



Complaints Policy

Rationale

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

Aim

The purpose of this policy is to:

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

Implementation

Fairfield Primary School welcomes feedback, both positive and negative, and is committed to continuous improvement. We value open communication with our families and are committed to understanding complaints and addressing them appropriately. We recognise that the complaints process provides an important opportunity for reflection and learning.

We value and encourage open and positive relationships with our school community. We understand that it is in the best interests of students for there to be a trusting relationship between families and our school.

When addressing a complaint, all parties are expected to:

- Be considerate of each other's views and respect each other's role.
- Be focused on resolution of the complaint, with the interests of the student involved at the centre.
- Act in good faith and cooperation.
- Behave with respect and courtesy.
- Respect the privacy and confidentiality of those involved, as appropriate.
- Operate within and seek reasonable resolutions that comply with any applicable legislation and Department policy.
- 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 and Fairfield Primary School.



SUPPORT PERSON

You are welcome to have a support person to assist you in raising a complaint with our school. Please advise us if you wish to have a support person to assist you, and provide their name, contact details, and their relationship to you.

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 (other relevant policies may include the *Bullying Prevention Policy* and the *Student Wellbeing and Engagement Policy*, found on the [school website](#)).

In some circumstances, Fairfield Primary School may also ask you to attend a meeting with an independent third party, or participate in a 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 process, including the role of the Regional Office, please see [Raise a complaint or concern about your school](#).

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.

COMMUNICATION

This policy will be communicated to our school community in the following ways:

- Available publicly on school website.
- Included in staff induction processes.
- Hard copy available from school administration upon request.

Further Information and Resources

The Department of Education:

- [Complaints Policy – Parents](#)
- [Raise a complaint or concern about your school](#)

Fairfield Primary School [website](#) for the following policies:

- Bully Prevention
- Student Wellbeing and Engagement

Evaluation

This policy will be reviewed as part of Fairfield Primary School's 3-year review cycle in August 2024.

This policy was ratified by School Council in August 2021