

## Parent Complaints

### POLICY

Ripponlea Primary School (RPS) has developed procedures to address parent complaints.

### PURPOSE

This policy outlines RPS procedures to effectively manage complaints to ensure a safe and supportive learning environment for students and staff, and to build a strong positive relationship between school, parents or guardians.

### IMPLEMENTATION

#### 1. Raising complaints

In the first instance a complaint should be made to the school. The complainant should telephone, arrange a visit or write to:

- a) the student's teacher about learning issues and incidents that happened in their class or group;
- b) the assistant principal about issues relating to staff members or complex student issues referred from the classroom teacher;
- c) the principal about issues relating to school policy, school management, staff members or very complex student issues.

#### 2. Responsibility of claimant

Any person raising a complaint should:

- a) do so as soon as possible after the issue occurs;
- b) provide complete factual information about the complaint;
- c) respect the privacy and confidentiality of all parties;
- d) acknowledge that the common goal is to achieve an outcome acceptable to all parties;
- e) act in good faith and in a calm and courteous manner;
- f) show respect for and understanding of others' points of view, rather than judge or blame;
- g) recognise that all parties have rights and responsibilities which must be balanced.

#### 3. Responsibility of school

The school will address any complaints received from parents:

- a) professionally, efficiently and fairly;
- b) promptly, or within the timeline agreed by all parties;

- c) in accordance with due process, principles or natural justice and the department's regulatory framework.

<http://www.education.vic.gov.au/school/principals/spag/community/Pages/parentcomplaints.aspx>

#### 4. Help with raising complaints

Complainants can seek the services of an advocate when they feel they are unable to express their complaint 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. All parties involved in addressing a complaint may seek the services of a mediator when there is difficulty coming to an agreement.

#### 5. Managing parent complaints information

The school will record the following details of all complaints received, even if the complaint appears to be minor. In the first instance when the complaint is easily resolved in a conversation, a brief note in the school's/principal's/teacher's diary recording the issue and the resolution is all that is necessary. Subsequently, the following will be documented:

- a) name and contact details (with permission) of the person with a complaint;
- b) the date the complaint made;
- c) the form in which the complaint was received such as face to face, by telephone, in writing, by email;
- d) a brief description of the complaint;
- e) details of the school officer responding to the complaint;
- f) action taken on the complaint;
- g) the outcome of action taken on the complaint;
- h) any recommendations for future improvement in the school's policy or procedures.

#### 6. Addressing complaints

- a) The school will make every effort to resolve complaints before involving other levels of the Department.
- b) The school will give a complainant a copy of its complaints policy.
- c) The school will determine whether a complaint should be managed through the school's complaints process or through other complaints processes of the Department.
- d) The school will acknowledge all written complaints in writing. It will provide the complainant with a timeline for investigating the complaint.
- e) The school will investigate all complaints and will provide a response to the complainant.

## 7. Referral of complaints

If a person with a complaint is not satisfied with the outcome determined by the school, they should contact the Education Department's appropriate regional office.

South Eastern Victoria Region

Email: [sevr@edumail.vic.gov.au](mailto:sevr@edumail.vic.gov.au)

Dandenong office

Postal address: PO Box 5, Dandenong, Victoria 3175

Location: 165-169 Thomas Street, Dandenong, Victoria 3175

Phone: 03 8765 5600

Fax: 03 8765 5784

## 8. Communication

The school will make this policy readily available to parents and the school community. It will be:

- a) published on the school's website;
- b) available in hard copy from the office.

References:

<http://www.education.vic.gov.au/school/principals/spag/community/Pages/parentcomplaints.aspx>

Ratified by School Council: October 2016

Next review date 2019