

COMPLAINTS MANAGEMENT POLICY

Rationale

The partnership between parents and schools should be a strong and reliable feature of the public school system. Parents and other school community members must be confident that staff will listen and respond to their needs and concerns. This policy will ensure that enquiries, disputes and complaints are dealt with promptly, consistently and fairly and contribute to continuous improvement. It is based on open and proactive school-community relations. The policy makes provision for resolution at the local level, but complaints can also be formally lodged with the Director General and resolved under the provisions of the School Education Act 1999 and School Education Regulations 2000.

Procedures

- Students, parents, members of the community, and Department of Education staff are entitled to have their disputes and complaints addressed by the Principal, Regional Executive Director or the Director General.
- A complaint may be made about the:
 - Provisions of education; or
 - Conduct of any member of the teaching staff; or
 - Conduct of any other member of staff
- Persons who are the subject of a complaint are to be informed of the substance of the complaint. The text of the complaint is not provided to them.
- Complaints will be handled promptly, confidentially and in accordance with procedural fairness.
- The time frame for a formal complaint will vary according to the complexity of the issues involved.

Lodging a complaint

- A person may complain verbally or in writing to the Principal, Regional Executive Director or the Director General.
- If a verbal complaint is complex or very serious the complainant may be required to restate the complaint in writing or sign a written summary prepared by the Principal or Regional Executive Director.
- The Director General will only consider written complaints.
- A person making a written complaint must provide his or her name, address and details of the dispute or complaint.
- A person who has made a complaint may withdraw the complaint at any time. A written complaint is to be withdrawn in writing. A verbal complaint may be withdrawn verbally.
- The officer who received the complaint is to give notice in writing to any parties affected by the complaint that it has been withdrawn.

Resolution of disputes and complaints

- All written complaints lodged with the Principal will be acknowledged within five working days.
- On a Carine Primary School **Complaints Management Form** the school's administrative staff will – record all complaints and document actions and outcomes.
- The complaints management process will involve Carine Primary School's administrative staff –
 - acknowledging and documenting the nature of the complaint
 - maintaining strict confidentiality
 - listening and responding to all issues
 - investigating the issue if necessary
 - recording a negotiated plan of action incorporating agreed timelines and outcomes
 - reviewing the situation with the complainant to ensure that the complaint, issue or dispute has been resolved
 - following up if any further action is deemed to be necessary
 - write to the complainant acknowledging closure
 - filing all documentation related to the complaint or dispute

In following this process the staff at Carine Primary School will ensure that every effort is made to promptly resolve disputes and complaints at the local level in accordance with the principles of procedural fairness and in a way that reflects the intent of Department of Education Disputes and Complaints Policy and Procedures.