

# Complaints and Grievance Procedures

Respect, Creativity, Excellence, Resilience

**Purpose:** Thorndon Park Primary School has the commitment to creating a supportive learning environment in which students, staff and parents work together harmoniously. There will be occasions when students, staff and parents may have concerns about particular aspects of school, classrooms, yard or behaviour expectations.

These guidelines outline a process for resolving issues in a positive and responsible manner. Quality resolutions can be achieved through collaborative communication and mutual respect between all parties. Ethical conduct is maintained by staff, students and parents at all times. Grievances are managed and resolved fairly, efficiently, promptly and in accordance with relative legislation and DECD requirements.

**Scope:** This procedure clarifies the steps that can be taken within the school setting before complaints and grievances are advanced to the formal avenues of DECD Education Complaint Unit and the Incident Management Division.

**The Education Complaint Unit** provides advice and support to the community in relation to complaints about DECD public schools, preschools and early childhood services.

The unit:

- facilitates complaints resolution procedures between complainants and DECD schools wherever possible
- advises complainants about their avenues or internal and external review where complaints have not been resolved at a local level
- may provide a formal review of complaints where there are concerns of procedural error unreasonableness by a DECD public school.

**The Incident Management Division (IMD)** assesses complaints of suspected or alleged misconduct against department employees. This includes allegations related to suspected or alleged misconduct towards children and young people.

The Incident Management Division is made up of six areas of responsibility:

- Case Management
- Intake and Assessment – Complaint Assessment Panel
- Investigations Unit
- Misconduct, Discipline and Advice Unit
- School Care (notifiable incidents in schools)
- Education Complaint Unit
- Incident management division

**Objectives:** We believe positive and effective working relationships within the school community provides:

- A safe and supportive learning and work environment
- Open communication for increased opportunities for success

## **Principles of our Resolution Procedures:**

- Everyone listened to and treated with respect with the right to feel safe and supported
- Resolving problems and/or conflict as soon as possible to maintain a climate of trust
- Meetings to discuss grievances will be suspended if any person behaves in an inappropriate, insulting, offensive or disrespectful manner.

## **The Resolution Procedure Detail:**

### **In the event of a grievance at our school, the following guidelines are recommended:**

In the first instance approach the person with whom you have the grievance. If you are unable to do this, follow the set of guidelines. When raising a concern, staff, parents and students are expected to: treat each other with respect; courtesy and maintain confidentiality; raise the concern as soon as possible; provide complete and factual information; act in good faith to achieve an outcome acceptable to all parties; have realistic and reasonable expectations about the course of action required to resolve the concern.

## **Grievance Procedures for Parents**

### **Step 1**

- Contact the person involved and arrange an appointment so that you can discuss the matter privately
- If you are unable to speak to the person directly, phone the school office to arrange a meeting time. If you feel uncomfortable approaching the school, a member of the Governing Council familiar with school procedures can support you to establish contact.
- Meet with the person concerned to discuss your concern. Respectful, quiet discussion, without accusation and blame enables points of view to be discussed and resolutions made.
- If you regard the issue as serious particularly if it relates to students' safety and well-being, contact the school for an appointment with a member of the leadership team.
- Staff will respond within 5 working days to establish a meeting time.

### **Step 2**

- If you consider the issue you have raised is not resolved, make an appointment with the Principal, Deputy Principal or Senior Leader. Inform them about the subject that you would like to discuss as this will help the problem-solving process. An appointment will be made within 5 working days.

### **Step 3**

- Attend an appointment. You may wish to arrange for another adult to support you by attending the meeting with you. The school will aim to resolve your concern or complaint as soon as possible. Meeting notes will be taken and signed by all parties for common agreements.

### **Step 4**

- If you are still dissatisfied with the outcome, your feedback or complaint can be directed to the Education Complaint Unit. Email: [DECD.EducationComplaint@sa.gov.au](mailto:DECD.EducationComplaint@sa.gov.au) Phone: 1800677435
- The Complaint Unit will assess your complaint, decide what action is needed, let you know what has been done and when you can expect to hear about the outcome.
- You can make an anonymous complaint or ask that your identity remains confidential, however this may limit options for investigating and negotiating a resolution.

***Throughout this process it is important that students learn that the school and the family are working together in support of their learning and well-being.***

	<b>STUDENTS</b>	<b>PARENTS/ CAREGIVERS</b>	<b>TEACHERS</b>
STEP 1	Solve the problem by letting the person concerned know how you feel and what you consider to be a concern	Arrange an appointment to speak to the teacher concerned without distractions	Arrange a time to speak to the person concerned
STEP 2	If the grievance is not addressed let the person know you will be speaking to someone else	Parents are not to approach students or other parents	If the grievance is not addressed let the person know you will be speaking to someone else
STEP 3	Seek the help of another student Speak to the teacher to help Talk to a family member to ask advice and strategies for solving the issue	Let the person know what you consider to be your concern	If the grievance is not addressed speak to your line manager, trusted colleague, AEU Rep, PAC member and ask for their support in addressing the grievance by speaking to the person involved Meeting notes to record discussions
STEP 4	Revisit the above strategies and if continues seek the support of a member of school leadership e.g. Principal or Deputy Principal Meeting notes to record discussions	Arrange a time to speak to a member of the school leadership team. Your concern will be resolved ideally within 14 days. Meeting notes to record discussions	If you are still dissatisfied contact the Campbell Education Director to assist you to resolve the situation Phone: 83668787
STEP 5	Discuss student's concern with their parents as part of the problem-solving process	If there is no resolution approach the Campbell Education Director who will assist you to resolve the situation Phone: 83668787	
STEP 6		If you are still dissatisfied you may contact the DECD Parent Complaint Unit with your concerns 1800 677 435	

