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CONCERNS & COMPLAINTS POLICY



Help for non-English speakers

If you need help to understand the information in this policy please contact the school office.

Purpose

The purpose of this policy is to:

- provide an outline of the complaints process at Glengarry Primary School so that students and parents and members of the community are informed of how they can raise complaints or concerns about issues arising at our school
- ensure that all complaints regarding Glengarry Primary School are managed in a timely, effective, fair and respectful manner.

Scope

This policy relates to complaints brought by parents, carers, students or members of our school community and applies to all matters relating to our school. In some limited instances, we may need to refer the complainant to another Department of Education and Training process where there are different mechanisms in place to review certain decisions, for example, expulsion appeals.

Policy

Glengarry Primary School welcomes feedback, both positive and negative, and is committed to continuous improvement. We value open communication with our families and are committed to understanding complaints and addressing them appropriately. We recognise that the complaints process provides an important opportunity for reflection and learning.

We value and encourage open and positive relationships with our school community. We understand that it is in the best interests of students for there to be a trusting relationship between families and our school.

When addressing a complaint, it is expected that all parties will:

- be considerate of each other's views and respect each other's role
- be focused on resolution of the complaint, with the interests of the student involved at the centre
- act in good faith and cooperation
- behave with respect and courtesy and demonstrate our school values
- respect the privacy and confidentiality of those involved, as appropriate
- operate within and seek reasonable resolutions that comply with any applicable legislation and Department policy
- recognise that schools and the Department may be subject to legal constraints on their ability to act or disclose information in some circumstances.



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Preparation for raising a concern or complaint

Glengarry Primary School encourages parents, carers or members of the community who may wish to submit a complaint to:

- carefully consider the issues you would like to discuss
- remember you may not have all the facts relating to the issues that you want to raise
- think about how the matter could be resolved
- be informed by checking the policies and guidelines set by the Department and Glengarry Primary School (see "Further Information and Resources" section below).

Raising a concern

Glengarry Primary School is always happy to discuss with parents/carers and community members any concerns that they may have. Concerns in the first instance should be directed to your child's classroom teacher. Concerns that relate to school policy and procedures should be directed to either the Assistant Principal or Principal. Where possible, school staff will work with you to ensure that your concerns are appropriately addressed.

Making a complaint

Where concerns cannot be resolved in this way, parents or community members may wish to make a formal complaint. Formal complaints will be directed to a member of the school's leadership team. Complaints involving students' academic progress or teaching and learning will be directed to the Assistant Principal and complaints involving student engagement, wellbeing and behaviour will be directed to the Wellbeing Leader and or Principal.

If you would like to make a formal complaint, in most cases, depending on the nature of the complaint raised, our school will first seek to understand the issues and will then convene a resolution meeting with the aim of resolving the complaint together.

The following process will apply:

1. **Complaint received:** Please either email, telephone or arrange a meeting through the front office. (Please note that if an issue, concern or complaint has not yet been raised and discussed with your child's classroom teacher, your concern will be directed to them).

Concerns that have not been resolved after this process, will be directed by the office to the relevant member of staff. When you contact the office, please outline your complaint so that we can fully understand what the issues are. We can discuss your complaint in a way that is convenient for you, whether in writing, in person or over the phone.

Matters related to teaching and learning will be directed to the Assistant Principal and matters related to student engagement, wellbeing and behaviour will be directed to either the Wellbeing Leader or Principal.



