



## **APPLECROSS PRIMARY SCHOOL**

### **Raising a Concern with Us Policy & Procedure**

This policy is monitored regularly by school staff and reviewed annually. It is guided in its intent by the Disputes and Complaints Schools policy (2007). We apply this policy at Applecross Primary School. This document is the source for determining outcomes to procedural queries.

**Policy Review Date:** August 2023

#### **Rationale**

Applecross Primary School is a happy and productive place where students, staff and the community work closely together to maintain a vibrant place of learning. This culture of cohesion and co-operation is one that has been built upon since parents in the locality of Applecross in 1905 were successful in lobbying government authorities for a local school. A strong and respectful relationship is the foundation upon which a good school community is built.

Applecross Primary School prides itself on being an integral part of the Applecross community. As such there are legitimate occasions where parents or community members may wish to raise a concern with us.

An essential component of our school culture is the fostering of sound home/school relationships. In some cases, parents discuss what they feel are problems with other parents and choose not to notify the school. No problem can be solved if the school is not aware of it.

Meetings to discuss student progress or problems can be instigated by parents or teachers and are best organised in advance for before or after school or in teachers Duties Other Than Teaching time (DOTT).

If the concern is not resolved, parents or community members may choose to raise their concern formally through the process outlined in this document.

#### **POLICY – Department of Education; Effective 12 November 2007**

1. Employees of the Department of Education (the Department) are responsible for managing the resolution of enquiries, concerns, complaints and disputes lodged by students, parents, members of the community, employees of government and non-government agencies and the Department in their private capacity.
2. Employees of the Department will make every effort to promptly resolve enquiries, concerns and complaints preferably at the local level where appropriate, in accordance with the principles of procedural fairness.
3. Principals, directors and line managers are responsible for establishing and maintaining processes for managing and reviewing enquiries, concerns and complaints that are appropriately managed at the local level.
4. The Executive Director, Professional Standards and Conduct is responsible for resolving complaints that cannot be resolved at a local level.

## PRINCIPLES

The following principles apply to the management of all complaints:

- The process is accessible to all aggrieved parties and is underpinned by a commitment to cooperation on the part of Department of Education staff.
- Resolution at the local level is preferred, wherever it is appropriate to do so.
- Procedural fairness is afforded to all parties. This includes making every effort to investigate the perspective of all parties involved.
- The subject of the complaint is informed of the substance of the complaint.
- Vexatious, trivial or previously finalised issues are not pursued.
- Warranted investigation will be pursued with or without the active involvement of the complainant.
- Confidentiality is maintained, to the extent that it is consistent with legislative requirements and the other principles outlined in this section.
- Complaints are monitored and their management evaluated so as to reduce the occurrence of systemic and recurring problems.
- In all matters, the educational wellbeing of students is the first priority.
- All persons in the school community including students, parents, administrators, teachers and support staff, have a right to be treated with respect and courtesy.
- Complainants are able to make enquiries, raise concerns or lodge complaints about the provision of education or the conduct of Department employees and have these dealt with efficiently, fairly and promptly.
- Processes are to be straightforward and align to the Department's policies.
- Information about the process for making enquiries, raising concerns or complaints is to be available to parents, students and members of the local community.

<https://www.education.wa.edu.au/understand-the-complaints-process>

### Why might you want to talk to us?

#### Issues particular to your child:

- Attitude
- Academic progress
- Participation
- Behaviour
- How he/she gets along with teachers and other students socially and emotionally
- Physical development and well-being
- Development of responsibility
- Non-attendance or truancy
- Learning program issues
- Special events and celebrations
- Specialised learning programs
- Parent information booklets
- Parent information sessions

#### School or class issues:

- Quality of teaching
- Homework
- Learning environment
- General student behaviour
- Pastoral care for students
- Schools policies and procedures
- Conduct of staff including teaching and non-teaching
- A specific school program such as the Chaplaincy Program
- Issues related to the physical condition of the school

### Access to support services:

- School and regional level student services
- Visiting teachers for students with disabilities
- Visiting teachers for ESL students
- Specialist facilities - language development centres, intensive language centres, socio-psycho educational resource units, education support schools, centres and units
- Programs for students experiencing difficulties with learning
- Programs for gifted and talented students
- Instrumental music program

### PROCEDURE - Act as soon as you have a Concern!

Seeking information as early as possible can solve many problems. If you have any questions or concerns about your child's progress, the homework set or the assessment procedures, contact the class teacher. The best way to do this is to contact the school office to arrange a mutually convenient time for a telephone conversation or meeting.

