

SOUTH YARRA PRIMARY SCHOOL

CONCERNS AND COMPLAINTS POLICY



Rationale

Relationships with parents/guardians and the school community are important to us and are underpinned by the school's values. We take concerns and complaints raised by parents/guardians seriously. A timely and professional response to parent/guardians concerns and complaints is an effective means of encouraging communication, building trust and resolving issues in a productive way.

Aims

- We will implement a complaints process through which parents/guardians can confidently raise concerns in the knowledge that they will be listened to and their concerns will be professionally managed in a timely, confidential and consistent manner.

Implementation

Expected Behaviours

- Our school promotes Respect and Responsibility and expects that everyone involved in a complaints procedure upholds these values at all times during the process.
- Parents/guardians making complaints are to be well-behaved, confidential and courteous. Parents/guardians who are unreasonable, threatening or discourteous can expect their discussions with staff to be terminated until such time as an alternative discussion time is arranged by the school.

Concerns and Complaints Procedures

- Parents/guardians with concerns or complaints should contact the school by telephone, in person or in writing as early as possible. Parents/guardians are discouraged from making complaints by email; it can be difficult to authenticate the identity of the person writing the email and therefore compromises privacy procedures.
- The principal will determine whether or not an anonymous complaint will be investigated.
- Before contacting the school, parents/guardians are advised to ascertain and make note of key facts and concerns regarding the complaint to support clear communication about the issue.
- The school will record the details of all concerns and complaints including the name and contact details of the person/s making the complaints. The school will then refer the complaint to the most appropriate school representative to investigate. There will be many occasions when this will be someone other than the principal.
- Once details of a complaint have been received by the school, office staff will make an appointment for the parent to meet with an appropriate school representative to discuss their concerns.
- The school representative may conduct a preliminary investigation or communicate with the parent to clarify key facts and concerns.
- Parents/guardians discussing concerns or complaints with staff and/or the allocated school representative may be accompanied by an advocate if they wish.
- The school representative will record the details of this preliminary investigation and any other information that may arise during the complaints process.
- Following the investigation, the school representative will communicate with those involved in the complaint to provide their findings and any steps which may be required to resolve the complaint.
- Any investigation conducted by the school will be done so in a timely, efficient and confidential manner while ensuring that the principles of natural justice are applied for all. Parents/guardians will be provided with an anticipated time frame for a resolution.

- If the scope of the investigation is deemed to be beyond the capacity or jurisdiction of the school, the matter will be referred to the appropriate authority and the parent will be informed of the referral.
- If in the view of the parent the matter remains unresolved, the parent will be provided with details as to how they can refer the matter to the Department of Education's regional office.
- All records of parent complaints, subsequent investigations and outcomes will be kept electronically where possible and are subject to the school's Privacy policies.
- All staff will be made aware of our school's complaints handling procedures and will be supported with training on how to minimise, respond to, and manage parent concerns and complaints.

Evaluation

This policy will be reviewed as part of the school's three-year review cycle. In doing so, School Council will consider aggregated complaints data to determine whether or not there are reoccurring areas of concern that could be better managed.

THIS POLICY WAS RATIFIED BY SCHOOL COUNCIL on SEPTEMBER 12TH, 2017.