

CONCERNS AND COMPLAINTS POLICY

Laburnum Primary School

Rationale:

The purpose of this policy is to:

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

Scope:

This policy relates to complaints brought by 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:

Laburnum Primary School's values of Respect, Integrity, Curiosity and Resilience underpin interactions with and between members of the school community. Laburnum Primary School is committed to continuous improvement. We recognize that the complaints process provides an important opportunity for reflection and learning.

Additionally, the school aims to address parent concerns or complaints within a context of:

- providing a safe and supportive learning environment for all our students;
- providing a safe working environment for staff; and
- building positive and trusting relationships between all stakeholders: students, parents, staff and the wider community.

Expectations:

When addressing a complaint, it is expected that all parties should:

- be considerate of each other's views and respect each other's role
- be focused on resolution of the complaint, with the interests of the student/s involved at the centre
- act in good faith and cooperation
- behave with respect and courtesy
- respect the privacy and confidentiality of those involved, as appropriate
- operate within and seek reasonable resolutions that comply with any applicable legislation and Department policy
- recognise that schools and the Department may be subject to legal constraints on their ability to act or disclose information in some circumstances.

Preparation for raising a concern or complaint:

Laburnum Primary School encourages parents, carers or members of the community who may wish to submit a concern or complaint 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 and Laburnum Primary School (see “Further Information and Resources” section below).

Complaints process:

In the first instance, concerns should be raised directly with the school, by telephoning, writing to or visiting:

- the student’s classroom teacher about learning or behaviour issues, or issues in their classroom or playground concerning a child or children in their class;
- the PLC leader or leading teacher if students from several classes are involved;
- the assistant principal about issues relating to complex student issues; or
- the principal about issues relating to staff members, school policy, school management, or extremely complex student issues.

If parents are unsure of whom to contact, please contact the principal, who will provide advice as to the most suitable staff member to handle the concern or complaint.

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

If you would like to make a formal complaint, in most cases, depending on the nature of the complaint raised, our school will first seek to understand the issues and will then convene a resolution meeting with the aim of resolving the complaint together. The following process will apply:

- 1. Complaint received:** Please either email, telephone or arrange a meeting through the front office with the Assistant Principal or Principal to outline your complaint so that we can fully understand what the issues are. We can discuss your complaint 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 about the situation or the concerns raised.
- 3. Response:** Where possible, and if needed, a resolution meeting will be arranged with the Assistant Principal/Principal to discuss the complaint, with the objective of reaching a satisfactory resolution. If, after the resolution meeting, we are unable to resolve the complaint together, we may work with you to prioritise areas needing action. In some circumstances, the Principal may determine that a resolution meeting would not appropriate.

Laburnum Primary School will try to acknowledge receipt of your complaint as soon as possible and seeks to resolve complaints in a timely manner.

Remedies:

Where appropriate, Laburnum 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 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.

In some circumstances, Laburnum Primary School may also ask you to attend a meeting with an independent third party, or participate in a mediation with an accredited mediator to assist in the resolution of the dispute.

Escalation

If you are not satisfied that your complaint has been resolved, then the complaint should be referred to the North Eastern Victoria regional office by contacting 1300 333 231.

Laburnum Primary School may also refer a complaint to North Eastern Victoria regional office if we believe that we have done all we can to address the complaint.

For more information about the Department's *Parent Complaints* policy, including the role of the Regional Office, please see: [Parent complaints policy](#).

Communication:

The school will make information about procedures for addressing concerns and complaints available to parents and the school community. This policy and procedures will be:

- published on the school website;
- referenced in '[Laburnum's A-Z of Useful Information](#)' on our website and Sentral parent portal; and
- available from the school office.

Further resources:

- [Communication policy](#)

Review period:

This policy was last updated in October 2019.

This policy was last endorsed by School Council in:

October 2019