



AIRVILLE STATE SCHOOL

Complaint Management

COMPLAINT MANAGEMENT PROCEDURE

This document outlines the procedures our school undertakes to manage complaints.
 Complaints come to Principals and other staff in many forms.
 Complaints can be from: parents/carers; staff; students; other community members.
 We will work with you to put things right for you and would appreciate your help to do this.

Our management of complaints is underpinned by:
 The Education (General Provisions) Act 2006 (QLD) Section 46
 Education Queensland's Complaints Management – State Schools
 Making a Complaint – http://education.qld.gov.au/schools/about/pdfs/making_a_complaint.pdf

| INTRODUCTION | DOCUMENTATION | WHAT TO EXPECT |
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| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> All complaints are handled in a positive & open way. Complaints can be made to any staff member or directly to the Principal. If the complaint is about a staff member, the staff member, in most instances, will be told of the complaint and will have the right of reply. You have the right to have a support person participate throughout the process. The aim is to achieve an effective resolution for all parties. Complaints should be delivered in a calm and reasoned manner. Making deliberately false, misleading and frivolous or vexatious complaints should be avoided. Complaints should be made in a timely manner. Complaints should be based on factual information. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> All complaints are documented. Complaints are recorded & reported to the Principal as soon as possible / practicable after receiving the complaint. Documents relating to the complaint are kept & stored in accordance with relevant departmental policies & procedures. (<i>Ref: Information Management & Access to Records Held in Schools.</i>) Information in the documentation: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Uses objective language. Clearly states the facts. Contains information in chronological order as practically as possible. Uses quotation marks where appropriate & necessary Is written neatly & legibly in biro or pen. Clear unambiguous language is used. Where necessary corrections are dated & initialled. Includes: author's signature & designation; time & date of complaint | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The complaint to be resolved at the first point of contact. If complaint cannot be resolved at the first point of contact, the complaint is acknowledged within 5 working days by telephone, in person, by email or in writing. <p style="text-align: center;">THE 4 KEY PHASES OF COMPLAINTS MANAGEMENT</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Phase 1: Receiving and clarifying the complaint. Phase 2: Deciding how to handle the complaint. Phase 3: Finding out about the complaint. Phase 4: Making decisions about the complaint. <i>(optional phase) Phase 5: Review of a complaint outcome.</i> |

| PHASE 1: RECEIVING AND CLARIFYING A COMPLAINT | |
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| Any staff member can receive a complaint | |
| Questions you might ask about delivering a complaint? | When staff receive a verbal complaint from you they will: |
| <p>How will staff react when you deliver your complaint: Staff will:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Be respectful and helpful • Give you their undivided attention. • Not become defensive • Not apportion blame • Remain positive • Not perceive anger as a personal attack. <p>How should you deliver your complaint? We ask that when you make a complaint you state your concerns:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Calmly • Clearly • Courteously <p>Can you have a support person with you when you make a complaint? Yes Complaints are sometimes made with the assistance of an advocate, interpreter, or by a third party as agreed between you, as the complainant, and the principal. In this case, staff will receive & clarify a complaint from more than one person.</p> <p>How soon can you expect your complaint to be resolved?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Many complaints are resolved at the first point of contact with information and/or explanation, together with an apology and recognition of the effect the situation has had on the person. • You may also receive an undertaking that action will be taken to prevent the problem recurring. <p>What happens if your complaint is not / cannot be resolved immediately by the staff member?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Your complaint will be referred to the principal as soon as is practicable. • If your complaint is a verbal complaint, you will be advised of the options of: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Putting your complaint in writing or ○ Assisting the staff member to record, in writing, the particulars of your complaint. ○ If you choose to put your complaint in writing, no further action will be taken until the written complaint is received. <p>If you wish to register a formal complaint verbally what process is followed by the staff member you give it to?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The staff member will make a written outline of the issues concerned. • The record will be read to you, with the opportunity for appropriate amendments. • You will be asked to sign and date the written version of the complaint. • The staff member will also sign and date this written version with their designation. E.g. Year 2 teacher, Airville State School, 14th March, 2016. <p>What if you do not wish to sign or confirm a written recording of a verbal complaint?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The staff member notes the refusal to sign on the written complaint. • You will be informed that this refusal will be noted and that the process will be on the staff member's interpretation of notes only. • You may not, at a later date, make another complaint based on a lack of satisfaction with this record of complaint. <p>Do you have to sign off on a verbal complaint taken over the phone? No You will however, be asked to provide verbal confirmation of the issues that have been recorded.</p> <p>What if the complaint is about a P&C service? Complaints about P&C services at the school should be directed to the P&C in the first instance.</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Listen carefully to the issues being raised. • Summarise the issues • Check that they understand what you, as the complainant, are telling them. • Empathise & acknowledge your feelings. • Ascertain your desired outcome as a result of the complaint. • Inform you that you may use the support of a third party in progressing the complaint, if they feel this is needed. • Resolve the complaint (if possible) or reassure you that an appropriate staff member will address your complaint. • Advise you what will happen with your complaint. • Thank you for communicating your complaint to them. • If the complaint made relates to a report about harm (whether physical/emotional/sexual) of a student under 18 years attending a state educational institution staff are required to follow Student Protection procedure for all Education Qld employees. <p>Written complaints procedures:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • All are date stamped • All are forwarded to the principal <p>Anonymous complaints procedures:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The complainant, if possible, is informed of the possible limitations associated with making an anonymous complaint. |

