



Complaints Policy

2022/2023

Nourishing the Human Potential



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Complaints Policy & Procedure

Ecole Montessori Casablanca is committed to providing a quality Montessori education for children and to work in an open and accountable way that builds the trust and respect of all families connected with it. We are constantly seeking for input in order to improve our practices and overall quality of the education we offer.

One way is by listening and responding to the views of the parents/guardians, and in particular by responding positively to complaints, and by putting mistakes right.

Therefore, we aim to ensure that:

- making a complaint is as easy as possible;
- we treat a complaint as a clear expression of dissatisfaction with our service which calls for an immediate response;
- we deal with it promptly, politely and, when appropriate, confidentially;
- we respond in the right way - for example, with an explanation, or an apology where we have got things wrong, or information on any action taken etc;
- we learn from complaints, use them to improve our service, and review annually our complaints policy and procedures.

We recognise that many concerns will be raised informally, and dealt with quickly. Our aims are to:

- resolve informal concerns quickly;
- keep matters low-key;
- enable mediation between the complainant and the individual/s about whom the complaint has been referred.

When an informal approach can work this is recommended. But if concerns cannot be satisfactorily resolved informally, then the formal complaints procedure should be followed.

Purpose: The formal complaints procedure is intended to ensure that all complaints are handled fairly, consistently and wherever possible resolved to the complainant's satisfaction.

Ecole Montessori Casablanca's responsibility will be to:

- acknowledge the formal complaint in writing;
- respond within a stated period of time (anywhere between 5 days and 20 days);
- deal reasonably and sensitively with the complaint;
- take action where appropriate.

A complainant's responsibility is to:

- bring their complaint, in writing, to the attention of the Administrative Team should informal processes not be deemed satisfactory;
- explain the problem as clearly and as fully as possible, including any action taken to date;
- allow the Administrative Team a reasonable time to deal with the matter;
- recognise that some circumstances may be beyond the School's control.



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Confidentiality: Except in exceptional circumstances, every attempt will be made to ensure that both the complainant and EMC maintains confidentiality. However, the circumstances giving rise to the complaint may be such that it may not be possible to maintain confidentiality (each complaint will be judged on its own merit). Should this be the case, the situation will be explained to the complainant.

Methods

To achieve this, we operate the following complaints procedure. A written record must be kept of all complaints that are made, whether they are resolved following a formal procedure, or proceed to a panel hearing. This will include the action taken by the school as a result of these complaints. The correspondence, statements, and records relating to individual complaints are to be kept confidential, except where local legal requirements permit access.

Stage 1 - Informal Resolution

- If parents/guardians have a complaint they should first contact their child's teacher directly.
- Complaints made to the Administrative Team will usually be referred back to the relevant teacher.
- Should the matter not be resolved within five days, or in the event that the relevant teacher and the parents/guardians fail to reach a satisfactory solution, parents/guardians will be advised to proceed with the complaint in accordance with stage 2 of this procedure.

Stage 2 - Formal Resolution

Level 1

- If the complaint cannot be resolved on an informal basis, then the parents/guardians will be asked to put their complaint in writing to the Administrative Team.
- The Administrative Team will consider the complaint and decide on the appropriate action to be taken.
- In most cases a member of the Administrative Team will speak to the parents/guardians concerned within forty-eight hours of receiving the complaint. If possible, a resolution will be reached at this stage.
- Once the Administrative Team is satisfied that all of the relevant facts have been established, a decision will be made and parents/guardians will be informed of this decision in writing.

Level 2

- Should the issue not be resolved at Level 1, the Administrative Team will bring the complaint to the Head of School.
- The Head of School will consider the complaint and decide on the appropriate action to be taken.
- In most cases, the Head of School will speak to the parents/guardians concerned within forty-eight hours of receiving the complaint. If possible, a resolution will be reached at this stage.
- Once the Head of School is satisfied that all of the relevant facts have been established, a decision will be made and parents/guardians will be informed of this decision in writing.



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Stage 3 - Requesting a Hearing

Where the parent is not satisfied with the response to the complaint made in accordance with the Stage 2, the school will make provision for a hearing before a panel appointed by or on behalf of the proprietor.

The panel will consist of at least three people who are not directly involved in the matters detailed in the complaint. One panel member must be independent of the management and running of the school. The hearing will allow for a parent to attend and be accompanied at a panel hearing if they wish.

The hearing will take place within a minimum of 14 working days

The panel will make findings and recommendations which will be:

- provided to the complainant, and, where relevant, the person complained about.
- available for inspection on the school premises by the proprietor and Head of School.

Complainants who behave in an unacceptable way

- EMC will act to ensure they remain a safe place for pupils, staff and other members of their community.
- If a parent's behaviour is a cause for concern, the school can ask him/her to leave school premises.
- In serious cases, the Head of School can notify them in writing that their implied licence to be on school premises has been temporarily revoked.
- The parent has the opportunity to formally express their views on the decision to bar in writing. The decision to bar should then be reviewed, taking into account any representations made by the parent, and either confirmed or lifted.
- If the decision is confirmed the parent should be notified in writing, explaining how long the bar will be in place.