



Effective From	AY 2024/25 (Fall term)
Compliance From	AY 2025/26 (Fall term)

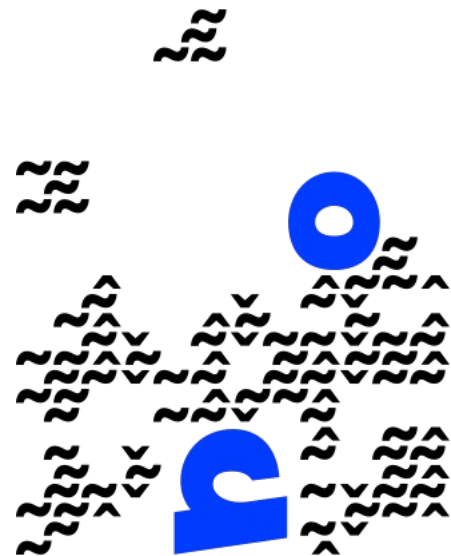
EARLY EDUCATION INSTITUTION **POLICY**

on

COMPLAINTS

Purpose

This policy sets out the procedures for both making and dealing with complaints about any aspect of the Early Education Institution’s service (EEl). It standardizes how formal and informal complaints are acknowledged, recorded, and dealt with in a fair, transparent, and efficient manner, and aligns expectations for all stakeholders (EEl management and staff, parents, regulators, service providers, etc.).



Definitions

Administration	The staff responsible for carrying out the administrative affairs of the EEI such as the accountant, receptionist, secretary, clerk, nurses, and others.
Child	A person under the age of 4 years, as per Federal Decree Law No. (51) of 2022 Regulating Nurseries.
Concern	A query related to a matter that is causing some level of worry or unrest.
Complainant	The person who raises a complaint.
Complaint	Any expression of dissatisfaction by an individual.
Early Education Institutions (EEIs)	All ADEK-licensed institutions that offer early years service (e.g., nurseries).
Formal Complaint	Dissatisfaction expressed by an individual (parent or staff member), verbally or in writing, with the expectation that the matter will be addressed officially, possibly with an outcome that would require official approvals and/or management intervention.
Grievance	An official statement of a complaint over something believed to be wrong or unfair. Workplace grievances are any real or perceived problem staff experience during employment, including the perception of discrimination, harassment, or unfair treatment.
Informal Complaint	Dissatisfaction expressed by an individual (parent or staff member), verbally or in writing, with the expectation of having the matter addressed with a friendly dialogue and quick resolution.
Key Group	Known as a “class” in more formal educational settings, comprises a group of children, an EE Educator, and any other members of the key team.
Key Person	A key staff member who is the primary contact for a key group of children and helps them feel safe and cared for.
Key Team	The team of staff in a child’s key group, whom they interact with daily and who take care of their physical, emotional, and educational needs, typically including the EE Educator, EE Assistant, and EE Aide.
Management	The staff responsible for overseeing the EEI-based staff and daily operations, such as the EE Director, their deputy, as well as any other member of staff to whom they have delegated specific authorities.
Non-Disclosure Agreement	A legal confidential contract used to protect sensitive information between two parties or more.
Whistleblowing	A term given to a complaint, when a person, often a staff member, feels the need to reveal information about an activity within a private or public organization that is deemed illegal, immoral, illicit, unsafe, or fraudulent.

Policy

All EEIs shall develop and implement a Complaints Policy, which clearly defines processes for:

1. Parents complaints
2. Staff complaints
3. Managing complaints and maintaining confidentiality
4. Recording of complaints

1. Parents Complaints Process

EEIs shall keep the complaints procedure as simple and as transparent as possible and assure parents that anyone wanting to make a complaint will be supported through the process as needed. The EEI Complaint Policy shall be shared with parents at the time of registration, included in the Parent Handbook and the Parent Induction Pack.

1.1 Communicating the Complaint

EEIs shall clearly state that parents are free to approach the EEI with their informal or formal complaints verbally (by phone or in person) and/or in writing (e.g., by email, and/or via the communication app, free text, or via a complaint form (if the EEI chooses to develop one)).

1.2 Designating a Person

EEIs shall formally designate a first point of contact with whom to register an informal or formal complaint.

1.3 Informal Complaints Process

EEIs shall stipulate that all informal complaints shall be brought to the attention of the EE Director and that parents are expected to be respectful with their spoken/written language, tone, and attitude whilst communicating a complaint or a concern.

1.4 Formal Complaints Process

For formal parent complaints, EEIs shall apply and follow the formal complaints management process (see [Section 3. Complaints Management Process](#)).

