



Floreat Park Primary School - Complaints Policy 2016

Rationale:

Parents, teachers and schools together play a vital role in every child's learning. It is our shared responsibility to ensure that every child reaches their individual potential academically, socially, physically and emotionally. As part of this joint responsibility, positive relationships between home and school are vital. One of the keys to creating and maintaining positive relationships is open and effective communication. It is important therefore that if there are concerns to be raised, there is a fair and productive procedure in place to manage them, with the aim of achieving a positive outcome for all involved.

Guiding Principles:

Floreat Park Primary School is committed to responding promptly, fairly and helpfully to parent and caregiver concerns. As such, it is important that any concerns are directed to the most appropriate person at the school. Concerns may be made either verbally or in writing.

Objectives:

- To ensure that complaints lodged at this school are resolved in a prompt and efficient manner.
- To promote the highest standard of professionalism when dealing with our community.

Policy:

Staff members at this school are responsible for managing the resolution of disputes and complaints lodged with us. We will make every effort to promptly resolve disputes and complaints lodged with us according to the principles of procedural fairness.

Where we cannot resolve a complaint, the complainant, Principal or District Director can forward written complaints to the Director General of the Department of Education.

Making a Complaint:

Complaints can be made - 1. verbally 2. by letter 3. by email

In some circumstances an issue will not be resolved because the judgment would have been made in the best interests of the whole school and not just the isolated incident that led to the complaint.

Steps to follow when making a complaint:

- 1. Clarify your Concerns.** - Before raising your concern with the school, consider and clarify the issues in your own mind. Be fair and rational, and gather as many factual supporting details as you can. You are representing your individual concerns, not the views of others. Everyone at the school has the same and full entitlement to raise concerns that involve them or their child. In many cases, your inquiry or concern is best directed to the classroom teacher and all teachers and staff have an 'open door' policy.

Minimum information needed when making a complaint:

You should provide the following information when making a complaint:

- your name and contact details;
- copies of any relevant correspondence or documents relating directly to the complaint;
- the nature of the complaint; and In the case of a verbal complaint, where you do not want to be identified or to lodge the complaint in writing, we will endeavour to work directly with you to resolve the matter.
- any concern must only be in relation to your child; you cannot speak on behalf of anyone else.

- 2. Arrange to Speak with Your Classroom Teacher.** - In many circumstances, the classroom teacher is best placed to hear and discuss any concerns. Inquiries regarding academic progress, general behaviour, homework, assessment, attendance and social or emotional wellbeing are best discussed with your teacher. You are welcome to either contact the teacher directly, verbally or in writing, to arrange a suitable time to speak with them. When discussing concerns remember the best interests of your child are foremost in mind. Once you have agreed on a path forward, arrange a follow-up form of communication to share progress and gain feedback. Finding solutions agreeable to everyone is a shared responsibility. The teacher will document the complaint and any agreed course of action. Both the parent and teacher are to sign the documented copy.

3. If unresolved, involve a Deputy Principal / Principal (depending upon the availability of one or other). Most concerns can be resolved at the classroom level. However, sometimes concerns are broader than the classroom, or a satisfactory outcome may not have been reached with the classroom teacher. In such cases, concerns can be directed, verbally or in writing, to the Deputy or Principal.

They will promptly hear your concerns and manage them in a way that is fair and reasonable to all parties. This may require one or several face-to-face meetings and other forms of communication.

To aid a satisfactory and positive outcome, provide as much factual information as you can and be accepting of the need for the Deputy or Principal to consider impacts on the greater school community. Anonymous concerns are only acted upon if enough information is provided for suitable follow-up.

Complaints can be lodged with the school using any of the contact methods listed above. Written complaints should be addressed.

"PRIVATE AND CONFIDENTIAL".

The Principal
Floreat Park Primary School
38 Chandler Ave West
Floreat 6014

4. Exceptional circumstances. - It may be necessary to contact an authority outside of the school to address your concerns. Generally, this is if your concern has not been resolved by the above procedures, or if there is a valid reason for not raising your concern with the school directly. In such cases, the Department of Education's relevant Regional Office is the most appropriate contact point. It should be noted that in the event of a complaint going to a higher body it is always directed back to the school for a response. In many cases this makes a huge workload for the school and impacts significantly across a range of day to day operational matters. Some complaints may take several working days and sometimes weeks or even months out of a principal's schedule.

To do this contact:

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Complaints Management
North Metropolitan Regional Office
PO Box 1126
Innaloo City,
Western Australia, 6918

Responsiveness:

Floreat Park Primary School will acknowledge written complaints within 5 school days. We seek to resolve local complaints within 14 days. If because of the serious nature of the complaint, it is deemed necessary to forward it on to another section of the Department, we will do this without delay. In all cases you will be kept informed of the progress of your complaint.

Enquiring on a complaints progress:

You may enquire as to the progress of your complaint at any time by directly contacting the appropriate person. At the time of lodging a verbal complaint, or in the acknowledgment letter for a written complaint, this person will be identified for you. Directing a large number of emails to the school administration daily, hourly does not resolve an issue more quickly. One email being sent and giving the recipient time to give an informed response is preferable.

Outcome of a complaint:

Floreat Park Primary School will advise you verbally or in writing of the outcome of the complaint. Confirmation of the outcome of all written complaints will be provided to you in writing.

Rejecting a Complaint:

Complaints judged to be vexatious, trivial or without substance, or where it is judged to not warrant further action, will not be progressed. You will be advised of this decision in writing.

Definitions:**Complaint:**

The expression of dissatisfaction with any aspect of government education. It may be general in nature or relate to particular staff, a part of the organisation, a policy or a decision. Any person may lodge a complaint, however staff employed by the Department of Education cannot use this process if they are acting in an official capacity. A complaint must contain sufficient detail to enable it to be addressed and recorded.

Locally Managed Complaint:

A verbal or written complaint made in relation to a school or staff member, and managed by the school.

Centrally Managed Complaint:

A complaint lodged in writing with the Director General of the Department of Education, and managed at Central Office may be redirected to the local level to be managed if it is deemed appropriate.

Complainant:

A person or persons lodging a complaint.

As outlined in the Australian Standards AS 4269-1995 our complaints handling policy demonstrates:

Commitment:

We recognise your right to complain and to have your complaint dealt with seriously.

Fairness:

We understand the need to be fair in our complaints handling processes.

Resources:

We have adequate resources for effective handling of complaints.

Visibility:

Our complaints handling processes are available from our website on: <http://www.floreatparkps.wa.edu.au/about-us/policies/>

Access:

We accept complaints lodged by phone or in writing.

Assistance:

Upon request, we will provide a complainant with the support needed to formulate and lodge a complaint.

Responsiveness:

Complaints will be dealt with quickly and efficiently.

Charges:

There will be no charge to the complainant for the raising of a complaint with us.

Remedies:

Where a complaint results in the identification of changes that should be made to our processes, those changes will be made.

Data Collection:

Data about complaints lodged with our school is collected and recorded.

Systemic and Recurring Problems:

Complaints are regularly analysed for the identification and addressing of systemic and recurring problems.

Accountability:

We report our complaints handling processes against our documented performance standards.

Reviews:

The School Board reviews this policy every two years.