| PHASE 2: DECIDING HOW TO HANDLE THE COMPLAINT |
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| Record of Complaint: The principal ensures that records of a complaint and any referral of a complaint are kept for either internal or external review. | | |
| Role of the staff member when a complaint is received: | Role of the principal when received or having a complaint referred: | Co-ordination of complaints: |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Begin the process of making an assessment about a complaint from the moment they receive the complaint. • Make an assessment in the first instance about whether the issue can be dealt with as a: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Concern or ○ Complaint. • If they are not the principal, refer the complainant or the complaint to the principal for addressing. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Decide whether to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Take no action ○ Attempt to resolve the complaint through resolution strategies such as mediation. ○ Refer the complainant to the relevant internal or external agency, if required. ○ Initiate an investigation of the complaint, within the school if further information is required. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The principal has the final responsibility for the management of all complaints that relate to school management issues under his/her jurisdiction. • The complaint can be referred to another staff member in the school for action. <p>Complaints relating to departmental policy or a departmental policy position:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The complainant is advised to take their complaint to Regional Office –(contact details to be given to complainant) <p>Complaints in relation to official misconduct, student protection or a perceived breach of privacy:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The complaint is directed to the Ethical Standards Unit and the Legal Administrative Law Branch. |

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| PHASE 3: FINDING OUT ABOUT THE COMPLAINT | | |
| The principal or delegate gathers all the necessary facts about the complaint while keeping in mind the principles of natural justice to all concerned. | | |
| The principal or delegate investigates a complaint by: | | |
| Collecting & analysing information relevant to the matter. | Working collaboratively with all involved | Finding the facts related to the matter. |
| Identifying any contributing factors to the matter. | Consulting the relevant DET Procedure Register on issues that relates to the complaint. | Documenting the investigation report or outcome. |

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| PHASE 4: MAKING A DECISION ABOUT THE COMPLAINT | |
| Who makes a decision on the complaint? | Notification procedures: |

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| <p>The principal or delegate.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Based on facts gathered in Phase 3 about the complaint, the principal or delegate makes a decision on the complaint. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Within 28 days of the receipt of the complaint, the principal will provide the complainant with either: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> A written response, including reasons for the decision or A written notification that their complaint has been referred to an internal or external agency. |
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| PHASE 5: REVIEW | |
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| <p>To be implemented if the complainant is not satisfied with the response to his/her complaint.</p> | |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The complainant will be encouraged to discuss the response further with the school principal. If required the complainant may be advised to contact the principal's supervisor, the Executive Director, Schools at Regional Office (Name of Executive Director and contact details to be provided to complainant) | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> A further review of the decision will also be available from the Queensland Ombudsman as described in Making a Complaint. http://education.qld.gov.au/schools/about/pdfs/making_a_complaint.pdf |

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| <p><i>Principal:</i> <i>Airville State School</i></p>  <p><i>Marian Bugeja</i></p> | <p><i>Assistant Regional Director</i> <i>Northern Region</i></p>  <p><i>Reid Thompson</i></p> |
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Reviewed and approved: April 2017