



PARENT COMPLAINTS POLICY

Approved by School Council:
March 2018

Review:
March 2021

Definitions

A *complaint* is an expression of dissatisfaction with an action taken, decision made or service provided, or the failure to provide a service, take action or make a decision at a school. A complaint is considered to be *resolved* when the complainant and the Department (school, region or central office) agree on an appropriate response or remedy.

Rationale

Our school has both a desire and a responsibility to ensure that high standards of conduct are maintained by staff and students at all times, and that concerns and complaints are managed and resolved fairly, efficiently, promptly and in accordance with relative legislation.

Aims:

- To provide a harmonious, positive and productive school environment
- To resolve complaints fairly, consistently, efficiently and promptly.

Implementation

- Our school will respond to and address written (letter and email) and verbal (face-to-face and phone) complaints raised by parents from our school community
- Our school will consider all parent complaints by: raising the issues in the complaint with relevant staff and/or members of the school community, consulting, where appropriate, with relevant sections of the Department and/or external agencies for technical or other advice and discussing the school's findings with the parent in an attempt to reach an agreed resolution
- We will ensure that complaints received are recorded and actions taken to resolve the complaint are well documented and maintained at the school
- The Principal will seek advice from either the central office or region about the management of complaints, including complex or challenging complaints
- Our school will publicise the school's complaint-handling procedures within the school community and make them readily available
- Our school will review the school's complaint-handling procedures regularly
- Our school will ensure all school personnel are aware of the school's parent complaint-handling procedures and provide opportunities for staff to attend training/professional development activities with a focus on complaint management
- Our school will actively assist parents with the complaint process, informing them that at any point of the complaint process they are able to be supported by an advocate/support person.

Raising concerns or complaints (see Appendix 1)

The complainant should telephone to make an appointment with:

- The classroom teachers about learning issues
- The Leading Teacher and Wellbeing Leader about issues relating to ongoing student issues

- The Assistant Principal about issues relating to complex student issues
- The Principal about issues relating to school policy, school management, staff members or very complex student issues

The school office staff will be responsible for passing on any messages from parents regarding appointments and staff will be required to return the parents call.

Resolving complaints

The Principal may contact the regional director and request the region's intervention to help resolve a complaint. The Principal would need to have exhausted the school's parent complaint-handling procedures and be of the belief that the complaint would not be able to be resolved at the school level. The parent should be advised that their complaint will be handled by personnel from the region.

When addressing a complaint it is expected that parents and school personnel will:

- Show respect and understanding of each other's point of view
- Operate within applicable legislation
- Acknowledge that their goal is to achieve an outcome acceptable to all parties
- Act in good faith and in a calm and courteous manner
- Recognise that all parties have rights and responsibilities which must be balanced.

Managing parent concerns and complaints

The following details of all complaints received will be recorded even if the complaint appears to be minor:

- Name and contact details of the complainant
- The date the concern was expressed or complaint made
- The form in which the complaint was received
- A brief description of the complaint
- Action taken on the complaint / outcome of the action taken
- Any recommendations for future improvement in the school's policy or procedure.

Remedies

If the concern or complaint is substantiated in whole or part, the school will consider an appropriate remedy at its discretion and depending on circumstances. The school might offer:

- An explanation or further information about the issue
- Mediation, counselling or other support
- An apology, expression of regret or admission of fault
- To change its decision
- To change its policies, procedures or practices

The school will implement the remedy as soon as practicable.

Referral of concerns or complaints

If a person with a concern or complaint is not satisfied with the outcome determined by the school, they should contact the Department's appropriate regional office. The officer from the region will ask the complainant for a complete and factual account in writing of the concern or complaint and the complainant's opinion about why the school did not resolve it to their satisfaction.

Review Cycle:

This policy will be reviewed as part of the school's three-year review cycle.



Parents' Concern or Complaint Management Process

