



WARBURTON PRIMARY SCHOOL

Concerns and Complaints Policy

Objectives - Policy statement

Warburton Primary School's approach to handling concerns and complaints is based on our values of:

- Respect - for others, ourselves and our environment.
- Relationships - providing support and compassion for each other.
- Personal Best - striving for success in all endeavours and celebrating achievements.
- Integrity - honest, open and responsible actions.

For the purposes of this 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. A **complaint** is an expression of grievance or resentment where the complainant is seeking redress of justice.

Warburton Primary School is committed to treating everyone with dignity and respect and encourages positive communication between parents and school staff. Schools, regions and the central office act in accordance with the Department of Education and Training's concerns and complaints policy and processes when managing complaints.

All concerns and complaints lodged with the Department about a Government school are addressed in line with the relevant professional and administrative standards and in accordance with obligations and rights afforded under Victorian legislative and regulatory frameworks. These include the *Education and Training Reform Act 2006*, the *Charter of Human Rights and Responsibilities Act 2006* and the *Equal Opportunity Act 2010*.

Expectations

The school expects a person raising a concern or complaint to:

- 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 confidentiality of all parties
- Refrain from airing grievances to third parties or other member of the school community
- 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



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- Show respect and understanding of each other's point of view and value difference, rather than judge and blame
- Recognise that all parties have rights and responsibilities which must be balanced.

Procedures

- The school should always be the first point of contact for all parent/guardian concerns or complaints. The school needs to know if there are concerns about a child's education or wellbeing. Teaching and learning work best when parents and teachers talk to each other and work together to solve any problems.
- Parents should contact their child's teacher either by phone or email to arrange a meeting time.
- In preparation for the meeting, parents are advised to plan what they are going to say and also to have some ideas about how the problem could be resolved realistically.
- Parents/guardians 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 service.
- Both parents and staff are advised to keep notes of any such meetings.
- Where a satisfactory agreement or resolution cannot be reached between the teacher and parent, the Principal should be contacted and a meeting will be arranged. Such meetings will be timely and held at the earliest possible convenience of the parents and staff.
- The school will make every effort to resolve concerns and complaints before involving other levels of the Department.
- If the matter is still not resolved parents are encouraged to contact the **Community Liaison Officer at the North-Eastern Victoria Regional office on 9265 2400.**
- The Community Liaison Officers will then facilitate discussions between the school and families.
- Where resolution still cannot be reached, parents may send a complaint in writing to:



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Deputy Secretary, Regional Services Group
C/o Manager, School Operations and Governance Unit
GPO Box 4367, Melbourne 3001
E: community.stakeholders@edumail.vic.gov.au

- Parents are encouraged to ask for copies of the school's policies and procedures for further clarification.

Communication of this policy

The school will publish this policy on its website and in its newsletter. The school will brief all members of staff (including volunteers) about its procedures to address concerns and complaints annually.

Policy Review

This policy will be reviewed every three years as part of the school's periodic review cycle.

Date Ratified at School Council 7th September 2016

Principal signature _____

School Council President signature _____

Next Review Date _____