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Policy Manual	901 Parent/Guardian Concerns and Complaints	Issue: 2.0 Date: 08/10

Rationale

The Parent/Guardian Concerns and Complaints policy encourages parents/guardians to raise any issues they have with the school so that they can be dealt with promptly and resolved to the satisfaction of all concerned in the most appropriate manner.

Goals

- The school will make every effort to resolve concerns and complaints before involving other levels of the Department of Education and Early Childhood Development (DEECD).
- To address and resolve complaints promptly.
- To inform parents/guardians of the complaints process.
- To provide a safe and supportive learning environment.
- To build relationships between students, parents/guardians and staff.
- To provide a safe working environment for staff.

Guidelines

- During this process all parties must maintain and respect privacy and confidentiality.
- Ensure all parties act in good faith and in a calm and courteous manner; show respect and understanding; recognise rights and responsibilities of all parties and ensure that they are balanced.
- The school should ensure parent/guardian complaints are addressed promptly within agreed timelines where possible.
- Acknowledge that a common goal is to achieve an outcome, acceptable to all parties.
- The following hierarchy is to be followed by all parties until the issue is resolved:
 - 1) The complainant must clarify the issue promptly, rationally and without bias.
 - 2) The complainant contacts the appropriate school personnel (class teacher, year level coordinator) via telephone, visit or writing and provides complete and factual information about the concern or complaint.
 - 3) The complainant contacts the Principal or Assistant Principal via telephone, in person or in writing and provides complete and factual information about issues relating to staff members or complex student issues.
 - 4) The complainant contacts the Principal via telephone, visit or writing and provides complete and factual information about issue relating to school policy, school management, staff members or very complex student issues.
 - 5) If the concern or complaint remains unresolved the complainant is to contact the regional office.
 - 6) If the concern or complaint still remains unresolved the complainant is to contact the DEECD central office in writing.
- A complaint is considered to be unresolved if the complainant does not agree on a course of action and/or a remedy or if the remedy can not be implemented. In such cases the school must involve its regional office to assist in resolving the complaint.
- Each step in the process is expanded and explained to parents/guardians via meetings, newsletters.
- Staff are informed and educated on the process.
- A complainant can seek the services of an advocate when they feel they are unable to express their concern clearly. An advocate can be a friend or someone who is available through an appropriate support organisation who does not receive a fee for the service.
- All parties involved in addressing a complaint may seek the services of a mediator when there is difficulty coming to an agreement.
- Principal and Assistant Principal to document complaints including all necessary detail: names, dates, form of complaint, brief description, action taken, outcome and recommendations.
- Principal to ensure that policy and procedures are consistent with the DEECD policy.
- The policy is to be published in the school newsletter annually.