



Mernda Primary School 0488

DEALING CONSTRUCTIVELY WITH PARENT COMPLAINTS POLICY

RATIONALE

At Mernda Primary School it is recognised that parent complaints, are a part of any school environment and that as professionals we should act on them in a proactive manner, using them to provide impetus for school improvement. Parents need to know that their concerns are taken seriously and that a fair process has been undertaken to arrive at a resolution.

GUIDELINES

- The support of the community and their satisfaction with the school are critical to our interests and those of our students.
- The way in which we approach complaints made by parents reflects our school culture and values, the professional and personal competence of the staff, and the soundness of our procedures.
- Parents and students are the best, and most active, “public relations” and school promotion advocates.
- There is an increase in the expectations on schools, and in the culture of accountability and continuous improvement, we must ensure that we are positive in all issues with which we deal.
- There has been a general increase in the volatility of school communities. We must be prepared to deal constructively with any situation which may begin as a minor complaint but can escalate.
- We need to acknowledge the rights of both parents and students and be positive in catering for their needs.
- School staff and other personnel need to create an environment that communicates to parents that we perceive them as valued clients.
- The need for confidentiality and discretion will be stressed to all

AIM

- To resolve the difficulty.
- To achieve school improvement.
- To consolidate/improve relationships for all parties involved.
- To demonstrate personal and professional integrity.
- To maintain everyone’s health and well being.
- To aim for elegant solutions:- Win-Win solution Win-Win approach (Win-win is a belief in the Third Alternative. It’s not your way or my way: it’s a better way. Stephen Covey)
- Dealing Constructively with Parent Complaints Policy March 2011

Implementation

- 1 Listen objectively
- 2 Acknowledge that the parents have a concern
- 3 Refer to relevant DET regulations and local documentation where available
- 4 Define and separate the needs rather than the wants
- 5 Document everything – particularly undertakings
- 6 Be clear about agreements
- 7 Consider all stakeholders and their issues
- 8 Maintain contact with the parents
- 9 If appropriate, engage all involved parties to work together to solve the problem as
 1. A sound strategy for working through the complaints. This is a powerful form of
 2. Internal mediation.
- 10 Parents should accept the outcome if they are satisfied that a fair process has been followed.
- 11 The first point of contact by parents with concerns should be the relevant staff member. If the problem is not satisfactorily resolved in this forum, parents and/or staff may arrange a meeting with the Principal who will determine next course of action.

Problem Solving Procedure: who should be involved at this level? Staff/ principal/parents/student for internal mediation:

- 1 Consider issues, needs and common ideas
- 2 Brainstorm the options
- 3 Design a plan of action and acquire agreement
- 4 Activate the plan
- 5 Evaluate and then Review the plan if required.

EVALUATION

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

This policy was last ratified by School Council on	18th May 2013
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