



TINTINARA AREA SCHOOL

PARENT COMPLAINT POLICY

TOGETHER ACHIEVE SUCCESS

Introduction:

Conflict can often result from misunderstandings. Therefore it is important that the school and home have open and transparent lines of communication and a 'no blame approach' to any issue that may arise. Student learning is at the centre of everything we do including the social and emotional well being of students. It is acknowledged that some issues may require higher level intervention as an initial starting point. Wherever possible individuals should adhere to the process outlined to seek satisfactory resolution to grievances.

Grievance Procedures:

Rights and responsibilities of the individuals involved

- To communicate honestly
- To reflect on the issue or concern
- To seek constructive solutions
- To expect opinions to be heard and sought
- To be supported throughout the process
- To be listened to
- To be given the opportunity to present all sides to an issue
- To maintain confidentiality
- To expect that agreed actions are adhered to
- To have the right to information according to DECD policies
- To consult outside agencies at any stage of the proceedings
- To have the matter dealt with in a timely manner

Guidelines:

- Raise the issue with the school in a calm and rational manner, bearing in mind that you have one side of an issue.
- Be prepared to talk specifics. That is, be prepared to talk about your own child and a particular incident.
- Parents can use an advocate (support person) to assist them in raising an issue.
- The grievances need to be kept confidential.
- At times, you may seek support from friends to gauge their reaction. It is important to do this wisely.
- At all times, it is important for the student's sake that the school and the teacher are not criticised in the student's hearing.
- When a grievance is discussed, the student involved needs to hear that there is confidence that it will be resolved at the school level.
- The school can only deal with issues that are raised in this way. If we are not approached about any concerns, then we assume that all is well.

Process:

Issues need to be raised in a confidential manner directly with the school and steps 1-4 should be followed through before activating Step 5.

- Step 1** Appointment made by parent/caregiver with the classroom teacher concerned.
(This makes the most productive use of the time available – as the teacher is free to give you their full attention)
- Step 2** If dissatisfied make an appointment with the Coordinator / Assistant Principal
- Step 3** If dissatisfied make an appointment with the Principal.
- Step 4** Meet with the Principal. Other staff involved may be invited to participate in this meeting, to ensure the most effective use of time.
- This could be followed up with a phone call at later times to monitor the situation.
 - It may also result in a further discussion with the parents, class teacher and Principal.
 - It might include inviting outside support for the family or school, e.g. Guidance Officer, Social Worker, Behaviour Management Coordinator, Murray Mallee Community Health.
- Step 5** Contact the Department for Education Customer Feedback Unit on 1800 677 435 which has the following functions.
- To provide advice and support to parents about their concern or complaint – this advice can be provided at any step in the process.
 - To review complaints that have not been resolved at the school or regional level
- The Customer Feedback Unit will aim to resolve the matter within 35 working days in most cases***
- Step 6** If after steps 1-5, parents are still dissatisfied contact the Ombudsman at **www.ombudsman.sa.gov.au**

At Tintinara Area School we actively encourage parents/caregivers/students to raise issues they may have with the school or member of staff in a positive and constructive way.

A Governing Council member would generally consult with the Principal to help you identify the appropriate forum for raising a matter.

A general school matter or policy issue may be considered on the agenda of Governing Council or at a staff meeting or raised with an individual depending upon the nature of the concern.

We appreciate your support, and know that we will “Together Achieve Success”.