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Embassy International School Staff Grievance Policy

Purpose

The purpose of this policy is to establish a procedure to resolve any disputes that may arise amongst staff. It applies to all employees of the Embassy International School.

Context

The Embassy International School has a series of policies and procedures concerning rights and dignities at work; the staff handbook describes the essence of professionalism and overall professional culture we wish to cultivate. These policies are in the staff handbook and on the school website.

This procedure is for use if a staff member believes they have been mistreated by a colleague or manager, or when other procedures and policies have been contravened.

Staff are protected against any form of retaliation should they raise a grievance.

Informal Resolution of Complaints

Many of the issues which arise in the context of an international school are due to cultural differences. Maintaining open minded, respectful and frequent dialogue between staff will make it possible to resolve many issues without the need for escalation.

Any issues which cannot be resolved between staff members at this level should be brought informally to the Head of School, who will in the first instance seek an informal solution based on discussion.

Should informal attempts at resolution not succeed, the formal grievance procedure should be used.

Time Limits

All formal grievances should be raised in writing within two weeks of the failure of informal approaches to resolve them.

The time limits may be modified by mutual written agreement of the parties.

If a member of staff should fail to observe the time limits in any particular step, the grievance will be considered to have been resolved to their satisfaction.

Grievance Procedure:

Staff are required to represent themselves throughout the course of this procedure. All meetings will be minuted. If a staff member requires to have a meeting due to this procedure in time normally scheduled for other activities then that activity will be either rearranged or someone else will lead it, without financial repercussions on the staff member involved.

Step 1.

If informal attempts to resolve grievances fail, the first step is to make a formal written complaint to the Head of School.

This:

- must identify the policy or right or dignity which is alleged to have been violated,
- must contain a non-judgemental, short statement of the facts surrounding the case, and
- must state the solution or outcome sought.

Grievances which do not include these elements will be dismissed.

Within five (5) working days from receipt of the written grievance, the Head of School will schedule a meeting with the staff member to discuss the contents. This will be minuted by the school secretary. This meeting shall be held within fifteen working days from receipt of the written grievance.

The Head of School will formally respond to the staff member in writing within five working days of this meeting. A copy will be kept on file.

Step II.

If this is not resolved by step 1, then the staff member may raise the complaint with the permanent **Complaints, Feedback and Suggestions Committee** described in the Quality Control Policy Complaints chapter and the procedures followed there must be applied.

If this does not resolve the issue then step III must be followed.

Step III Arbitration

The staff member and other people involved will have the opportunity for their cases to be put to arbitration by the school counselor as a neutral and unbiased arbitrator. The school counselor may wish to call up an arbitration committee from outside the school. This will be an odd number of people of suitable professional background chosen by the school counselor and if they require to be paid for their time, the school will meet this cost.

Each side in the dispute will have a fixed time to present their case, the written evidence from the previous steps will be considered. Each side will be given a chance for one response to allegations made after their initial presentation. The time limits on these presentations will be set by the arbitration committee.

The committee will decide the solution by a simple majority vote and all sides will accept this solution as binding. Action must also be recommended to avoid future disputes of a similar nature.

Dr Lindsay Davidson, Head of School
Embassy International School



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