

Policy Name:	Parent Complaints
Date Adopted:	17 th October 2016
Review Date:	17 th October 2018
Referred Documents:	http://www.education.vic.gov.au/school/principals/spag/community/Pages/parentcomplaints.aspx

RATIONALE:

Wedge Park Primary School recognises that from time to time families may wish to raise concerns or complaints with the school. The school believes that when complaints are handled correctly and both raised and responded to in a respectful and constructive manner, that this forms part of our framework for a connected and positive school tone and culture. We value ongoing communication with parents/guardians; we strive to understand, address and respond in a professional manner to concerns expressed by parents. The school also expects that any concerns that parents have will be raised in a courteous and respectful manner. At Wedge Park Primary School, we value and encourage open and positive relationships with parents, guardians and families.

GOALS:

The following points clearly outline the purpose of this policy and how Wedge Park Primary School aims for implementation:

- The school has high expectations of communication from all community members
- The school expects that in managing complaints from parents, all parties will be honest and hear complaints as delivered.
- The school will at all times maintain and stress the confidentiality of all discussions.
- The school believes that the common goal is to achieve an outcome acceptable to all parties, in good faith and in a calm and courteous manner.
- At all times, the school expects all parties to show respect and understanding of each other's point of view and perceptions.

Guiding Principles

The following principles guide the implementation of this policy:

- Dignity and respect between all parties, at all times
- The school is committed to providing a safe and supportive work environment where everyone is treated with respect, fairness and dignity
- The school will ensure the safety, security, health and wellbeing of all community members
- The school will apologise where required and work towards positive outcomes or shared understandings.

- The school may ask families to agree to disagree and move forward

Definitions

For the purposes of the policy:

A '**concern**' is an issue of interest (because of its importance and effect) which is raised informally in order to improve or change a situation. For example: I believe that the school's physical education policy and program is inadequate. I don't think that it caters for students who have well-developed skills and who need to be involved in competitive sport. I think the school should review its policy in this area.

A '**complaint**' is an expression of grievance or resentment where the complainant is seeking redress or justice. For example: My daughter has been left out of the school's netball team for the third time in a row. She is an accomplished netballer and deserves to be part of the team. It is not fair that she is left out and I want you to do something.

IMPLEMENTATION:

At Wedge Park Primary School, complaints and concerns will be handled in a timely manner and with the intention to resolve with a positive outcome. The School will address complaints as follows:

- It is our aim to respond to ALL complaints within 24 hours, but no longer than 48 hours
- Efficiently and fairly with a timeline for investigation and resolution communicated
- Promptly, within timelines agreed with the person with the concern or complaint
- In accordance with due process, the principles of natural justice and relevant regulatory frameworks
- After a complaint has been followed up, the resolution/decision will be communicated to all parties in writing (usually by email)
- It is good practice for serious complaints to be handled by 2 staff members, at least one of whom should be a Principal Class Officer
- The school and staff have the right to stop or refuse a complaint conversation/request with a parent, should the complaint have been raised at an inappropriate time or if a level of mutual respect and courtesy is not being followed.

NB: This policy does not cover matters for which there are existing rights of review or appeal, such as: student discipline matters involving expulsions; complaints about employee conduct; performance and complaints that should be dealt with by performance management; grievance resolution or disciplinary action; student critical incident matters or any criminal matters.

Raising Concerns or Complaints – For Parents/Guardians

The following points outline how parents/guardians should go about making a complaint to the school. Parents are encouraged to access our support and feedback processes at all times, with the correct person. This will ensure quick response and no double handling.

The school expects parents/guardians to make appointment times to meet with school staff.

In the first instance the complainant should telephone, email or write to:

- The student's teacher about learning issues and incidents that may have happened in their class
- The Student's Teaching & Learning Coach or Assistant Principal if it is a concern about behaviour or wellbeing
- An Assistant Principal or the Principal about issues relating to other staff members or complex student issues
- The Principal about issues relating to school policy, school management, staff members or very complex student issues
- At times, a telephone conversation may be helpful, but the school values personal appointments with complainants assuming they can be arranged
- At no time should a complainant approach a staff member in the school without first reporting to the Office to sign in

POLICY EVALUATION:

This policy will be reviewed as part of the school council annually.