Scaddan Primary School Complaints Management Policy
Queries and Concerns

This policy is designed to create a strong and reliable partnership between parents and schools. Parents and other school community members must be confident that staff will listen and respond to their needs and concerns.

The policy sets out the process for students, parents, members of the community and Department of Education staff in their private capacity to have enquiries, concerns and complaints addressed by the Department of Education.

This policy is not applicable to complaints made by department employees that are employment related.

Principles underlying the policy
The following principles apply to all disputes and complaints lodged under Section 118 of the School Education Act 1999:

- The process is accessible to all aggrieved parties and is underpinned by a commitment to cooperation on the part of the Department’s staff.
- Resolution at the local level is preferred, wherever it is appropriate to do so.
- Procedural fairness is afforded to all parties.
- The subject of the complaint is informed of the substance of the complaint.
- Vexatious, trivial or previously finalised issues are not pursued.
- Warranted investigation will be pursued with or without the active involvement of the complainant.
- Confidentiality is maintained, to the extent consistent with legislative requirements and other principles in this section.
- Complaints and disputes are monitored and their management evaluated so as to reduce the occurrence of systemic and recurring problems.
- In all matters the educational well-being of students is the first priority.
- All persons in the school community including students, parents, administrators, teachers and support staff, have a right to be treated with respect and courtesy.
- Complainants are able to make inquiries, raise concerns or lodge complaints about the provision of education and the conduct of Department staff and have them dealt with efficiently, fairly and promptly.
- Processes are to be straightforward and operate within the regulatory framework of the Department.
- Information about the process for raising concerns and making inquiries or complaints is to be available to parents, students and members of the local community.
Useful information for Parents – Talking to Scaddan Primary School

The relationship between the home and school play a very important part in a child’s education.

We can not overestimate the critical role parents play in successful learning: parents contribute much to their child’s development and are among the most important influences on the way in which the child approaches learning.

Teachers are responsible for the formal aspects of children’s learning, and successful teaching builds on the home experiences of the child. This is most effective where there is an active partnership with parents.

Two-way communication is a critical factor in the partnership between parents and the school. Where a partnerships exists, it is easier for parents to feel confident about the teaching and learning taking place in the classroom and to solve problems.

What might you talk to your school about?

Issues particular to your child:

- Attitude
- Academic progress
- Participation
- Behaviour
- How he/she gets along with teachers and other students socially and emotionally
- Physical development and well-being
- Development of responsibility
- Non-attendance or truancy
- Learning program issues
- Special events and celebrations
- Specialised learning programs
- Parent information booklets
- Parent information sessions

School or class issues:

- Quality of teaching
- Homework
- Learning environment
- General student behaviour
- Pastoral care for students
- School’s policies and procedures
- Conduct of staff

Access to support services:

- School and district level student services
- Visiting teachers for students with disabilities
- Visiting teachers for ESL students
- Specialist facilities – language development centres, intensive language centres, sociopsycho educational resource units, education support schools centres and units
- Programs for students experiencing difficulties with learning
• Programs for gifted and talented students
• Instrumental music program

**How Scaddan Primary School communicates with you:**
• Two formal reports each year on student progress
• Regular information about the schools through newsletters and Scaddan Primary School website
• Parent – Teacher interview (Formal interviews in Term 3)
• Tray Peeks after every Assembly
• Parent helping in the classroom on regular or project based activities
• Notes
• Surveys
• Displays of children’s work
• Assemblies
• Special events and celebrations
• Specialised learning programs
• Parent information booklets
• Pride Packs
• Parent information sessions

You are welcome to talk to your child’s teacher whenever you need to. However, you should make an appointment to talk with the teacher, to avoid disrupting the learning program.

