



Cranbourne East Primary School ***PARENT CONCERNS & COMPLAINTS*** ***POLICY 2014***

Rationale:

A timely and professional response to parent concerns and complaints is an effective means of encouraging communication, building trust and resolving issues for the betterment of all concerned.

Aims:

- To develop and implement a process by which parents can confidently raise concerns in the knowledge that they will be listened to and their concerns will be professionally managed in a timely, confidential and appropriate manner.

Implementation:

- Relationships with parents are important to us. We take concerns or complaints raised by parents seriously.
- Cranbourne East Primary School expects a person raising a concern or complaint to:
 - do so promptly, as soon as possible after the issue occurs
 - provide complete and factual information about the concern or complaint
 - maintain and respect the privacy and confidentiality of all parties
 - acknowledge that a common goal is to achieve an outcome acceptable to all parties
 - act in good faith, and in a calm, respectful and courteous manner
 - show respect and understanding of each other's point of view and value difference, rather than judge and blame
 - recognise that all parties have rights and responsibilities which must be balanced.
- Cranbourne East Primary School will address any concerns and complaints received from parents:
 - courteously
 - efficiently
 - fairly
 - promptly, or within the timeline agreed with the person with the concern or complaint
 - in accordance with due process, principles of natural justice and DEECD's regulatory framework.
- In the first instance, a parent with a concern or complaint should contact Cranbourne East Primary School.
 - The parent should telephone, visit or write to make an appointment to speak with:
 - the student's homegroup teacher about learning issues and incidents that happened in their class or group
 - the Assistant Principal about issues relating to staff members or complex student issues
 - the Principal about issues relating to school policy, school management, staff members or more complex student issues.
- Parents visiting the school to make a complaint are advised that it is unlikely that staff will be immediately available to investigate the complaint. However, details regarding the complaint can be taken by the office staff and this information will be forwarded to the Principal and Assistant Principal for information sharing purposes and to the most appropriate person for

action. There will be many occasions that this will be someone other than the principal. The school will record the details of all complaints including the name and contact details of the persons making the complaints.

- Parents making complaints are to be well-behaved, confidential and courteous. Parents who act in an unreasonable, threatening or discourteous way may be asked to leave the school. