



Yokine Primary School

COMPLAINTS MANAGEMENT GUIDELINES



Policy endorsed and adopted by School Council 21/11/07

Relevant Regulations: "School Education Regulations 2000" Part 3 Division 8: Disputes and Complaints: Sections 54 - 57 and DET Policy "Disputes and Complaints 2007"

INTRODUCTION:

The relationship between the home and the school plays a very important part in a child's education.

We can not overestimate the critical role parents play in successful learning: parents contribute much to their child's development and are among the most important influences on the way in which the child approaches learning.

Teachers are responsible for the more formal aspects of children's learning, and successful teaching builds on the home experiences of the child. This is most effective where there is an active partnership with parents.

Two-way communication is a critical factor in the partnership between parents and the school. Where a partnership exists, it is easier for parents to feel confident about the teaching and learning taking place in the classroom and to solve problems.

OBJECTIVES:

- To ensure that complaints lodged at Yokine Primary School are resolved in a prompt and efficient manner.
- To promote the highest standard of professionalism in dealing with our community.

POLICY STATEMENT:

- The School and Staff are responsible for managing the resolution of disputes and complaints lodged with them.
- The School will make every effort to acknowledge complaints promptly and respond accordingly to resolve disputes and complaints, in accordance with the principles of procedural fairness.
- Principals, directors and line managers are responsible for establishing and maintaining processes for managing disputes and complaints that are appropriately managed at the local level.
- Where a complaint is not resolved at the local level, the complainant, principal, director or line manager can forward a written complaint to the Director General.

PRINCIPLES AND GUIDELINES:

All processes are in line with the Department of Education and Trainings Dispute and Complaints Policy and Procedures.

"Creating bright minds for a brighter future."

RESPONSIBILITIES OF STAFF FOR LOCAL MANAGEMENT OF COMPLAINTS:

Class Teachers

- Maintain confidentiality at all times.
- Resolve parent concerns and complaints where possible.
- Communicate outcomes of parent concerns and complaints to a school administrator where appropriate.
- Refer parent complaints to a school administrator where appropriate.

Principals

- Maintain confidentiality and impartiality in dealing with each matter.
- Ensure, wherever appropriate, that concerns and complaints are resolved at the school level.
- Develop and implement a process for registering, responding to and managing parent enquiries, concerns and complaints.
- Ensure that the process for managing complaints includes recording and monitoring of complaints and their outcomes to enable improvements to be identified and implemented.
- Ensure that enquiries, concerns and complaint procedures are communicated clearly to parents and community members.
- Ensure that school policies and procedures are modified, where necessary, to address areas of concern.
- Ensure that processes are consistent with all relevant Department of Education and Training policies
- Ensure that complainants and respondents are aware that they can have a friend or adviser present during any discussion.
- Refer the complaint, where appropriate, to the Director, Schools and Services for either resolution or, if the complaint has possible disciplinary implications for an employee to the Complaints Management Unit to manage.

MAKING A COMPLAINT:

Complaints can be made:

- verbally
- by letter
- by email or
- by fax

Help is available at the school to support complainants to formulate, write and lodge a complaint. Complaints can be lodged with the school using any of the contact methods listed above.

Written complaints should be addressed to the

Principal

PRIVATE AND CONFIDENTIAL

Yokine Primary School

39 Woodrow Avenue

Yokine WA 6060

Minimum information required when making a complaint:

You should provide the following information when making a complaint:

- your name and contact details;
- copies of any relevant correspondence or documents relating directly to the complaint;
- the nature of the complaint; and
- what you consider is needed to resolve the complaint.

DEALING WITH DISPUTES and COMPLAINTS:

Responsiveness:

We will endeavour to acknowledge written complaints within 5 school days. We will also endeavour to resolve local complaints within 14 days. If because of the serious nature of the complaint, it is deemed necessary to forward it on to another section of the Department; we will do this without delay. In all cases you will be kept informed of the progress of your complaint.

Enquiring on a complaints progress:

Complainants may enquire as to the progress of their complaint at any time by directly contacting the appropriate person. At the time of lodging a verbal complaint, or in the acknowledgment letter for a written complaint, this person will be identified for them.

Outcome of a complaint:

We will advise complainants verbally, or in writing of the outcome of their complaint. The outcome of all written complaints will be provided in writing.

When a complainant is unhappy with the outcome of a complaint:

If a complainant is unsatisfied with our attempts to resolve their complaint, or dissatisfied with the outcome, they may wish to express their concerns to the District Director. To do this they need to contact the District Director. It is preferable if this contact is made in writing.

Rejecting a Complaint:

Complaints judged to be vexatious, trivial or without substance, or where it is judged to not warrant further action, will not be progressed. Complainants will be advised of this decision in writing.

In dealing with complaints the school will endeavour to adhere to the 13 elements considered essential in having an effective complaints handling process, as determined by the Standards Council of Australia (AS 4269).

These elements are:

1. **Commitment.** *We recognise your right to complain and to have your complaint dealt with seriously.*
2. **Fairness.** *We understand the need to be fair in our complaints handling processes.*
3. **Resources.** *We have adequate resources for effective handling of complaints.*
4. **Visibility.** *Our complaints handling processes are displayed on and available from our website on:
www.myschoolweb.com.au/yokine*
5. **Access.** *We accept complaints lodged by phone, fax, in writing and via email.*
6. **Assistance.** *Upon request, we will provide a complainant with the support needed to formulate and lodge a complaint.*
7. **Responsiveness.** *Complaints will be dealt with quickly and efficiently.*
8. **Charges.** *There will be no charge to the complainant for the raising of a complaint with us*
9. **Remedies.** *Where a complaint results in the identification of changes that should be made to our processes, those changes will be made.*
10. **Data Collection.** *Data about complaints lodged with our school is collected and recorded.
Complaints are regularly analysed for the identification and addressing of systemic and recurring problems*
11. **Systematic and Recurring Problems.** *These are identified to enable systemic rectification to ensure our processes are responsive to the needs of the community.*
12. **Accountability.** *We report our complaints handling processes against our documented performance standards.*
13. **Reviews.** *We review our complaints handling process annually.*