

Complaints Handling and Dispute Resolution Policy

Purpose

This policy outlines the Complaints Handling and Dispute Resolution policy and procedures of the ACT German Language School (GLS). In addition to promoting a culture of fair student and parent treatment, these procedures also assist our school to improve our approach to providing German language skills to children and adults.

This document applies to all employees, agents and representatives of GLS and our service. The document clearly sets out the procedures Committee and staff must follow on becoming aware of a complaint (see definition below).

Definitions

Throughout this policy, the following terms are used

GLS refers to the ACT German Language School Inc.

Complaint is any expression of dissatisfaction in relation to teachers or volunteers, where a response or resolution is explicitly or implicitly expected.

Complainant refers to any person who raises a complaint with GLS.

School Culture

GLS promotes a safe environment for students to learn the German language and experience the culture of German speaking countries. We respect different cultures and value diversity. GLS treats all students and parents equally and fairly and is open to continuous improvement.

The committee and teaching staff demonstrate a commitment to a safe environment where students and parents are encouraged to participate in the learning and growth, and appreciation of German as a second language.

Policy

GLS welcomes and values feedback and seeks to continually improve processes. We are committed to resolving complaints quickly, fairly, efficiently and courteously.

Our policy is:

- To provide a fair complaints procedure which is clear and easy to use for anyone wishing to make a complaint;
- To ensure that the relevant people at GLS know what to do if a complaint is received;
- To ensure that all complaints are investigated impartially and in a timely manner;
- Any person complained about has the right to know the details of any allegations against them;
- To ensure that complaints are, wherever possible, resolved and that relationships are repaired;

- To gather information which helps us improve what we do.

Complainants will be:

- a. treated with respect and provided with all documentation and evidence in support of their concerns;
- b. informed of the complaints handling process; and
- c. informed of decisions and the reasons for those decisions.

Complaints Handling Procedure

This procedure aims to provide a quick, simple and streamlined process for resolving complaints early.

GLSs complaints process provides three opportunities to resolve complaints:

1. **Stage 1 Frontline resolution** – address the Adult Coordinator or Children's Principal's with your complaint. If it is not resolved to the complainant's satisfaction, then proceed to Stage 2,
2. **Stage 2 Investigation** – the complaint is escalated to the Committee for investigation and resolution,
3. **Stage 3 Dispute Resolution** – if the response given at Stage 2 does not satisfactorily resolve the Complainant may seek a negotiated outcome where the parties resolve the matter to a mutually beneficial outcome.

An investigation aims to establish all the facts relevant to the points made in the complaint and to give the complainant a full, objective and proportionate response that represents GLSPs final position. The investigation and notification to the complainant will be completed within a reasonable time ie. No more than 30 days upon receipt of complaint, and the complainant will be notified in writing of the outcome.

Further avenues for dispute resolution, depending upon the nature of the complaint, may be pursued through the Fair Work Commission or the Fair Work Ombudsman.

Review

This policy will be reviewed by the GLS' Management Committee, at least every three years, or more frequently in response to feedback or legislative changes.