



# POLICY 12

## Complaints

### Complaints policy

#### PURPOSE:

The purpose of this policy is to:

- provide an outline of the complaints process at Gordon Primary School so that 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 Gordon Primary School are managed in a timely, effective, fair and respectful manner.

#### IMPLEMENTATION:

Gordon 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
- 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.

#### Preparation for raising a concern or complaint

Gordon 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 Gordon Primary School see school code of conduct.

## Complaints process

- Parents with a concern or complaint relating to their child are encouraged to arrange a time to meet with their child's classroom teacher. Should they feel the matter remains unresolved, they should arrange a time to meet with the principal.
  - Parents with a concern or complaint regarding the conduct of any member of the school community should contact the principal.
- ◆ In regards to a formal complaint, the following process will apply:
1. **Complaint received:** Please either email, telephone or arrange a meeting through the front office with the Principal, to 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.
  2. **Information gathering:** Depending on the issues raised in the complaint, the Principal, 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 / phone call will be arranged with the Principal to discuss the complaint with the objective of reaching a resolution satisfactory to all parties. 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:** Gordon PS will acknowledge receipt of your complaint as soon as possible (usually within 48 hours) and will seek to resolve complaints in a timely manner. Depending on the complexity of the complaint, Gordon PS 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, Gordon PS will consult with you and discuss any interim solutions to the dispute that can be put in place.

## Resolution

Where appropriate, Gordon PS 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, Gordon PS 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 a parent or community member is not satisfied that their complaint has been resolved by the school, or if their complaint is about the Principal, then the complaint should be referred to the South Western Region of the department of Education.

Gordon PS may also refer a complaint to The South Western Region 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](#).

- 5. Timelines:** Gordon 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, Gordon 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, Gordon Primary School will consult with you and discuss any interim solutions to the dispute that can be put in place.

### **Communication of Policies**

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

- Included in staff induction processes and staff training
- Available publicly on our school's website
- Discussed at staff briefings/meetings as required
- Included in transition and enrolment packs
- Reminders in our school newsletter
- Hard copy available from school administration upon request

### **EVALUATION:**

This policy was last approved by school council **11.8.21**. **Due for review 11.8.24**