



Complaints Policy

Rationale

This policy exists to provide an outline of the complaints process at Fairfield Primary School.

This policy relates to complaints brought by parents, carers, students or members of our school community and applies to all matters relating to the school. In some limited instances, complaints may need to be referred to a Department of Education and Training (DET) process where there are different mechanisms in place to review certain decisions – for example, expulsion appeals.

Aim

- That parents and members of the community are informed as to how they can raise complaints or concerns about issues arising at our school.
- That all complaints regarding Fairfield Primary School are managed in a timely, effective, fair and respectful manner.

Implementation

When addressing a complaint, all parties are expected to:

- Raise and discuss issues in a courteous and respectful manner.
- Acknowledge that the goal is to achieve an outcome that is in the affected student's best interests and acceptable to all parties.
- Act in good faith and respect the privacy and confidentiality of those involved, as appropriate.
- Recognise that all parties, including the broader school community, have rights and responsibilities that must be balanced.
- Recognise that schools and the Department may be subject to legal constraints on their ability to act or disclose information in some circumstances.

PREPARATION FOR RAISING A CONCERN OR COMPLAINT

Fairfield Primary School encourages parents, carers or members of the community who wish to submit a complaint to:

- Carefully consider the issues you would like to discuss.
- Remember you may not have all the facts relating to the issues that you want to raise.
- Think about how the matter could be resolved.
- Be informed by checking the policies and guidelines set by the Department: see [Parent Complaints – Government Schools](#).



COMPLAINTS PROCESS

In most instances, direct the complaint to your child's teacher first. Where this is not appropriate, or the issue is not resolved, direct the concern to the Assistant Principal or Principal.

Where concerns cannot be resolved in this way, parents or community members may wish to make a formal complaint to the Principal. The following process will apply:

1. Complaint Received:

Arrange a meeting with the Principal or Assistant Principal to outline the complaint. This process can take place in a form that is convenient to the complainant, whether in writing, in person, or over the phone.

2. Information Gathering:

Depending on the issues raised in the complaint, the Principal, Assistant Principal or nominee may need to gather further information to fully understand the situation. This process may also involve speaking to others to obtain details about the situation or the concerns raised.

3. Response:

Where possible, a resolution meeting will be arranged with the Assistant Principal or Principal to discuss the complaint with the objective of reaching a resolution satisfactory to all parties. If after the resolution meeting, the complaint is not resolved, the school will work with the complainant to produce a written summary of the complaint in the event the complainant would like to take further action. In some circumstances, the Principal may determine that a resolution meeting would not be appropriate. In this situation, a response to the complaint will be provided in writing.

4. Timelines:

Fairfield Primary School will acknowledge receipt of a complaint as soon as possible (usually within 48 hours) and will seek to resolve complaints in a timely manner. Depending on the complexity of the complaint, the school may need some time to gather enough information to fully understand the circumstances of the complaint. Fairfield Primary School will endeavour to complete any necessary information gathering and hold a resolution meeting, where appropriate, within 10 working days of the complaint being raised. In situations where further time is required, the school will consult with the complainant and discuss any interim solutions to the dispute that can be put in place.

RESOLUTION

Where appropriate, Fairfield Primary School may seek to resolve a complaint by:

- An apology or expression of regret.
- A change of decision.
- A change of policy, procedure or practice.
- Offering the opportunity for student counselling or other support.
- Other actions consistent with school values that are intended to support the student, parent and school relationship, engagement, and participation in the school community.

In some circumstances, Fairfield Primary School may also ask the complainant to attend a meeting with an independent third party, or participate in mediation with an accredited mediator to assist in the resolution of the dispute.

ESCALATION

If a parent or community member is not satisfied that their complaint has been resolved by the school, or if their complaint is about the Principal, then the complaint should be referred to the North Western Region of the Department of Education by contacting 9488 9488.

Fairfield Primary may also refer a complaint to the North Western Region of the Department of Education if we believe that we have done all we can to address the complaint.

For more information about the Department's Parent Complaints policy, including the role of the Regional Office, please see: [Parent Complaints Policy](#).

COMPLAINTS RELATING TO SCHOOL COUNCIL

If the complaint relates to a function of the school's council, then the matter will be brought to the attention of the council. The complainant will be asked to put their concern in writing and address it to the council. The complaint will then be discussed at a council meeting. The Principal, as the Executive Officer, will contact the complainant advising how the matter has been or is proposed to be resolved.

Evaluation

This policy will be reviewed as part of Fairfield Primary School's 3-year review cycle in August 2021.

This policy was ratified by School Council in August 2018