

FEEDBACK AND COMPLAINT POLICY

2026 – 2027

Document Title	Feedback and Complaint Policy
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1. Introduction

At Small Steps Learning Difficulties Center, we are committed to delivering high-quality, inclusive services across GEMS Education schools. We view feedback—both positive and critical—as essential to continuous improvement. This policy provides a clear, structured pathway for addressing concerns and complaints raised by parents, guardians, and stakeholders, ensuring they are managed efficiently, respectfully, and transparently.

2. Purpose of the Policy

The aim of this policy is to ensure that any concerns or complaints related to Small Steps' operations or clinical services are addressed promptly, fairly, and constructively. We aim to establish a culture of open communication, accountability, and responsiveness while supporting all stakeholders in feeling heard and valued.

3. Aims and Objectives

- To resolve informal concerns at the earliest possible stage to prevent escalation.
- To provide clear procedures for managing feedback and complaints fairly and consistently.
- To ensure that all complaints are documented, reviewed, and responded appropriately.
- To support a collaborative problem-solving approach that fosters trust and partnership between families, staff, and school leadership.

Small Steps encourages parents to first speak with their child's Case Supervisor or Center Manager. If not resolved, the issue may be escalated in the following order:

- **Program Director**
- **COO or CEO**
- **Assistant Head Teacher**
- **Principal of the host school**

4. Roles and Responsibilities

All Small Steps staff, school staff, and senior leadership are responsible for upholding this policy. Anonymous complaints are typically not investigated unless they involve imminent health and safety or safeguarding issues. In such exceptional cases, Small Steps will act immediately in consultation with relevant internal or external authorities.

5. Policy Components and Implementation

A. Complaints Against Small Steps Staff

Informal Stage:

Raised directly with the Case Supervisor via phone, email, MS Teams, or in person. Most concerns are resolved at this level. If unresolved, the matter may be referred to the Program Director. A written record is kept if requested or deemed necessary.

Formal Stage:

Submitted in writing to the Program Director. The complaint is logged and reviewed within 10 school days. Outcomes may include:

- Complaint not upheld due to lack of evidence.
- Complaint partially or fully substantiated, with action taken (confidential).
- Formal procedures are underway.

If unresolved, it can be escalated to the CEO/COO, and subsequently to the School's Assistant Head Teacher or Principal.

B. Complaints About Case Supervisors or Center Managers

Informal Stage:

Raised with the Program Director, who will investigate and attempt to resolve.

Formal Stage:

If unresolved, escalated to the CEO or COO in writing. The same review and response timeline applies (within 10 school days). Outcomes are documented and confidential.

C. Complaints About the Program Director

Informal Stage:

Directed to the CEO or COO.

Formal Stage:

Escalated to the Assistant Head Teacher or Head of Inclusion of the host school. If needed, a mediator may be introduced. The case will be investigated and a written response provided.

D. Complaints About Small Steps Leadership or CEO/COO

Informal Stage:

Submitted to the host school's Assistant Head Teacher. If unresolved, a mediator may be invited.

Formal Stage:

Escalated in writing to the Vice Principal of the host school. The Assistant Head and CEO/COO will be invited to respond. Final decisions will be issued in writing.

E. Complaints About Inclusion Heads or SEN Teachers

Informal Stage:

Discussed with the host school's Assistant Head Teacher.

Formal Stage:

Written complaints submitted to the School Vice Principal. Evidence will be collected, and a final outcome will be communicated in writing.

F. Complaints About the Assistant Head Teacher or Head of Inclusion

Informal Stage:

Raised with the School Vice Principal.

Formal Stage:

Escalated to the School Principal/CEO. A comprehensive review will follow. Unsatisfied complainants may request a review by the GEMS Corporate Head of Inclusion.

G. Complaints About the School Principal/CEO

For such cases, the GEMS Founders School Complaint Procedures and Policy 2026–2027 will apply.

6. Formal Channels of Communication

Formal complaints must be made via phone, email, or by scheduling an appointment. Small Steps' social media platforms (Facebook, Instagram, LinkedIn, Google, Twitter) are for community updates and celebrations—not for airing grievances. We request that these platforms be used respectfully and positively.

7. Monitoring and Review

This policy has been agreed upon by Small Steps and GEMS Founders School. It will be reviewed annually to ensure relevance and effectiveness. Feedback from stakeholders is welcomed and considered during the review process.

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