Do this.....

- Try to identify the problem clearly before going to the school. If there is more than one problem, list them to ensure that the extent of the problem is clear to the school.
- Decide whether the problem is a query, a concern or a complaint. This will help in finding a solution.

Then do this...

- Decide with whom you want to raise your enquiry/concern

If it's your child's teacher, make an appointment to speak with them. This can be done via email, a note through your child, in person or arranged through the front office.

If your concern is about the conduct of a staff member, you may prefer to discuss the matter with a school administrator; either a deputy principal or the principal. In this case you can make an appointment through the front office (93641792) or through an email to the school's email address, ([applecross.ps@education.wa.edu.au](mailto:applecross.ps@education.wa.edu.au)).

If you decide you would prefer to make your concern known in writing as opposed to discussing it in person, then you can address your concern to either your child's teacher, a deputy principal or to the principal. Please ensure you mark any correspondence as **"Private and Confidential"**.

If your concern involves the principal, then you may wish to raise this with the Regional Executive Director. To do this via;

1. Telephone, by speaking to the Coordinator of Regional Operations on 9336 9563.
2. In writing, addressed to Regional Executive Director, South Metropolitan Education Region, 184 Hampton Road, Beaconsfield WA 6162 or post to PO Box 63 South Fremantle WA 6162.

Decide how you want to raise your concern; we (the school) would prefer you to raise your concern in a face to face conversation however if you feel you are not able to do this then there are other alternatives. You MAY want to make your enquiry in the form of;

- a. Verbal conversation
- b. Written letter
- c. Email
- d. By a third person who will act on your behalf through a face to face conversation

***Please note: We would consider it unreasonable if a third person raised a concern on your behalf in writing either by letter, email or SMS. In any of these cases we would not respond to the concern raised.***

#### **Points to consider when raising your concern**

- If you are writing or emailing your concern, be sure to include your name and contact details. This will help with providing you with an appropriate and timely response.
- Include copies of relevant correspondence or documents relating directly to your concern.
- The nature of your concern.
- What you consider is needed to resolve your concern.
- Attend any meetings with a willingness to discuss your issue calmly and rationally.
- When attending a meeting and if you feel you would like to have a support person with you then you are entitled to do so. Please ensure you advise the person you are meeting with that you will be supported by a third party during the meeting.
- Please be aware that a member of the school staff may (and is entitled to) choose to be supported during any face to face conversation. You will be advised prior to any meeting if this is to be the case.

#### ***Please be aware:***

***a. If you lodge your concern but in the course of dealing with your concern you do not wish to be identified by other parties we will endeavour to work directly with you to resolve the matter.***

***b. Try to stay calm. Even if you don't feel it, being calm will help to get your concerns across more clearly than if you are upset or angry. It may help to take someone with you.***

#### **Enquiring on the progress of the concern you have raised,**

You may enquire as to the progress of your concern at any time by directly contacting the appropriate person. At the time of lodging a verbal concern, or in the acknowledgement letter for a written concern, this person will be identified to you.

#### **What we will do after you have raised your concern**

- We will formally acknowledge receipt/awareness of your concern as soon as we have become aware of it. **Allow for up to 3 school days** for this. In the case of a concern being raised prior to school holidays the concern will be acknowledged within 3 **school days** from the beginning of the next school term.
- We will seek to resolve your concern within 14 **school days**.
- If we cannot resolve your concern we will offer you the option of forwarding your concern on to a departmental representative from the Metropolitan South Regional Education Office.

- If we initially consider your concern is of a serious enough nature to forward it on to another section of the Department of Education, we will do so without delay.

### **Outcome of a Concern**

- We will advise you either verbally or in writing of the outcome of your concern. The outcome of all concerns raised in writing will be provided to you in writing.
- Where your concern is judged to be vexatious, trivial or without substance, or where it is judged not to warrant further action; it will not be progressed. You will be advised of this decision in writing.
- If you are unsatisfied with our attempts to resolve your concern, you may wish to express your dissatisfaction to the Regional Executive Director. This should be addressed to;

Regional Executive Director

South Metropolitan Education Region,

184 Hampton Road, Beaconsfield WA 6162

or post to:

PO Box 63 South Fremantle WA 6162.

While such requests can be made verbally, it is preferable that they be made in writing. Help will be provided by us or the regional office, upon your request.

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