

Agreements and disagreements: concerns, issues, complaints and appeals

At DIS we believe that successful education stems from a successful cooperation of students, families and teachers.

Policies about assessment, attendance, conduct and other school rules are available on the school website and handbook to allow students and families to acquaint themselves with them.

To foster dialogue, students are periodically given time to discuss possible issues as a class. Each class has elected class representatives that are in charge of communicating to teachers or to the head of year the class' concerns.

Families are encouraged to communicate possible issues through elected parents' representatives in meetings that gather representatives of students, parents, school staff, teachers and direction. Different parents' representatives are elected for primary school, Middle Years Programme and Diploma Programme to better represent the different issues and concerns that may arise in the different programmes.

Open meetings are held periodically for each year group, about three times a year. These meetings are decided at the beginning of the year and set in a calendar available on the school website.

The Head of School holds general meetings with the parents assembly about twice a year to discuss issues and hear proposals about how to improve the school.

Individual concerns and complaints:

Urgent complaints may be voiced directly to teachers and /or heads of year or by email.

Individual teacher-parent meetings are held periodically. In these meetings, parents are informed about the student's situation and can also communicate issues and complaints, and find a solution together with the teacher involved. The student is often called at the meeting to be a active part of the conversation. When necessary, also the Head of Year and the Coordinator may be present at the meetings.

We encourage students and parents to communicate first with teachers/classmates if the concern relates to an event that took place in class or involves class rules. A direct and open communication among members of the community is what we think works best and encourages students to develop as communicators.

Where this is not possible, students and families can address their concerns to the Head of Year, who, after having assessed the situation and weighed possible solutions, can decide to involve the Coordinator and/or Headmaster to cooperate towards a solution.

Where the complaint regards the behaviour of another student or other students, the incident is discussed with all students involved. The record of the incident may be stored securely. Different steps may be weighed depending on the type of complaint (see the school policy about conduct and our handbook).

Open-mindedness, understanding and balance should be encouraged when possible, also while facing a disagreement. Sometimes, a solution is reached only after all the members of the community involved have met and discussed, often several times, to understand the others' reason and negotiate a successful solution.

After having come to a solution, the Head of Year and teachers monitor the situation keeping in touch with the families when needed.

We answer and address communications of concern in a timely manner; however, fairness, sensitivity to students' needs, successful negotiation and enduring solutions may take time.

Appeals

MYP

The end of term reports are released twice a year. If a parent has a complaint, a meeting is set with the Head of Year and the teacher involved to discuss the issue. In case the situation is not resolved the Coordinator will also be involved.

Term reports may be issued again in case of changes.

Terza media state examinations involving local standards are taken outside the school; therefore, complaints and appeals have to be addressed to state institutions and courts and are outside the school's area of concern.

Diploma Programme

After the issue of results, students may want to start a procedure for a remark. In that case, the student and family involved are invited to a meeting with the Diploma Programme Coordinator. During the meeting, the Coordinator discusses the situation with the student, clarifies the meaning and possible outcomes and consequences of the different categories of remark, and the student is asked to sign a consent form.

Sometimes, the Coordinator may deem the request of the student unsound, and decide not to start a procedure for a remark. The final decision on whether to file a procedure for remark is made by the Coordinator.

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