

Complaints and Grievances Policy

1. Definitions

- 1.1 **DET** – Department of Education and Training.
- 1.2 **Concern** - an issue of interest (because of its importance and effect) which is raised informally in order to improve or change a situation
- 1.3 **Complaint** - is an issue of a minor nature that can be resolved promptly and does not require a detailed investigation
- 1.4 **Grievance** - A grievance is a formal statement of complaint that cannot be addressed immediately and involves matters of a more serious nature e.g. the service is in breach of a policy or the service did not meet the care expectations of a family
- 1.5 **Notifiable complaint** - A complaint that alleges a breach of the Act or Regulation, or alleges that the health, safety or wellbeing of a child at the service may have been compromised.
- 1.6 **Positive Behaviours Model** - Guidelines and procedures for the management of student behaviour at Coatesville Primary School
- 1.7 **Sentral** - School management system

2. Purpose

- 2.1 To clearly outline procedures to effectively address parent concerns and complaints and ensure that parental concerns and complaints are responded to in an effective and timely matter.
- 2.2 To provide positive, clear and effective processes for resolving grievances between the school and community members which assists in the building of strong relationships, dispels anxiety, and ultimately provides students with an enhanced learning environment.

2.3 Guideline

- 2.4 The school's approach to handling concerns and complaints is based on our values of; providing a safe and supportive learning environment by;
 - 2.4.1 building relationships between students, parents and staff;
 - 2.4.2 providing an environment of mutual respect, where communication is open and honest;
 - 2.4.3 complying with all legislative and statutory requirements;
 - 2.4.4 dealing with concerns, complaints and complainants with fairness and equity;

2.4.5 establishing procedures to promote prompt, efficient and satisfactory resolution of complaints and grievances:and

2.4.6 maintaining confidentiality at all times.

3. Implementation

3.1 When addressing parent / guardian concerns or complaints, Coatesville Primary School will:

3.1.1 maintain the confidentiality of all parties, in line with Departmental policy and legislative requirements;

3.1.2 acknowledge that their common goal is to achieve an outcome acceptable to all parties;

3.1.3 act in good faith and in a calm and courteous manner;

3.1.4 show respect and understanding for each other's point of view and value differences, rather than judge and blame: and

3.1.5 recognise that all parties have rights and responsibilities which must be balanced.

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

3.2.1 do so promptly, as soon as possible after the issue occurs;

3.2.2 provide complete and factual information about the concern or complaint;

3.2.3 maintain and respect the privacy and confidentiality of all parties;

3.2.4 acknowledge that a common goal is to achieve an outcome acceptable to all parties;

3.2.5 show respect and understanding of each other point of view and value difference rather than judge or blame and;

3.2.6 recognise that all parties have rights and responsibilities.

3.3 The complainant raising concerns or complaints should telephone, visit or write to the:

3.3.1 Classroom teacher,if the issue or concerns relates to the student learning and specific student incidents in the teacher's class;

3.3.2 Grade level Teacher and Learning leader, if the issue involves students across the grade level and repeated student incidents (refer to the Positive Behaviours Model);

3.3.3 Assistant Principal about issues relating to staff members or complex student issues and;

3.3.4 Principal about concerns relating to school policy, school management, staff members or complex student issues.

3.4 The school will address any concerns and complaints received from parents courteously, efficiently, fairly and promptly, or within the timeline agreed with the person who raised the concern or complaint.

3.5 If the matter is not resolved by speaking to the Assistant Principal or Principal, then

contacting the community liaison officer at the South Eastern Region will assist in finding a solution. **Phone:** 03 8765 5600 **Postal address:** PO Box 5, Dandenong, Victoria 3175
Location: 165-169 Thomas Street, Dandenong, Victoria 3175.

- 3.6 When a complaint or grievance has been assessed as 'notifiable', the Principal must notify Department of Education and Training (DET) of the complaint or grievance. The Principal will investigate the complaint or grievance and take any actions deemed necessary, in addition to responding to requests from and assisting with any investigation by DET.
- 3.7 There may be occasions when the complainant reports the complaint or grievance directly to DET. If DET then notifies the Principal about a complaint they have received, the Principal will still have responsibility for investigating and dealing with the complaint or grievance as outlined in this policy, in addition to co-operating with any investigation by DET.
- 3.8 DET will investigate all complaints and grievances it receives about a service, where it is alleged that the health, safety or wellbeing of any child within the service may have been compromised, or that there may have been a contravention of the *Education and Care Services National Law Act 2010* and the *Education and Care Services National Regulations 2011*.
- 3.9 The school will make every effort to resolve concerns and complaints before involving other levels of DET.
- 3.10 If a concern or complaint is substantiated in whole or part, the school will determine an appropriate course of action. For example, at its discretion and depending on the circumstance, the school might offer:
 - 3.10.1 an explanation or further information about the issue;
 - 3.10.2 mediation, counselling or other support;
 - 3.10.3 an apology, expression of regret or admission of fault;
 - 3.10.4 to change its decision;
 - 3.10.5 to change its policies, procedures or practices;
 - 3.10.6 to waiving of debt related to school fees and payments
 - 3.10.7 to refund of parent payments
- 3.11 The school will provide a *Complaints and Grievances Register* (refer to *Definitions*) on Sentral and ensure that a staff representative will record complaints and grievances along with outcomes
- 3.12 The school's policy for addressing parent concerns and complaints will be published on the school's website.
- 3.13 The school will brief all staff annually about its procedures to address concerns and complaints and provide staff with support and/or training appropriate to their responsibilities.

4. Related School Based Policies

- [Student Engagement and Inclusion Policy](#)

5. DET resources

- Addressing parents' concerns and complaints effectively: policy and guides

<http://www.education.vic.gov.au/Documents/school/principals/community/addressparentsconcern.pdf>

6. Evaluation

- 6.1 This policy will be reviewed every 2 years (or as required) as part of the school's policy review cycle.

**This policy was last ratified by School Council on
[insert date] 2017**