

# WARRANWOOD PRIMARY SCHOOL PARENT CONCERNS AND COMPLAINTS POLICY



## RATIONALE

Warranwood PS acknowledges that parents and caregivers have a right to raise concerns and air complaints they may have and to have them addressed appropriately. The school's approach to handling concerns and complaints is based on a commitment to:

- providing a safe and supportive learning environment
- building relationships between students, parents and staff
- providing a safe working environment for staff.

## GUIDELINES

This policy is to ensure that concerns and complaints are dealt with in a fair and transparent way. Concerns and complaints will be handled responsibly, openly and in a timely manner. The policy covers concerns and complaints about:

- general issues of student behaviour contrary to the school's code of conduct
- incidents of bullying or harassment in the classroom or the school yard
- learning programs, assessment and reporting of student learning
- communication with parents
- school fees and payments
- general administrative issues
- issues will be dealt with accordingly by the class teacher, area coordinator, Assistant Principal or Principal
- any other school related matters except as detailed below.

The policy does not cover matters for which there are existing rights of review or appeal, as detailed in the *Victorian Government Schools Reference Guide and Student Engagement Policy Guidelines*. These matters include:

- student discipline matters involving suspensions and expulsions
- complaints about employee conduct or performance and complaints that should be dealt with by performance management, grievance resolution or disciplinary action
- complaints by the Department's employees related to their employment
- student critical incident matters
- other criminal matters.

## IMPLEMENTATION

### 1. Expectations of the School

It is expected that the school will address any concerns and complaints received from parents/caregivers:

- courteously, efficiently and fairly
- promptly, or within an agreed timeline
- in accordance with due process, principles of natural justice and DEECD regulatory framework
- maintain and respect the privacy and confidentiality of all parties
- acknowledge that a common goal is to achieve an outcome acceptable to all parties
- act in good faith, and in a calm and courteous manner

- show respect and understanding of each other's point of view and value difference, rather than judge or blame
- recognise that all parties have right and responsibilities which must be balanced.

## **2. Expectations of Parents and Caregivers**

It is expected that a parent or caregiver raising a concern or complaint will:

- do so promptly, as soon as possible after the issue occurs
- provide complete and factual information about the concern or complaint
- maintain and respect the privacy and confidentiality of all parties
- acknowledge that a common goal is to achieve an outcome acceptable to all parties
- act in good faith, and in a calm and courteous manner
- show respect and understanding of each other's point of views and value difference, rather than judge and blame
- recognise that all parties have rights and responsibilities which must be balanced.

## **3. Raising concerns or complaints**

A parent or caregiver can raise a concern or complaint about any aspect of a school's operations as indicated under the Guidelines.. Concerns or complaints should be made directly to the school to be addressed to the Principal. Schools are required to make every effort to resolve a concern or complaint related to it before involving other levels of the Department.

## **4. Addressing concerns or complaints**

Upon receipt of a concern or complaint the school will determine whether it should be managed through the school's processes or through other complaints processes of DEECD.

All complaints will be noted and acted on promptly by the staff member who receives the complaint. The school will make every attempt to resolve a concern or complaint as quickly as possible. If a complaint involves complex issues more time may be needed to resolve the issues.

## **5. Remedies**

If a concern or complaint is substantiated in whole or part, the school will offer an appropriate remedy. For example, at its discretion and depending on the circumstances, the School might offer:

- an explanation or further information about the issue
- mediation, counselling or other support
- an apology or expression of regret
- to change its decision
- to change its policies, procedures or practices.

## **6. Referral of concerns or complaints:**

If a person with a concern or complaint is not satisfied with the outcome determined by the School, they may contact the Department's appropriate regional office (North Eastern Region). An officer from the region will ask the complainant for a complete

and factual account of the issue in writing and the complainant's opinion about why the school did not resolve it to their satisfaction.

If the complaint cannot be resolved by the complainant, school and regional office working together, the regional office may refer it to the Department's Group Coordination Division. The Division will follow the same procedure as the region and will ask the complainant to outline their view on the course of action required to resolve the complaint. Where the complainant is unable to provide a written account the officer from Group Coordination Division should act on the information provided.

#### **7. Communication and training:**

The School will make information about procedures for addressing concerns and complaints readily available to parents and the school community, in clear and easy to understand language and where appropriate, in a range of community languages and formats that are accessible to everyone so that no one is disadvantaged.

#### **REVIEW**

The School Council will regularly review its policy and procedures to effectively address parent concerns and complaints as part of its cyclic policy review.

Ratified December 2013  
Review 2017