



# COMPLAINTS

## POLICY

### PARENT INFORMATION BROCHURE

**Aims:**

To ensure that complaints lodged are resolved in a prompt and efficient manner.

To promote the highest standard of professionalism in dealing with our community.

**Definitions:**

***Complaint:***

An expression of dissatisfaction. It may be general in nature or relate to particular staff, a part of the organisation, a policy or a decision. Any person may lodge a complaint, however, staff employed by the Department of Education and Training cannot use this process if they are acting in an official capacity. A complaint must contain sufficient detail to enable it to be addressed and recorded.

***Locally Managed Complaint:***

The Principal is responsible for the issues related to the management of the staff. A verbal or written complaint made in relation to the school's operation or a staff member and managed by the school.

***Centrally Managed Complaint:***

A complaint lodged in writing with the Director General of the Department of Education and Training, and managed at Central Office.

***Complainant:***

A person or persons who lodge a complaint.

**Implementation:**

Staff at this school are responsible for managing the resolution of disputes and complaints lodged with us. We will make every effort to promptly resolve disputes and complaints lodged with us according to the principles of procedural fairness. Where we cannot resolve a complaint, the complainant, Principal or Regional Director can forward a written complaint to the Director General of the Department of Education.

NB: The Department of Education *Disputes and Complaints Policy and Procedures* details the Departmental procedures to be followed in the management of complaints. This document details the procedures to be followed for local management of complaints at this school.

As outlined in Australian Standard AS 4269-1995 our Complaints Handling Policy demonstrates:

***Commitment:***

We are genuinely interested in having complaints resolved at the school level. We recognise a community member's right to complain and to have their complaint dealt with seriously and fairly. We actively seek comments about our performance from our parent community.

***Fairness:***

We understand the need to be fair in our complaints handling processes. We follow procedural fairness principles when responding to a complaint. Decisions made, and the reason for them will be made available to all parties directly involved in a complaint.

***Resources:***

We use school resources to effectively manage complaints and have adequate resources for effective handling of complaints. Complainants will have easy access to the person at our school that will be dealing with the complaint.

***Visibility:***

Brochures explaining our complaints handling processes are available from the school office.

***Access:***

We accept complaints lodged by telephone and in writing. For clarification purposes, verbal complaints can be requested to be placed in writing. We facilitate people with special needs to access our complaints handling system. Our complaints handling processes recognise cultural diversity and take into account the particular needs of our parent community.

***Assistance:***

Upon request, we will provide a complainant with the support needed to formulate and lodge a complaint.

***Responsiveness:***

Complaints will be dealt with quickly and efficiently. We will maintain regular contact with complainants to keep them informed of the progress of their complaint.

***Charges:***

There will be no charge to the complainant for the raising of a complaint with us.

NB: Where relevant, statutory charges, for example, Freedom of Information requests, still apply.

***Remedies:***

Our complaints handling system has the capacity to determine and put in place remedies. Where a complaint results in the identification of changes that should be made to our processes, those changes will be made.

***Data Collection:***

Complaints received, and their outcomes will be recorded under our school name in the Department of Education and Training's complaints handling database. Data about complaints lodged with our school is collected and stored.

***Systemic and Recurring Problems:***

Complaints are regularly analysed for the identification and addressing of systemic and recurring problems. We analyse our Complaints Register to identify areas where changes are required to address systemic and recurring problems.

***Accountability:***

We report on our complaints handling processes as a part of our school review and evaluation procedure.

***Reviews:***

We review our complaints handling process regularly.

**Receiving a Complaint**

Complaints are to be received and recorded as outlined in this policy. All complaints are treated equally regardless of the manner in which they are lodged. Where necessary the complainant is to be given help in the framing, writing and lodgement of a complaint. In all cases complainants will be treated with courtesy and the contact is to be conducted and ended in a positive way.

## **Resolving a Complaint:**

Local complaints should be resolved within 14 school days where practical. Where outside support is required or it is judged that the complaint needs to be handled external to the school (Regional Office or Central Office) this determination will be made as soon as possible and all relevant material is to be forwarded promptly.

*NOTE: The Department's Disputes and Complaints Policy and Procedures details the circumstances under which a complaint is to be managed externally to the school.*

Where there are likely to be unavoidable delays, the complainant should be contacted and kept informed of the status of their complaint. This contact may be made by telephone.

For verbal complaints lodged by complainants who do not wish to be formally identified and who do not wish to lodge the complaint in writing, resolution can only be attempted directly with the caller. A written record of the nature of the complaint and the attempts for its resolution should still be recorded.

Where the Principal makes a judgement that a complaint is vexatious, trivial, without substance or does not warrant further action then the complaint is not investigated and the complainant is informed of this decision in writing.

## **Escalation**

Should a complainant be clearly dissatisfied with the school's attempts to resolve a complaint, the following process applies:

Advise the complainant of their right to take the matter further by writing to:

**Regional Executive Director  
North Metropolitan Regional Education Office  
PO Box 1126  
INNALOO CITY WA 6918**

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

