

COMPLAINTS MANAGEMENT POLICY

OBJECTIVES

- To ensure that complaints lodged at this school are resolved in a prompt and efficient manner.
- To promote the highest standard of professionalism in dealing with our community.

POLICY and PURPOSE

Staff at this school are responsible for managing the resolution of disputes and complaints lodged with us. We will make every effort to promptly resolve disputes and complaints lodged with us according to the principles of procedural fairness.

Where we cannot resolve a complaint, the complainant, Principal or Coordinator Regional Operations- North Metropolitan Regional Office can forward written complaints to the Director General of the Department of Education and Training.

BROAD GUIDELINES

Complaints can be made:

verbally;
by letter;
by email; or
by fax.

Help is available at the school to support complainants to formulate, write and lodge a complaint. Complaints can be lodged with the school using any of the contact methods listed above. Written complaints should be addressed

“PRIVATE AND CONFIDENTIAL”

The Principal
Craigie Heights Primary School
47 Spinaway Street
CRAIGIE WA 6025

Minimum information when making a complaint:

You should provide the following information when making a complaint:

- your name and contact details;
- copies of any relevant correspondence or documents relating directly to the complaint;
- the nature of the complaint; and
- what you consider is needed to resolve the complaint.

In the case of a verbal complaint, where you do not want to be identified or to lodge the complaint in writing, we will endeavour to work directly with you to resolve the matter.

If a verbal complaint is complex or very serious the complainant may be required to restate the complaint in writing or sign a written summary prepared by the principal.

NB. A written or verbal complaint which contains personal abuse, inflammatory statements or material that is clearly intended to intimidate will not be addressed and the complainant will be informed accordingly.

Responsiveness:

We will acknowledge written complaints within 5 school days. We seek to resolve local complaints within 14 days. If because of the serious nature of the complaint, it is deemed necessary to forward it on to another section of the Department; we will do this without delay.

In all cases you will be kept informed of the progress of your complaint.

Enquiring on a complaint's progress:

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

Outcome of a complaint:

We will advise you verbally or in writing of the outcome of the complaint. The outcome of all written complaints will be provided to you in writing.

When a complainant is unhappy with the outcome of a complaint:

If you are unsatisfied with our attempts to resolve your complaint, you may wish to express your concerns to the District Director. To do this contact:

Regional Executive Director
North Metropolitan Regional Office
PO Box 1126
Innaloo City WA 6918

While this request can be made verbally, it is preferable that it is made in writing. Help in making this request will be provided by us, or the district office, upon your request.

Rejecting a Complaint:

Complaints judged to be vexatious, trivial or without substance, or where it is judged to not warrant further action, will not be progressed. You will be advised of this decision in writing.

Definitions

Complaint

The expression of dissatisfaction with any aspect of government education and training. It may be general in nature or relate to particular staff, a part of the organisation, a policy or a decision. Any person may lodge a complaint; however staff employed by the Department of Education cannot use this process if they are acting in an official capacity. A complaint must contain sufficient detail to enable it to be addressed and recorded.

Locally Managed Complaint

A verbal or written complaint made in relation to a school or staff member, and managed by the school.

Centrally Managed Complaint

A complaint lodged in writing with the Director General of the Department of Education and Training, and managed at Central Office. Such complaints may be redirected to the local level to be managed if it is deemed appropriate.

Complainant

A person or persons lodging a complaint.

As outlined in Australian Standard AS 4269-1995 our Complaints Handling Policy demonstrates:

1. *Commitment:*
 - We are genuinely interested in having complaints resolved at the school level.
 - We recognise a community member's right to complain and to have their complaint dealt with seriously and fairly.
 - We actively seek comments about our performance from our parent community.
2. *Fairness:*
 - We understand the need to be fair in our complaints handling processes.
 - We follow procedural fairness principles when responding to a complaint.
 - Decisions made, and the reason for them will be made available to all parties directly involved in a complaint.
3. *Resources:*
 - We use school resources to effectively manage complaints.
 - We have adequate resources for effective handling of complaints.
 - Relevant staff at this school receive training in the management of complaints.
 - Complainants will have easy access to the person at our school that will be dealing with the complaint.

