

Complaints Policy

North Melbourne Primary School

Issue Date: 23/08/2018

Review Date: 23/08/2021

SCHOOL Nº 1402



PURPOSE

The purpose of this policy is to:

- provide an outline of the process at North Melbourne Primary School so that parents and members of the community are informed of how they can provide feedback about issues arising at our school.
- ensure that all feedback regarding North Melbourne Primary School is managed in a timely, effective, fair and respectful manner.

SCOPE

This policy relates to feedback from parents, carers, students or members of our school community and applies to all matters relating to our school. In some limited instances, we may need to refer the complainant to another Department of Education and Training process where there are different mechanisms in place to review certain decisions, for example, expulsion appeals.

POLICY

North Melbourne Primary School welcomes feedback and is committed to continuous improvement. We value open communication with our whole school community. We recognise that this 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 responding to feedback, it is expected that all parties will:

- raise and discuss issues in a courteous and respectful manner
- acknowledge that the goal is to achieve an outcome that is in the student's best interests and acceptable to all parties
- act in good faith and respect the privacy and confidentiality of those involved, as appropriate
- recognise that all parties, including the broader school community, have rights and responsibilities that must be balanced
- recognise that our school and the Department may be subject to legal constraints in their ability to act or disclose information in some circumstances.

Preparation for providing feedback or raising a concern

North Melbourne Primary School encourages parents, carers or members of the community 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 of Education and training and North Melbourne Primary School (see website)



Process

Staff at North Melbourne Primary School will discuss with parents/carers and community members any concerns that they may have. **Concerns in the first instance should be directed to your child's teacher.** Where possible, school staff will work with you to ensure that your concerns are appropriately addressed.

Where concerns cannot be resolved in this way, parents or community members may wish to make a formal complaint to the Principal or an Assistant Principal.

If you choose to make a formal complaint, in most cases, depending on the nature of the complaint raised, our school will follow the following process with the aim of resolving the complaint.

The following process will apply:

1. **Complaint received:** Please either email or telephone to arrange a meeting (through the front office) with the Principal or an Assistant 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 all, whether in writing, in person or over the phone.
2. **Information gathering:** Depending on the issues raised in the complaint, the Principal, Assistant 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 appropriate, a resolution meeting will be arranged with the Principal/Assistant Principal to discuss the complaint with the objective of reaching a resolution satisfactory to all parties. ***In some circumstances, the Principal/Assistant Principal may determine that a resolution meeting would not be appropriate. In this situation, a response to the complaint will be provided in writing or over the phone.***
4. **Timelines:** North Melbourne Primary School 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, North Melbourne Primary School may need some time to gather enough information to fully understand the circumstances of your complaint. We will endeavour to investigate and hold a resolution meeting where appropriate within 10 working days of the complaint being raised. In situations where further time is required, North Melbourne Primary School will consult with you and discuss interim solutions to the concern that may be put in place.

Resolution

Where appropriate, North Melbourne Primary School 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.



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 Victorian Region by contacting 1300 333 232.

North Melbourne Primary School may also refer a complaint to the South Western Victorian Region if we believe that we have done all we can to address the concern.