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- 2. Information gathering:** Depending on the issues raised in the complaint, the Principal, Assistant Principal, Wellbeing Leader or nominee may need to gather further information to properly understand the situation. This process may also involve speaking to others to obtain details about the situation or the concerns raised.
- 3. Response:** Where possible, a resolution meeting will be arranged with the relevant person to discuss the complaint with the objective of reaching a resolution satisfactory to all parties. If after the resolution meeting we are unable to resolve the complaint together, we will work with you to produce a written summary of the complaint in the event you would like to take further action about it. In some circumstances, the Principal may determine that a resolution meeting would not be appropriate. In this situation, a response to the complaint will be provided in writing.
- 4. Timelines:** Glengarry Primary School will acknowledge receipt of your complaint as soon as possible (usually within two school days) and will seek to resolve complaints in a timely manner. Depending on the complexity of the complaint, Glengarry Primary School may need some time to gather enough information to fully understand the circumstances of your complaint. We will endeavour to complete any necessary information gathering and hold a resolution meeting where appropriate within 10 working days of the complaint being raised. In situations where further time is required, Glengarry Primary School will consult with you and discuss any interim solutions to the dispute that can be put in place.

Resolution

Where appropriate, Glengarry Primary School may seek to resolve a complaint by:

- an apology or expression of regret
- a change of decision
- a change of policy, procedure or practice
- offering the opportunity for student counselling or other support
- other actions consistent with school values that are intended to support the student, parent and school relationship, engagement, and participation in the school community.

In some circumstances, Glengarry Primary School may also ask you to attend a meeting with an independent third party, or participate in a mediation with an accredited mediator to assist in the resolution of the dispute.

Escalation

If you are not satisfied that your complaint has been resolved by the school, or if your complaint is about the Principal and you do not want to raise it directly with them, then the complaint should be referred to the Department of Education and Training, Gippsland Regional Office by contacting 1300 338 738.

Glengarry Primary School may also refer a complaint to the Department of Education and Training Gippsland Regional Office if we believe that we have done all we can to address the complaint.

For more information about the Department's *Parent Complaints* policy, including the role of the Regional Office, please see: [Parent complaints policy](#).



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Record keeping and other requirements

To meet Department and legal requirements, our school must keep written records of:

- Serious, substantial or unusual complaints
- Complaints relating to the Child Information Sharing Scheme and Family Violence Information Sharing Scheme, to meet regulatory requirements - refer to Child and Family Violence Information Sharing Schemes for further information

Our school also follows Department policy to ensure that record-keeping, reporting, privacy and employment law obligations are met when responding to complaints or concerns.

Complaints and concerns process for students

Glengarry PS acknowledges that issues or concerns can cause stress or worry for students and impact their wellbeing and learning. Glengarry PS encourages our students to raise issues or concerns as they arise so that we can work together to resolve them.

Students with a concern or complaint can raise them with a trusted adult at school, for example, with their classroom teacher, Wellbeing staff, Koorie Education Support Officers, Education Support staff. This person will take your concern or complaint seriously and will explain to you what steps we can take to try to resolve the issue and support you.

You can also ask your parent, carer or another trusted adult outside of the school, to talk to us about the issue instead.

Further information and resources to support students to raise issues or concerns are available at:

- [Report Racism Hotline](#) (call 1800 722 476) - this hotline enables students to report concerns relating to racism or religious discrimination
- [Reach Out](#)
- [Headspace](#)
- [Kids Helpline](#) (call 1800 55 1800)
- [Victorian Aboriginal Education Association](#) (VAEAI)

COMMUNICATION

This policy will be communicated to our school community in the following ways

- Available publicly on school website
- Included in staff induction processes

FURTHER INFORMATION AND RESOURCES

The Department's Policy and Advisory Library (PAL):

- [Complaints - Parents](#)



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CONCERNS & COMPLAINTS POLICY


The Department's parents' website:

- [Raise a complaint or concern about your school](#)
- [Report racism or religious discrimination in schools](#)

Further information on our school's policies, including, including our school's *Statement of Values* can be found on our website, www.gps.vic.edu.au

APPROVAL AND REVIEW

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

Date Created	June 2022
Consultation	School Council - 17/08/2022 School Community via The Swoop 17/08/2022
Approval Authority (Signature and date)	 Julie Telford Acting Principal 17/08/222
Endorsed On	17/08/222
Next Review Date	As per GPS Policy Document List June 2024