



Coomandook Area School

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GRIEVANCE PROCEDURE – Parent Complaints

1. PURPOSE

This policy has been developed with a focus on positive learning and well being outcomes for the students at Coomandook Area School (CAS) in consultation with staff, students and the school community to provide a clear pathway in the parent complaints procedures of CAS.

All decisions are made with the Student Learner as the focus while adhering to the School Values of Respect, Confidence, Honesty, Organisation, Persistence and Working Together. However at times concerns may arise and parents have the right to raise a concern or a complaint about any aspect of a school's operations (for example, the type, level or quality of DECD services, the behaviour and decisions of students, DECD staff or policy, procedures and practices). Concerns or complaints should be raised at the school first as this is where it can best be resolved.

2. SCOPE

This policy affects all students, staff, parents and community members of CAS acting in matters relating to the operation of the school, student learning and well being at CAS. However it does not include complaints about suspensions/exclusion, occupational health and safety, staff disputes/grievances or teacher registration.

3. POLICY DETAILS

Guidelines:

- The needs of the students are the focus of the grievance procedure process.
- All decisions will be made in accordance with the Education Department Act, departmental regulations and the DECD Parent Complaints Policy, or administrative guidelines of the South Australian Department for Education and Child Development.
- The process is founded on fairness, impartiality, accessibility, respect and responsiveness
- Advocates, Support people and/or mediators can be enlisted to assist parents in the resolution of concerns.

Assumptions:

It is important to realise in engaging in this process that:

- ***The person you contact about the concern will need to be provided with accurate information to ensure the matter is understood and can be addressed in an appropriate way. What happened, or what is the problem? When did it happen? Who was involved? Where did it happen? Why did it happen? Did anyone see it? How does it affect my child? Who can help solve the problem? What is an acceptable solution?***
- Resolving issues takes time and often resolution of conflict occurs in difficult circumstances.
- Raising a grievance does not necessarily mean that the subsequent decision will favour the aggrieved person. There are many points of view, often completely opposed, that need to be considered. For a decision to be changed, generally it would need to be shown that the process was flawed or that there is new information that would lead to a change in the decision.

Expectations:

Parents can expect:

- A safe learning and caring environment that provides a broad, balanced and rigorous curriculum
- Information about all aspects of their students' education
- Information about school policies and procedures
- Opportunities to put their point of view across and express opinions and concern
- To be treated fairly and equitably
- Opportunities exist for involvement and participation in school activities
- Clear accessible communication channels
- Confidentiality
- have access to appropriate and easily understandable information regarding the complaint resolution process
- have the complaint considered impartially and in accordance with due process and principles of natural justice
- be kept informed of the progress and outcome of their complaint.

The school expects:

- Support for school policies and procedures such as Behaviour Management, Uniform Policy, Attendance Policy.
- The concern or complaint is raised as soon as possible after the issue has arisen
- Complete and factual information is provided about the concern or complaint
- Parents to treat staff with respect and listen to their point of view.
- Concerns will be raised at the school through the agreed channels.
- Confidentiality will be maintained.
- To be informed if the parent intends to take the matter further.

Grievance Procedures:

There are 3 steps to the parent complaint process:

1. **Raise the concern** – the school should always be the first point of contact (if it is a classroom concerns contact the class teacher, if it is about the teacher contact the principal)
2. **Contact the regional Office** – if the parent is not satisfied that the outcome has been resolved by the school they can contact the local regional office who will review the complaint.
3. **Parent Complaint Unit** – if a complaint has not been able to be resolved parents can contact the Parent Complaint Unit Hotline (1800 677 435) **OR** at any stage during the process to seek advice.

Complaint Process: Please refer to the 'Parent Guide for Raising a Complaint' or 'flow Chart: DECD procedure for managing parent concerns or complaints' on our school website
www.coomyas.sa.edu.au
