



SCHOOL COMMUNITY COMPLAINT MANAGEMENT PROCEDURE

The following procedures are designed to assist in the resolution of student, parent and staff grievances.

Grievance is something unreasonable that you are not happy with and that you want to change. A grievance is a complaint that may or may not be justified.

Complainants are encouraged to explore options for personal resolution of their grievance in the first instance and, where reasonable, to engage in a resolution process. Personal resolution may not be an option for reasons of individual sensitivity, cultural or power relationships, or where there is a policy or statutory obligation for an investigation owing to the nature and seriousness of the complaint.

The Department for Education endorses a Three Level Model of Complaint Handling recognised as best practice in the Australian/New Zealand Standard.

LEVEL 1 – COMPLAINT MANAGEMENT - RESPONSIBILITIES OF SCHOOL, PRESCHOOL AND CORPORATE OFFICE STAFF

Schools and preschools must try to resolve complaints at the local level, wherever possible, before using Level 2 complaint management

LEVEL 2 – COMPLAINT MANAGEMENT – RESPONSIBILITIES FOR CUSTOMER FEEDBACK UNIT

Complaints that have not been resolved at a local level may be raised with the Customer Feedback Unit

LEVEL 3 – EXTERNAL COMPLAINT MANAGEMENT - ROLE OF OMBUDSMAN SA (OSA)

Complaints that have not been resolved at a central level may be raised with an external statutory authority.

Schools and preschools must try to resolve complaints at the local level, wherever possible. Teachers and support staff are often approached first by parents with a concern or complaint, and staff should make every effort to resolve these matters where possible.

All complaints received by the school or preschool and the decisions or actions taken to address the complaints must be documented in the school complaints register and reported annually.

Customer Feedback unit (CFU) staff will refer complaints back to the original decision maker and/or site leadership if they have not been addressed at this level already. This gives the original decision maker an opportunity to explain their decision or action and try to resolve the matter first. In circumstances where the original decision maker and/or site leader does not think it appropriate that they review or manage a complaint, contact the CFU to determine the best course of action.

Our school community complaint management procedure is to keep communication between members of our school community as open as possible and to ensure that issues or concerns that parents/caregivers have are most effectively dealt with when raised through appropriate channels.

Things that help include:

- Checking the facts straight away with the person/s most likely to know, so that misunderstandings and rumours can't get started.
- Recognising that there is always another side to the issue (or indeed several sides depending on how many people are involved).
- Asking a friend to go with you to check out or discuss a problem if you feel you need support.
- Being clear about the 'next step' if you feel your first attempts haven't been successful.
- Maintaining confidentiality.

Things that don't help include:

- Talking about it with others who don't have all the information either (that's how rumours start!)
- Thinking there is only one side to an issue.
- Forgetting that the 'other person/people' have feelings too.

General school matters regarding administrative or policy issues, such as fees, uniform etc., should be lodged with the front office or staff member responsible for administration.

All personal matters such as concerns regarding student, parent or staff relationships should be raised directly with the school through the class teacher or Principal / Assistant Principal in a confidential manner.

Before making a complaint you should:

- clearly identify issues and the resolution you are after
- provide complete and factual information
- cooperate with any requests for more information
- not include deliberately false or misleading information
- treat staff handling the complaint with courtesy and respect.



SCHOOL COMMUNITY COMPLAINT PROCEDURE



LEVEL 1

– SCHOOL OR PRESCHOOL

If a person is not happy with a decision made or action taken by a school or preschool they should first contact the original decision maker or educator involved to discuss the matter and raise their concerns directly. This might be a teacher, year level coordinator, deputy principal, principal or preschool director.



LEVEL 2

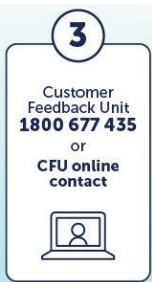
– CENTRAL COMPLAINT RESOLUTION

If a person is not satisfied that their complaint has been addressed at the school or preschool level, including the principal or preschool director (or delegate), they can contact the Customer Feedback Unit (CFU).

The role of CFU is to give advice and support about the issues behind a complaint and to confirm if departmental policy and procedure has been followed. The CFU role is to liaise with schools and preschools to help all parties to explore appropriate options for resolution.

A complaint or feedback can be lodged to CFU by using the [online submit a complaint form](#) or by phone (free call) 1800 677 435.

Note: Where the complaint relates to the conduct of the principal, contact the Education Director, Paul Newman
Partnership Inner West
Phone: 84167300



LEVEL 3

– EXTERNAL RESOLUTION

If all avenues to resolve the complaint by the department have been exhausted and the matter remains unresolved, a review or advice can be sought through the [Ombudsman SA](#) (OSA).



The OSA is an independent body that investigates complaints about SA government. Contact the OSA on (08) 8226 8699. The circumstances of the complaint will influence whether the option of an external review is available.

Unreasonable conduct

Staff safety and wellbeing is vital when dealing with unreasonable conduct at a school or preschool. There's a need to balance the right for someone to make a complaint with the rights of staff safety and respect, and the rights of others to equal time and resources.

There are a number of actions that can be taken by the school or preschool if a person making a complaint is unreasonable.

Unreasonable may include:

- constant phone calls, visits or emails to staff
- swearing, yelling, intimidation or offensive remarks
- making demands to staff on how the complaint should be managed.

Depending on the severity and frequency of the behaviours, actions can range from changing or limiting access to staff, students and school premises through to involving police. Find out more about [unreasonable conduct when making a complaint](#).

Our commitment

We know that when we can work together, things can be better. We are committed to a resolution, we have experience in getting things right and we want the opportunity to resolve issues in a fair and timely manner. Be assured, we take customer feedback and complaints seriously.

Brompton Primary School procedure

updated February 2021

Related Department for Education policy documents
[Complaint management policy](#)
[Complaint resolution for employees policy \(PDF, 443.6 KB\)](#)
[Information Privacy Principles Instructions](#)
[Assault – site responsibilities procedure](#)
[Raising a complaint with the Department for Education](#)
[Managing trespass and misbehaviour procedure \(PDF, 535.2 KB\)](#)