



TERERAI TRENT INTERNATIONAL SCHOOL

SCHOOL COMPLAINTS POLICY

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TERERAI TRENT INTERNATIONAL SCHOOL

Complaints Policy (February 2026)

1. Policy Statement

At Tererai Trent International School, we believe that students should be able to easily voice any complaints or concerns. Our school welcomes complaints and views them as valuable opportunities for learning, adaptation, and improvement in our services. This policy aims to ensure that complaints are handled appropriately and that all feedback from students, parents, and guardians is given due consideration. This policy does not seek to assign blame, assess negligence, or offer compensation.

We recognize that neglecting to acknowledge or address complaints can lead to escalated issues, dissatisfaction among our community, and potential legal action. We believe that most complaints can be resolved quickly and effectively at the local level between the complainant and the relevant department when addressed openly and honestly. If resolution remains elusive or the complainant is still unhappy, the issue will be escalated to higher authorities, and legal counsel may be consulted if necessary.

Tererai Trent International School is committed to providing a safe, respectful, and high-quality educational environment in accordance with:

- The **Education Act [Chapter 25:04] (Zimbabwe)**
- The **Children's Act [Chapter 5:06]**
- The **Constitution of Zimbabwe (Section 19 – Rights of the Child)**
- Ministry of Primary and Secondary Education (MoPSE) regulations and circulars
- National child protection guidelines

The school recognizes the right of parents, students, staff, and stakeholders to raise concerns and complaints without fear of victimization. Complaints will be handled fairly, promptly, confidentially, and in compliance with Zimbabwean law.

2. Purpose

This policy aims to:

- Provide a transparent and accessible complaints procedure
- Ensure compliance with Zimbabwean legal and regulatory frameworks
- Promote early and informal resolution of concerns
- Safeguard the welfare and rights of children
- Ensure accountability and continuous improvement

Definition of Complaints

A complaint is defined as any formal expression of dissatisfaction regarding school policies, practices, or personnel. This may include concerns about academic performance, treatment of students, disciplinary actions, or failure to follow established procedures. Complaints can originate from parents, guardians, students, or staff and should be based on specific incidents or ongoing issues that impact the educational environment

3. Scope

This policy applies to complaints from:

- Parents/Guardians
- Students
- Staff members
- School stakeholders
- Members of the public

It covers complaints relating to:

- Academic standards and performance
- Student welfare and discipline
- Staff conduct
- School management and governance
- Bullying, harassment, or discrimination
- Breach of school policy
- Health and safety matters

This policy does not replace:

- Formal child abuse reporting obligations under the Children's Act
- Staff disciplinary procedures
- Criminal matters (which must be reported to the Zimbabwe Republic Police)
- Appeals governed by ZIMSEC or MoPSE regulations

4. Safeguarding and Child Protection Cross-Reference

Tererai Trent International School operates a **Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy** aligned with:

- The Children's Act [Chapter 5:06]
- National Case Management System Guidelines
- MoPSE Child Protection Policy

4.1 Mandatory Reporting

If a complaint involves:

- Physical abuse
- Sexual abuse or exploitation
- Emotional abuse
- Neglect
- Child trafficking
- Grooming or inappropriate conduct

The matter will immediately be referred to:

- The **Designated Child Protection Officer (DCPO)**
- The **Head of School**
- The **Department of Social Development** (where required)
- The **Zimbabwe Republic Police (ZRP)** where criminal conduct is suspected

Such cases will not be handled solely through the standard complaints procedure.

The safety and best interests of the child will always take precedence.

5. Guiding Principles

- **Best Interests of the Child** (Constitution Section 19)
- **Fair Hearing** (Constitution Section 69)
- **Confidentiality**
- **Impartial Investigation**
- **Protection from Retaliation**
- **Timely Resolution**

6. Complaints Procedure

Stage 1: Informal Resolution

Most concerns should first be raised with:

- The Class Teacher
- Subject Teacher
- Head of Department

A meeting will be arranged within **5 school days**, and the matter should be resolved within **10 school days**, where possible.

