



Athula Dassana International Buddhist Vihara Dhamma School

"What We Learn We Become"



Our Complaints procedure

What should I do if I am concerned about something at Athula Dassana Dhamma School?

From time to time, parents will find themselves concerned about something that has happened involving their child at school. It might be a problem related to the work set, homework, their wellbeing, falling out with friends or a sanction imposed.

It's in everybody's best interests that any issues are resolved as quickly as possible. If you do have an issue or concern that relates to your child, then you shouldn't hesitate to approach the Dhamma school directly.

Almost all issues can be dealt with informally, simply by parents talking through their concerns with teachers or relevant Dhamma school staff, and this may also help to prevent a similar situation arising again.

The aims of our complaints policy are:

- to enable complainants to express their dissatisfaction
- to ensure that anyone making a complaint about the school, or between persons within or connected with the Dhamma school, is dealt with sympathetically and courteously
- to take complaints seriously and investigate them fairly and thoroughly
- to ensure that where errors or faults on our part are demonstrated, they are remedied as far as is possible, to the satisfaction of the complainant
- to learn from complaints in order to make improvements to our practice and procedure

At each stage in the procedure the Dhamma school will want to keep in mind ways in which the complaint might be positively resolved through:

- an apology
- explanation
- an admission that the situation could have been handled differently or better
- an explanation of the steps that have been taken to ensure that every effort will be made to prevent a similar situation arising
- an undertaking to review school policies in the light of the complaint

Our Promise to You:

- Your complaint will be dealt with honestly, politely and in confidence
- Your complaint will be investigated thoroughly and fairly
- We will keep you up to date with progress at each stage
- You will get an apology if we have made a mistake
- You will be told what we are going to do to put things right
- You will get a full and clear written reply to formal complaints within 15 working day

The following guidelines have been written to help you know the best course of action;

1. Talk to your child if they're unhappy at school, or you're worried about their education. Find out as much as you can.
2. Reach out to the Dhamma School as early as you can to avoid things building up. The first point of contact needs to be your child's class teacher. For any reason you're unable to speak to the class teacher then please don't hesitate to speak to one of Dhamma School's representatives. These could be one of other teachers, our Principal or the Head of the Dhamma School. Alternatively, an email can be sent to admin@addschool.org
3. Your child's class teacher (or the Dhamma School representative) will then contact you in person, via email, phone or by arranging a meeting to discuss the concerns.
 - Make sure you fully explain the problem to the Dhamma School representative
 - Ask what they can do to help
 - Ask when they'll give you an update
4. The class teacher (or the representative) may sign-post you to other members of staff (the Dhamma School's Safeguarding officer and \ or Dhamma School Principle) who may be in a better position to find a solution to the concern.
5. Work with the class teacher (or the representative) and other key staff to improve the situation.

If you are not happy with the response of the class teacher or with the representative or if you have difficulty discussing a concern with this particular member of staff, we will respect your views and ask you to make an appointment to speak to a more senior member of staff. You may like to speak to the Head of Dhamma School or the Principle.

We do understand that on rare occasions, or for more serious breaches of trust, it may unfortunately be necessary for parents to raise a formal complaint. This should be viewed as a last resort, and it should also be understood that a formal process is likely to take longer to resolve, and once initiated, can be time-consuming and stressful, so it is best to exhaust all other options in seeking an amicable solution.

If you do still wish to make a formal complaint, please complete our online complaint form – available on our website, Information section (<https://addschool.org/information>)

Definitions:

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’.

Our Policies – Complaints

Our Dhamma School aims to meet its statutory obligations when responding to complaints from parents of pupils at the Dhamma School, and others. When responding to complaints, we aim to:

- Be impartial and non-adversarial
- Facilitate a full and fair investigation by an independent person or panel, where necessary
- Address all the points at issue and provide an effective and prompt response
- Respect complainants’ desire for confidentiality
- Treat complainants with respect
- Keep complainants informed of the progress of the complaints process
- Consider how the complaint can feed into school improvement evaluation processes

Confidentiality

All grievances must be dealt with in the strictest confidence. Teaching Staff and headteacher and others involved in cases must not breach confidentiality beyond those involved in the management of the grievance, without the specific agreement of the parties.

Record keeping

The interests of both the Dhamma School and complainant, written records must be kept throughout the grievance process. Records should include:

- the nature of the grievance raised
- a copy of the written grievance
- the management response
- action taken
- reasons for action taken
- where there was an appeal and if so, the outcome and subsequent developments
- minutes of meetings (school to provide a minute clerk for meetings).

Records should be treated as confidential and kept in accordance with the Data Protection Act 1998, which gives the individuals the right to request and have access to certain personal data. Copies of meeting records should be given to the complainant and to the respondent including any formal minutes that may have been taken. In certain circumstances, for example to protect a witness, some information may be withheld.

We try to resolve concerns or complaints by informal means wherever possible. Where this is not possible, formal procedures will be followed. The Dhamma School will aim to give the complainant the opportunity to complete the complaints' procedure in full – for further information please visit our website; <https://addschoool.org/information/>

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