



CLYDE PRIMARY SCHOOL COMPLAINTS AND GRIEVANCES POLICY

Rationale:

Clyde Primary School's approach to handling concerns and complaints is based on our values of **Respect, Responsibility and Resilience** where children are taught and encouraged to monitor and regulate their behaviour. This positive approach requires an emphasis on the recognition and response to appropriate behaviour both within the class and the school yard. It is important that a partnership exists between home and school which provides a positive and caring environment in which engagement is encouraged alongside purposeful teaching.

From time to time, parents will make contact with the school to address a concern or complaint. Dealing with parent concerns and complaints in a respectful and professional manner is essential in building a respectful and functioning community. All parent concerns and complaints will be handled in line with the school and Department policies and procedures. These procedures and policies cover concerns and complaints about:

- General issues of student behaviour that are contrary to the school's code of conduct
- Incidents of bullying or harassment in the classroom or the schoolyard (as outlined in the 'anti-bullying policy')
- Learning programs, assessment and reporting of student learning
- Communication with parents
- School levies and payments
- General administrative issues.

Definitions:

A complaint is defined as an issue of a minor nature that can be resolved promptly or within 24 hours, and does not require a detailed investigation. Complaints include an expression of displeasure, such as poor service, and any verbal or written complaint directly related to the service (including general and notifiable complaints). Complaints do not include staff, industrial or employment matters and occupational health and safety matters (unless related to the safety of the children).

A grievance is a formal statement of complaint that cannot be addressed immediately and involves matters of a more serious nature e.g. the school is in breach of a policy or did not meet the care expectations of a family.

Related school policies:

Community Code of Conduct – Statement of Values
 Staff Health and Wellbeing
 Privacy and Confidentiality
 Child Safe
 Anti-Bullying and Cyberbullying
 Parent Payments
 Communication

Aims:

1. To ensure all parent concerns and complaints are handled professionally and with a suitable level of respect so that Clyde Primary School is a:
 - safe and supportive learning environment
 - is continually building the relationships between students, parents and staff, and
 - provides a safe and supportive work environment for staff.
2. To provide guidelines for:
 - receiving and dealing with complaints and grievances
 - procedures to be followed in investigating complaints and grievances.

Note: This policy does not address complaints relating to staff grievances or employment matters. The relevant awards provide information on the management of such issues.

Implementation:

1. All staff and parents will be made aware each year about the correct process for dealing with parent complaints/concerns.
2. Parents 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 view and value difference, rather than judge and blame, and
 - recognise that all parties have rights and responsibilities which must be balanced.
3. The school will address any concerns or complaints from parents:
 - courteously
 - efficiently
 - fairly
 - promptly, or within the timeline agreed with the person with the concern or complaint, and
 - in accordance with due process, principles of natural justice and the Department's regulatory framework.
4. The school will develop a clear procedure and associated resources for addressing parent concerns and complaints which will be communicated annually with staff and will be reviewed biennially.
5. Concerns and complaints can be addressed to any staff member; however, some issues may be referred to a more appropriate person at any stage in the process.
6. Communication to parents of the procedure and expectations when directing a concern or complaint will occur annually through an information leaflet and through the school newsletter. This information will include:
 - how a person can make a complaint
 - the person's responsibilities
 - information to be provided by the person
 - who the person should contact and appropriate ways of doing this
 - the process for managing complaints
 - parents are welcome to seek the services of an advocate when expressing their concern or complaint.
7. All staff will be asked to record parent concerns and complaints and communicate these to the Principal. These concerns/complaints will be re-visited periodically and common issues addressed in the appropriate area – Leadership meeting, Staff meeting, School Council, etc
8. The school will make every effort to resolve concerns and complaints before involving other areas of the Department. If a complainant reports a complaint or grievance directly to DET, the Principal will have responsibility for investigating and dealing with the complaint or grievance as outlined in this policy, in addition to responding to any questions from the Department.
9. All complaints will be noted and acted on in a timely manner by the staff member who receives the complaint.
10. The school will make every attempt to resolve a concern or complaint as quickly as possible. If the complaint involves many students and a range of issues, the school will need more time to investigate and resolve it.

11. The school may contact the Regional Office for advice on any complaints. The timeline taken to achieve this will be communicated with the complainant. In all cases, the school will try to resolve a concern or complaint within 20 school days.
12. The school will implement the remedy (see section below) as soon as practicable.
13. If a person with a concern or complaint is not satisfied with the outcome determined by the school, they will be advised to contact the Department's regional office.
14. The school will record information about complaints and grievances, together with a record on the outcomes and maintain a Complaints and Grievances register

Remedies

If possible, suggested outcomes will be discussed and could include:

- An explanation or further information about the issue
- An acknowledgement of each other's perspective and agreement on ways to manage differences
- Mediation, referral to counselling or other support
- An apology, expression of regret or admission of fault
- The school may change a decision
- The school may change its policies, procedures or practices
- Agreement on what constitutes acceptable behaviour
- An undertaking that unacceptable behaviour will change
- The school may cancel a debt
- A fee refund may be made.

Evaluation:

This policy will be reviewed as part the three-year review cycle.

In addition, the school will seek feedback from those affected by the policy regarding:

- its effectiveness
- to monitor complaints and grievances as recorded in the Complaints and Grievances Register to assess whether satisfactory resolutions have been achieved
- to review the effectiveness of the policy and procedures to ensure that all complaints have been dealt with in a fair and timely manner
- to keep the policy up to date with current legislation, research, policy and best practice.

Endorsement:

This policy was ratified by School Council on 19/11/2018

This policy is due for review in 2021.