

PARENT COMPLAINTS POLICY & PROCEDURES

Preamble:

At Braybrook College we believe that the safety and educational wellbeing of our students is our first priority. We will work in partnership with parents (*refer to definition, below*) to resolve any concerns and complaints that they may have about their child's schooling. We acknowledge that parents have the right to raise concerns and complaints about their child's school life and that they will be treated with respect and courtesy during the process.

Purpose of this policy:

- To provide clear and transparent information to parents, the community and staff on how parent concerns and complaints will be managed and resolutions found
- To ensure that wherever possible, complaints are resolved at the school level

Definitions:

For the purpose of this policy, the following definitions mean:

Parent: includes:

- A person who has a parental responsibility for 'major long term issues' as defined in the *Family Law Act 1975* (Commonwealth)
- A person appointed as 'guardian' pursuant to the *Children Youth and Families Act 2005* (Victoria)
- An informal carer with whom the child normally/regularly resides, and who has day-to-day care/control of the child
- A mature minor student
- An adult student

Concern: an issue of interest which is raised informally in order to improve or change a situation

Complaint: an expression of grievance or resentment where the parent is seeking resolution

'Resolved' Complaint: a complaint is considered to be 'resolved' when the complainant and the Department (school, Regional Office) agree on an appropriate response or remedy

Expectations:

- Parents can expect that their concern/complaint will be responded to in a courteous, respectful and timely manner and considered on its merits without prejudice arising from any previous contact that a parent may have had with the school
- In return, we expect that parents be respectful, co-operative and courteous to staff and that they will be realistic and reasonable about what course of action is required to resolve the concern or complaint
- Confidentiality will be adhered to throughout the complaint process

Complaints not covered by this policy:

This policy does not apply to matters where there are legislated requirements or existing policies and processes for appeal. Examples:

- Appeals about student suspension and expulsion
- Mandatory reporting responsibilities
- Complaints about staff that if upheld would constitute misconduct
- Student critical incident matters.

Complaint procedures:

Raising the concern:

- Contact the appropriate person at the school (in writing, by phone or make an appointment to speak in person.) Office Phone Number: 9312 2900 and provide complete and factual information about the concern or complaint.
If parents do not know who they should speak with regarding the concern/complaint the office staff will be able to assist in referring them to the appropriate person.
- The appropriate person (Year Level Coordinator, Sub-school Leader or Assistant Principal) will contact the parent within two working days to work with the parent to consider the most effective way of resolving the concern or complaint based on the information provided
- Parents will be kept informed of the progress and the outcome of the complaint
- If the parent is not satisfied after speaking with the school contact person, they may choose to speak with the Principal
- The Principal will acknowledge the complaint as soon as reasonably possible and communicate the outcome to all parties
- If a resolution is still not reached - the complaint can be referred to the Regional Office on 8397 0300

Role of the school:

On receiving a complaint it is expected that the school staff will:

- Make a time available as soon as is reasonably possible to discuss with the parent (face to face or by phone) their complaint
- Provide an interpreter if required
- Listen to the parent
- Keep open communication between the parent and the school re the progress of the complaint
- Identify and discuss with the parent possible courses of action that could be taken to resolve their complaint and the timeframe within which this will occur
- Follow up with parent after a reasonable period of time has elapsed for any changes to take affect to ensure that the parent is satisfied with the outcome
- If the staff member is unable to resolve the complaint to the satisfaction of the parent, they will refer the complaint to a Principal Class Officer. The staff member who receives the initial complaint is to advise the parent of the reason/s why the matter is to be referred elsewhere
- If a complaint is in relation to the Principal then the parent is to contact the Regional Office

Recording of Complaints:

- If a complaint is easily resolved over the phone then recording of the issues may not be required. Complaints, in most instances, will be acknowledged in the form that they were made (i.e. a phone call acknowledged with a return phone call)
- All meetings with parents and the Principal to discuss complaints will be documented, using the 'Parent Complaint Record Sheet' and copy provide to all parties.

For further information refer to:

- DET's 'Parent Complaints - General Information' sheet (see link below)
<http://www.education.vic.gov.au/Documents/school/parents/primary/parentcomplaints.pdf>
- If a resolution has not been found, parent can access DETs 'Parent Complaint Form' (see link below)
<http://www.education.vic.gov.au/Documents/about/contact/parentcomplaintform.pdf>

BRAYBROOK COLLEGE PARENT COMPLAINT TO PRINCIPAL RECORD SHEET

1. Details of Parent making complaint:

Name:

Address:

Contact phone number:

2. Date complaint received:

3. Date of meeting held with Parent:

4. Staff member managing complaint, prior to Principal meeting:

5. Nature of the complaint: (details and requested resolution):

6. Action taken: (to resolve the complaint/time/outcome):