4. *Visibility:*
 - Brochures explaining our complaints handling processes are available from the school office.
 - Complaints handling processes are explained regularly in our school newsletter.
5. *Access:*
 - We accept complaints lodged by telephone, fax, in writing and via email.
 - We facilitate people with special needs to access our complaints handling system.
 - Our complaints handling processes recognise cultural diversity and take into account the particular needs of our parent community.
6. *Assistance:*
 - Upon request, we will provide a complainant with the support needed to formulate and lodge a complaint.
7. *Responsiveness:*
 - Complaints will be dealt with quickly and efficiently.
 - We will maintain regular contact with complainants to keep them informed of the progress of their complaint.
8. *Charges:*
 - There will be no charge to the complainant for the raising of a complaint with us.
 - NB: Where relevant, statutory charges, for example, Freedom of Information requests, still apply.
9. *Remedies:*
 - Our complaints handling system has the capacity to determine and put in place remedies.
 - Where a complaint results in the identification of changes that should be made to our processes, those changes will be made.
10. *Data Collection:*
 - Complaints received, and their outcomes will be recorded under our school name in the Department of Education and Training's complaints handling database.
 - Data about complaints lodged with our school is collected and stored.
11. *Systemic and Recurring Problems:*
 - Complaints are regularly analysed for the identification and addressing of systemic and recurring problems.
 - We analyse our Complaints Register to identify areas where changes are required to address systemic and recurring problems.
12. *Accountability:*
 - We report our complaints handling processes against our documented performance standards.
 - We report on our complaints handling processes as a part of our school review and evaluation procedure.
 - Complaints lodged and their outcomes are reported to the District Director as part of the school review process.
13. *Reviews:*
 - We review our complaints handling process annually.

COMPLAINT RESOLUTION FLOWCHAR

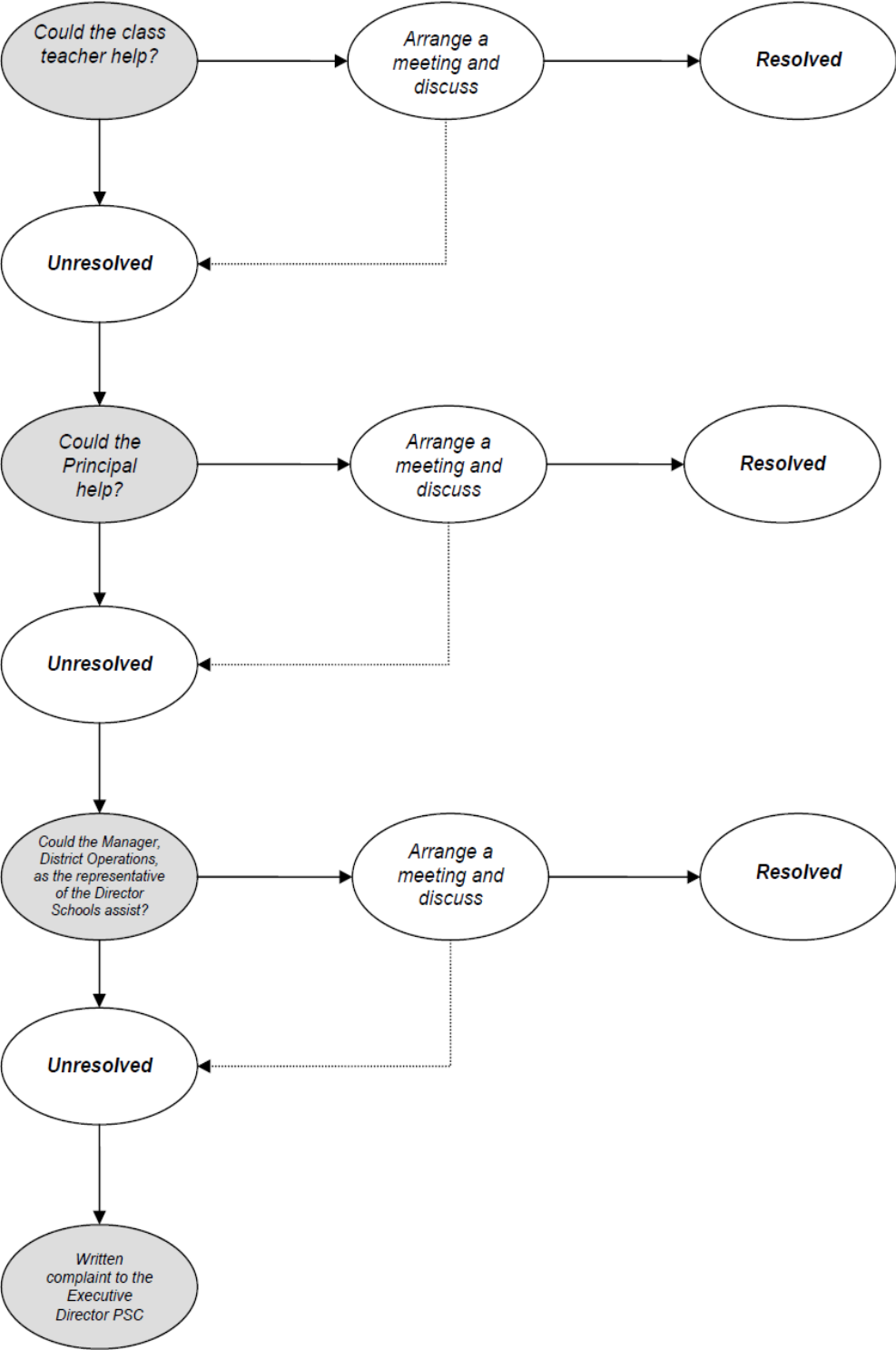


Figure 3: Complaint resolution flowchart