



TUCKER ROAD BENTLEIGH PS

PARENT CONCERNS & COMPLAINTS POLICY

Purpose:

Parents/guardians will often have concerns/questions about aspects of the school's operations. The school looks to build trust and a sense of belonging to a wider community through all communication and interactions. The school's approach to handling concerns is based on its values of:

- Respectfulness
- Responsibility
- Co-operation
- Friendliness
- Enthusiasm

There will be times parents/guardians believe the appropriate course of action is to lodge a complaint with the school, Regional Office, Central Office or the Victorian Ombudsman.

The Parent Concerns and Complaints Policy is based on the "Addressing parents' concerns and complaints effectively: policy and guides" booklet from the Department of Education and Early Childhood Development (DEECD), April 2009.

Aims:

To ensure parents will have a clear process to follow to ensure that concerns and complaints are dealt with in a prompt and fair manner.

To ensure the expected manner of parents raising concerns and complaints is communicated and upheld.

To assist staff to confidently address the concerns of parents in an acceptable manner.

Implementation:

Concerns

- A 'concern' is defined by the Department as 'an issue of interest (because of its importance and effect) which is raised informally in order to improve or change a situation'.
- Concerns covered by this policy include:
 - general issues of student behaviour that are contrary to the student code of conduct
 - incidents of bullying or harassment in the classroom or the school yard
 - learning programs,
 - assessment and reporting of student learning
 - communication with parents
 - school fees and payments
 - general administrative issues
 - any other school-related matters except as detailed below.
- Matters not covered by this policy, for which there are existing rights of review or appeal include:
 - student discipline matters involving expulsions
 - concerns about employee conduct or performance and concerns that should be dealt with by performance management, grievance resolution or disciplinary action
 - student critical incident matters
 - criminal matters.
- When addressing concerns, the expectation on all parties is to:
 - maintain the confidentiality of all parties, in line with Departmental policy and legislative requirements
 - acknowledge that their common goal is to achieve an outcome acceptable to all parties
 - act in good faith and in a calm and courteous manner

- show respect and understanding of each other's point of view and value difference, rather than judge and blame
- recognise that all parties have rights and responsibilities which must be balanced.
- Parent concerns will be raised in accordance with the TRBPS Communication Guidelines.
- The school will publish the TRBPS Communication Guidelines annually through methods the school deems appropriate.

Complaints

- A 'complaint' is defined by the Department as an 'expression of grievance or resentment where the complainant is seeking redress or justice'.
- When addressing a complaint, the expectation on all parties is to:
 - maintain the confidentiality of all parties, in line with Departmental policy and legislative requirements
 - acknowledge that their common goal is to achieve an outcome acceptable to all parties
 - act in good faith and in a calm and courteous manner
 - show respect and understanding of each other's point of view and value difference, rather than judge and blame
 - recognise that all parties have rights and responsibilities which must be balanced.
- The Principal will ensure that parents are aware of their right to advocacy when communicating the issues involved in their complaint and in negotiating an outcome and refer parents to the parent complaints website: www.education.vic.gov.au/about/contact/parentcomplaint.htm
- If a parent/guardian is NOT satisfied with the response received to their concern or question, then they are able to make a complaint in accordance with the following process:
 - a complaint can be lodged in writing to the Principal or Assistant Principal
 - if the matter is not resolved by the Principal or Assistant Principal, the community liaison officer at the Regional Office can be contacted
 - if the matter is not resolved by the Regional Office, the complaint can be lodged in writing to the Central Office
 - if that matter is not resolved by the Department, the Victorian Ombudsman can be contacted.
- The school will publish the parent concern and complaint process through methods the school deems appropriate.

Approved by School Council: October 2015

Date for Review: 2018

References

<http://www.education.vic.gov.au/about/contact/Pages/complainschool.aspx>
https://www.eduweb.vic.gov.au/edulibrary/public/commrel/contacts/POLICY_AND_GUIDES_Addressing_parents_concerns.pdf