

# **RAISING CONCERNS AND COMPLAINTS**

## **THE SCHOOL'S VALUES**

The school's approach to handling concerns and complaints is based on our values of:

- Providing a safe and supportive learning environment
- Building relationships between students, parents and staff
- Providing a safe working environment for staff

## **CONCERNS AND COMPLAINTS COVERED BY THE PROCEDURES**

These procedures cover concerns and complaints about:

- General issues of student behaviour that are contrary to the school's code of conduct
- Incidents of bullying or harassment in the classroom or the school yard
- Learning programs, assessment and reporting of student learning
- Communication with parents
- School fees and payments
- General administrative issues

## **EXPECTATIONS**

The school expects a person raising a concern or complaint to:

- Do so promptly, as soon as possible after the issue occurs
- Provide complete and factual information about the concern or complaint
- Maintain and respect the privacy and confidentiality of all parties
- Acknowledge that a common goal is to achieve an outcome acceptable to all parties
- Act in good faith, and in a calm and courteous manner
- Show respect and understanding of each other's point of view and value difference, rather than judge and blame
- Recognise that all parties have rights and responsibilities which must be balanced

The school will have developed a process for recording complaints and your complaint will be listed on a register.

The school will address any concerns and complaints received from parents:

- Courteously
- Efficiently
- Fairly
- Promptly, or within the timeline agreed with the person with the concern or complaint
- In accordance with due process, principals of natural justice and the Department's regulatory framework

The complainant should telephone, visit or write to:

- The student's teacher or home group teacher about learning issues and incidents that happened in their class or group
- The year level coordinator if students from several classes are involved
- The assistant principal about issues relating to staff members or complex student issues
- The principal about issues relating to school policy, school management, staff members or very complex student issues.

### **HELPING WITH RAISING CONCERNS OR COMPLAINTS**

Complainants can seek the services of an advocate when they feel they are unable to express their concern clearly. An advocate can be a friend or someone who is available through an appropriate support organisation who does not receive a fee for service.

All parties involved in addressing a complaint may seek the services of a mediator when there is difficulty coming to an agreement.

### **MANAGING PARENT CONCERNS AND COMPLAINTS INFORMATION**

The school has developed a concerns and complaints register which will record the following details:

- The date the concern was expressed or complaint made
- Name and contact details of the person with a concern or complaint
- A brief description of the concern or complaint
- The outcome of action taken on the concern or complaint

## **ADDRESSING CONCERNS OR COMPLAINTS**

The school will make every effort to resolve concerns and complaints before involving other levels of the Department.

The school will give a complainant a copy of its complaint procedures.

The school will determine whether a concern or complaint should be managed through the school's concerns and complaints process or through other complaints processes of the Department.

All complaints will be noted and acted on promptly by the staff member who receives the complaint.

The school will acknowledge all complaints made in writing. It will provide the complainant with a timeline for investigating the complaint.

Concerns and complaints about general school matters (such as the timing of events, school policies and facilities) will be addressed by the principal or a relevant staff member.

The school will make every attempt to resolve a concern or complaint as quickly as possible

Should the complaint involve complex issues, the school might need to take advice from the Department's regional office which may take more time.

## **REMEDIES**

If a concern is substantiated in whole or part, the school will offer an appropriate remedy.

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
- To cancel a debt (such as for school payments)
- A fee refund

## **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 Western Metropolitan Region on 9291 6500

## **COMMUNICATION AND TRAINING**

The school will make information about procedures for addressing concerns and complaints readily available to parents and the school community, in clear and easy to understand language and, where appropriate, in a range of community languages and formats that are accessible to everyone so that no one is disadvantaged.

School will communicate its complaints procedures to parents and the school community by:

- Publishing on the school's website
- Printing in the parent's handbook

The school will:

- Brief all members of staff (including volunteers) about its procedures to address concerns and complaints annually

## **MONITORING THE PARENT COMPLAINTS POLICY**

The school will monitor parent concerns and complaints and consider issues raised through the parent complaints process, and any other relevant information from the parent opinion survey, when undertaking a review of the school's policies, procedures and operations.

The school council will regularly review its policy and procedures to effectively address parent concerns and complaints as part of its cyclic policy and procedures review schedule.