2. Staff Complaints Process

2.1 Informal or Formal Complaints

EElS shall stipulate that:

- a) All informal complaints received by line managers are communicated to the EE Director, even if they have been resolved at the team level.
- b) All formal staff complaints shall be registered via a complaints form.
- c) A staff complaints log shall be maintained in all cases that involve a formal complaint.

2.2 Grievances

EElS shall outline a clear procedure for dealing with staff grievances. This procedure shall state that all staff grievances will be documented in writing, via a formal complaint form, a written letter, or email. The grievance procedure shall be communicated to all staff at the time of staff induction and included in the staff guidelines handbook (see [ADEK EEI Staffing Policy Guide](#)).

2.3 Whistleblowing

EElS shall outline a clear whistleblowing process, which protects the identity of whistleblowers whenever possible and ensures that they are not wrongfully terminated or subject to retaliation in line with Federal Decree Law No. (33) of 2021 Concerning Regulating Labour Relations.

The whistleblowing process shall also outline a procedure in cases where an EEI management team member or the owner is involved in the concern.

The whistleblowing procedure shall be communicated to all staff at the time of staff induction and be included in the Staff Guidelines Handbook.

3. Complaints Management Process

EElS shall specify and implement a formal complaint management process, which consists of four stages (acknowledgment, investigation, communication, and review) and includes the following minimum elements:

1. Designated point of contact
2. Complaint form
3. Documenting method
4. Expected response time
5. Expected resolution time
6. Complaint escalation

3.1 Managing Special Complaints

EEl's shall ensure that any complaints beyond the EEl's scope of investigation will be referred appropriately, which shall be stated within the Complaints Policy. Where a complaint involves an allegation of a breach of a person's rights (child or adult) and/or criminal action or behavior, the relevant law enforcement, child protection, or health and safety authorities shall be informed (see [ADEK EEl Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy Guide](#) for further details).

3.2 Maintaining Confidentiality

EEl's shall ensure that all discussions and documentation related to addressing and resolving a complaint, regardless of its source, are kept strictly confidential and limited to the EE Director and/or those directly involved, to protect all directly or indirectly involved parties from adverse rebound, unfair, or disrespectful treatment.

4. Recording of Complaints

EEl's shall store and dispose of all complaint records in full compliance with Federal Decree Law No. (33) of 2021 Concerning Regulating Labour Relations, Federal Decree Law No. (45) of 2021 Concerning the Protection of Personal Data, and any other applicable laws. These shall be separated from children's or staff record files and placed in a complaints records file.

EEl complaint records shall include:

- a) The name of the complainant.
- b) The nature and details of the complaint.
- c) The date and time the complaint was received.
- d) The method by which the complaint was received.
- e) The name of the person who received the complaint.
- f) The level of risk to the child or children arising from the subject of the complaint.
- g) The way they were dealt with, including:
 - Any local resolution implemented.
 - Any specific meetings held with the person making the complaint and minutes of any such meetings.
 - Timelines for investigation of the complaint and notification of the outcome to the person making the complaint.
 - Details of the investigation carried out.
 - The outcome of the investigation.
 - Details of any corrective or preventive actions required to resolve the complaint.
 - Information given to the person making the complaint about the progress and the outcome of the complaint of the investigation and whether the action taken to resolve the complaint was accepted.
 - Details of any plan implemented for the child's care because of the complaint as agreed with the child's parents.
 - Details of any risk management process review, considering the nature of the complaint.
 - Details of any changes to practice or policy.

5. Compliance

- 5.1** This policy shall be effective as of the start of the Academic Year 2024/25 (Fall term). EEIs are expected to be fully compliant with this policy by the start of the Academic Year 2025/26 (Fall term).
- 5.2** Failure to comply with this policy shall be subject to legal accountability and the penalties stipulated in accordance with the ADEK’s regulations, policies, and requirements, notwithstanding any other penalties imposed by Federal Decree Law No. (31) of 2021 Promulgating the Crimes and Penalties and its amendments or any other relevant law. ADEK reserves the right to intervene if the EEI is found to be in violation of its obligations.

References

- Federal Decree Law No. (31) of 2021 Promulgating the Crimes and Penalties and its amendments
- Federal Decree Law No. (33) of 2021 Concerning Regulating Labour Relations
- Federal Decree Law No. (45) of 2021 Concerning the Protection of Personal Data

Publication

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Department of Education and Knowledge, Abu Dhabi (ADEK)

This policy applies to Early Educational Institutions (EEI) in Abu Dhabi.

