

# Sandy Creek Primary School



**SANDY CREEK  
Primary School**

RESPONSIBILITY RESPECT EXCELLENCE

## Parent Complaints Policy

**Current as of: August 2017**  
**To be Reviewed: May 2020**

<p><b>Definitions</b></p>	<p><b>'Parent'</b> - includes a guardian and every person who has parental responsibility for a student at Sandy Creek Primary School.</p> <p>A <b>'concern'</b> - is an issue of interest (because of its importance and effect) which is raised informally in order to improve or change a situation</p> <p>A <b>'complaint'</b> - is an expression of grievance or resentment where the parent is seeking redress or justice</p> <p><b>DECD</b> – is the Department for Education and Child Development</p>
<p><b>Core Beliefs</b></p>	<p>At Sandy Creek Primary School the education and wellbeing of our students is our first priority. All members of our school community, including students, parents, staff and volunteers have the right to be treated with courtesy and respect. Parents have the right to raise concerns and complaints about school, and this policy is designed to support parents through this process.</p>
<p><b>Responsibilities</b></p>	<p><b><u>When raising a concern or complaint with staff, parents can expect to:</u></b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Be treated with respect, courtesy and consideration</li> <li>• Have the complaint dealt with in a confidential and timely manner</li> <li>• Have access to appropriate and easily understandable information regarding the complaint resolution process</li> <li>• Have the complaint considered impartially and in accordance with due process and principles of natural justice</li> <li>• Be kept informed of the progress and outcome of their complaint</li> </ul> <p><b><u>We request that, when making a complaint parents will:</u></b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Raise concerns and complaints at an appropriate time and place</li> <li>• Treat other parties with respect, courtesy and maintain confidentiality</li> <li>• Refrain from using social media (such as Facebook) to raise concerns and complaints</li> <li>• Raise the concern or complaint as soon as possible after the issue has arisen</li> <li>• Provide complete and factual information about the concern or complaint</li> <li>• Ask for assistance or further information as needed</li> <li>• Act in good faith to achieve an outcome acceptable to all parties</li> <li>• Have realistic and reasonable expectations about what course of action is required to resolve the concern or complaint</li> </ul>
<p><b>Concerns and Complains</b></p>	<p>Parents can raise a concern or complaint about any aspect of the school's operations. This policy does not apply to matters where there are legislated requirements or existing policies and processes of appeal such as:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Complaints or appeals about student suspension and exclusion</li> <li>• Mandatory reporting responsibilities</li> </ul> <p>While all reasonable efforts will be made to address concerns and complaints some issues may never be resolved to a parent's satisfaction.</p>
<p><b>Concern and Complaint Resolution Stages for Parents</b></p>	<p>At any stage of this process parents can call the DECD Parent Complaint Unit hotline on 1800 677 435 for information, advice and support. Parents may also bring a support person to any meetings held. The role of the support person is to provide advice and support, not to answer questions or speak on behalf of any of the parties or interfere with the discussion. If, at any point, the parent engages legal representation the process will be referred to the DECD Legislation and Legal Services Unit.</p>

<p><b>STAGE ONE</b></p>	<p><b><u>Stage One A – Raise the concern with a teacher</u></b>  Parents may raise concerns or complaints verbally or in writing. Issues should be raised with the school in the first instance. Parents need to make an appropriate time to talk to the class teacher to discuss their concern or complaint. This can be arranged through a diary note, a phone call or face to face.</p> <p>It is expected that teachers will:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Make a time available as soon as reasonably possible to discuss the issue (within 5 working days)</li> <li>• Listen to the parent</li> <li>• Consider relevant legislation, policies and guidelines, seeking support as necessary</li> <li>• Identify and discuss with the parent possible courses of actions that could be taken and the timeframe within which this will occur</li> <li>• Follow up with the parent after a reasonable period of time has elapsed to ensure parent is satisfied</li> <li>• If appropriate, refer issue to leadership staff</li> </ul> <p><b><u>Stage One B – Raise the concern with the Principal</u></b>  If the concern is about a teacher, or if the issue is not addressed to the satisfaction of the parent by the teacher, the parent should raise the issue with the school principal. Appointments to see the principal can be made through the front office via phone call or in person.</p> <p>The Principal will consider the most effective way of resolving the concern or complaint, based on:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Information provided by all relevant parties</li> <li>• The school’s parent concern and complaints procedure</li> <li>• DECD Parent Concerns and complaints policy and procedure</li> <li>• Consideration of any legislative and policy implications</li> <li>• Advice from the regional office or DECD Central Office</li> </ul> <p>The school will aim to resolve the concern or complaint within 15 working days.</p>
<p><b>Concern and Complaint Resolution Stages for Parents</b></p> <p><b>STAGE TWO</b></p>	<p>If the concern or complaint is not resolved to the satisfaction of the parent by the school or if the Principal is the subject of the complaint – parents may choose to contact the DECD Complaints Resolution Services. Please ring the Education Complaint Unit on 1800677435 or email: <a href="mailto:DECD.EducationComplaint@sa.gov.au">DECD.EducationComplaint@sa.gov.au</a></p> <p>The Education complaint Unit can help you by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• providing advice and support about the issues behind the complaint</li> <li>• advocating with local sites to ensure all options for resolution have been explored</li> <li>• objectively reviewing complaints that have not been resolved at the local level, including through a formal review</li> </ul>
<p><b>Concern and Complaint Resolution Stages for Parents</b></p> <p><b>STAGE THREE</b></p>	<p>Other ways to resolve your issue  If we can’t resolve your issue through the previous steps, you may choose to seek independent advice and review by an external agency. The circumstances of your complaint will influence whether this option is available.</p> <p><b>External agency contact point:</b>  SA Ombudsman  Toll free: 1800 182 150  Phone: 8226 8699  Email: <a href="mailto:ombudsman@ombudsman.sa.gov.au">ombudsman@ombudsman.sa.gov.au</a>  <a href="http://www.ombudsman.sa.gov.au">www.ombudsman.sa.gov.au</a></p> <p>Depending on the nature of the matter, the Office of the Ombudsman will usually ask if you have taken your complaint to the school or to the DECD Education Complaint Unit before approaching the Ombudsman.</p>
<p><b>Monitoring and Review</b></p>	<p>This policy has been developed in accordance with the Raising a complaint with DECD Procedure 2017.</p>