Stage 2: Formal Complaint to the Head of School

If unresolved, a written complaint must be submitted to the School Principal.

The School Principal will:

- Acknowledge receipt within **3 school days**
- Conduct an investigation
- Interview relevant parties
- Review documentation
- Provide a written response within **10–15 school days**
- Upon receiving a written complaint, it should be forwarded to the designated complaints principal, who will log it in the complaints record and send an acknowledgment letter within eight hours. This principal will oversee the complaint throughout the process.
- A leaflet outlining the complaint procedure should be provided to the complainant.
- If the issues are too complex to resolve within two days, the complainant should be notified of any delays, and a meeting should be scheduled.
- Provide regular updates throughout the investigation process to the child's Parent/Guardian. Parents should feel encouraged to participate in meetings to discuss their concerns and proposed resolutions. This partnership fosters mutual understanding and reinforces the school's commitment to addressing issues collaboratively.
- During the meeting, a detailed explanation of the investigation's findings should be provided, along with an apology if deemed appropriate (noting that an apology does not imply liability).
- This meeting allows the school to demonstrate that the matter has been taken seriously and thoroughly investigated.

Stage 3: Appeal to the School Board

If dissatisfied, the complainant may appeal in writing to the **School Board/Responsible Authority** within **10 school days** of receiving the Stage 2 decision.

The Board will:

- Review the documentation
- Conduct hearings if necessary
- Issue a final written decision within **20 school days**

The decision of the School Board shall be final, subject to MoPSE oversight where applicable.

Stage 4: Referral to Ministry of Primary and Secondary Education

If the matter involves regulatory compliance or governance concerns, complainants may refer the matter to the **District Schools Inspector (DSI)** or Provincial Education Director in accordance with MoPSE procedures.

7. Complaints by Students

Students are encouraged to:

- Speak to a trusted teacher
- Approach the Designated Child Protection Officer or Form Teacher
- Use the school's confidential reporting system

Students will not face retaliation for raising genuine concerns.

8. Anonymous Complaints

The school suggestion box will serve as the collection point for anonymous complaints. Anonymous complaints may be investigated where sufficient information is provided. However, anonymity may limit the scope of investigation.

9. Protection Against Victimization

No complainant, student, or staff member shall suffer retaliation for raising a genuine complaint. Any retaliatory conduct will result in disciplinary action.

10. Record Keeping

- All formal complaints will be documented and securely stored.
- Safeguarding-related complaints will be stored separately in restricted files.
- Records will be maintained in accordance with Zimbabwean data protection standards.

11. Monitoring and Review

To ensure the effectiveness of the complaints policy, Tererai Trent School will conduct an annual review. This review will involve:

- Analyzing complaint trends and patterns to identify areas for improvement.
- Gathering feedback from stakeholders, including parents, students, and staff, regarding their experiences with the complaints process.
- Revising the policy as needed based on the findings to maintain transparency and improve the resolution process.
- This policy will be reviewed annually by:
 - School Principal
 - School Board
 - Safeguarding Committee



FORMAL COMPLAINT

SUBMISSION FORM

Tererai Trent International School

(To be submitted to the Principal)

1. Complainant Details

Full Name: _____

Relationship to School (Parent/Student/Staff/Other): _____

Contact Number: _____

Email Address: _____

If submitting on behalf of a student:

Student Name: _____

Class/Grade: _____

2. Nature of Complaint

Please describe the complaint in detail (include dates, times, locations, and individuals involved):

(Attach additional pages if necessary)

3. Previous Steps Taken

Have you raised this matter before?

- Yes
- No

If yes, please provide details (who you spoke to and outcome):

4. Desired Outcome

What resolution are you seeking?

5. Safeguarding Concern

Does this complaint involve a child protection or safeguarding concern?

- Yes
- No
- Unsure

If yes, please briefly explain:

6. Declaration

I confirm that the information provided is accurate to the best of my knowledge.

Signature: _____

Date: _____

For Office Use Only

Date Received: _____

Received By: _____

Reference Number: _____

Acknowledgement Sent: Yes No

Referred to DCPO: Yes No