**Information that is available from Scaddan Primary School**
• Information on Department and school policies and policy changes
• What is expected in relation to homework
• Student behaviour management policy
• Information on whole school programs such as TRIBES and PATHS
• School charges and fees
• Excursions
• School dress code

**What can you do if you have a problem?**
• Seeking information as early as possible can solve many problems. If you have any questions or concerns about your child’s progress, the homework set or the assessment procedures, contact the class teacher. The best way to do this is to contact the school office to arrange a mutually convenient time for a telephone conversation or meeting.
• Parents have the opportunity for greater involvement in the school through the Parents and Citizen’s Association and the School Council. These provide the opportunity for parents to express opinions on policy issues in the school.

**When you have a problem**
• Try to identify the problem clearly before going to the school. If there is more than one problem, list them to ensure that the extent of the problem is clear to the school.
• Decide whether the problem is a query, a concern or a complaint. This will help in finding a solution.
• Make an appointment to talk with the teacher. This can be arranged through the school office. If your concern is about the conduct of a staff member, you may prefer to discuss
the matter with a school administrator or, the Director of Schools if your complaint involves the principal.

- Try to stay calm. Even if you don’t feel it, being calm will help to get your concerns across more clearly than if you are upset or angry. It may help to take someone with you.

**How the complaint will be handled**

- Complaints will be handled promptly, confidentially and in accordance with procedural fairness.
- Person who is the subject of a complaint, who made a complaint or provided information in the course of an investigation into a complaint shall not be subject to prejudice, intimidation, and harassment or be subject to any detriment because of their involvement.
- Appropriate confidentiality is to be observed in any discussion of complaints. This means that at the workplace these matters are to remain confidential between the employee and his or her line manager and any other parties who have a legitimate interest in the process.

**Procedures for making complaints – step for Parents**

*If you need assistance in resolving a concern or complaint.*

Staff will help you:

- Obtain information about school policies and procedures
- Make inquiries about student programs, performance and behaviour
- Clarify a problem and register a concern with the school
- Direct letters of enquiry or complaint

At all stages, staff will work with you to establish an agreed plan of action and timeline

**SCHOOL LEVEL RESOLUTION**

**STAGE 1: DISCUSSION WITH STAFF MEMBER**

Contact the class teacher or other relevant staff member to discuss your complaint. This is best done by making an appointment through the school office. The staff will work with you to resolve the problem.

**STAGE 2: REVIEW OR INVESTIGATION AT THE SCHOOL LEVEL**

Contact the Principal who will work with you and the staff member to resolve the problem. You may wish to formalise your complaint. To do this, you may write to the Principal who will acknowledge the complaint with a written reply as soon as possible, even if a resolution is not available at this stage.

The Principal will consider the issue and identify what action is to be taken and then, and will clarify the process if a formal complaint is to proceed. The principal may seek the support of the Manager of Operations or other relevant district, or central office staff. Other parties include support persons, unions, professional associations and more senior line managers.

You should be aware than when a complaint is made in writing about the performance of an individual staff member, that staff member will receive documentation of the substance of the complaint.
The principal director or manager can reject a complaint that in their opinion is vexatious, or without substance, or does not warrant further action taking into account the priorities of the policy.

**DISTRICT LEVEL RESOLUTION**

**STAGE 3: DISTRICT RESOLUTION**

If resolution is not reached at the school level or, if the principal is the subject of your complaint, contact the Manager, Operations at the Regional Education Office for assistance in resolving the issue. This will involve an independent review of the situation and may include mediation.

Esperance Local Education Office
PO Box 783
ESPERANCE WA 6450

Department of Education
Goldfields Education Region
PO Box 385
Federal Road
KALGOORLIE WA 6430

**STAGE 4: FORMAL COMPLAINTS**

In those exceptional circumstances where a complaint relates to the alleged improper conduct of a department employee, the complaint should be forwarded to:

PRIVATE AND ONCIDENTIAL
Executive Director
Professional Standards and Contact
Department of Education and Training
151 Royal Street
EAST PERTH WA 6004
Phone: (08) 9264 4740
Disputes and Complaints

All policy and procedural statements contained within this document are lawful orders for the purposes of section 90(e) of the Public Sector Management Act 1994 (WA) and are therefore to be observed by all Department of Education employees.