✓ No board member may sit on the committee if they have had a prior involvement in the complaint or in the circumstances surrounding it.
- ✓ The aim of the meeting should be to resolve the complaint and achieve reconciliation between the school and the complainant.
- ✓ We recognise that the complainant might not be satisfied with the outcome if the meeting is not found in their favour. It may only be possible to establish the facts and make recommendations.
- ✓ Many complainants will feel nervous and inhibited in a formal setting
- ✓ Parents/carers often feel emotional when discussing an issue that affects their child.
- ✓ Extra care needs to be taken when the complainant is a child/young person and present during all or part of the meeting
- ✓ Careful consideration of the atmosphere and proceedings should ensure that the child/young person does not feel intimidated.
- ✓ The committee should respect the views of the child/young person and give them equal consideration to those of adults.
- ✓ If the child/young person is the complainant, the committee should ask in advance if any support is needed to help them present their complaint. Where the child/young person's parent is the complainant, the committee should give the parent the opportunity to say which parts of the meeting, if any, the child/young person needs to attend.
- ✓ However, the parent should be advised that agreement might not always be possible if the parent wishes the child/young person to attend a part of the meeting that the committee considers is not in the child/young person's best interests.
- ✓ The welfare of the child/young person is paramount.

Appendix A – Sample Complaint Form

Please complete and return it to the Office, who will acknowledge receipt.

Document should be stored on the Document Management System (DMS) under Private and Confidential.

Your name:
Student's name (if relevant):
Your relationship to the student (if relevant):
Address: Day time telephone number: Evening telephone number:
Please give details of your complaint, including whether you have spoken to anybody at the school about it.
What actions do you feel might resolve the problem at this stage?
Are you attaching any paperwork? If so, please give details.
Signature:
Date:
<i>For official use</i>
Date acknowledgement sent:
By whom:
Complaint referred to:
Date: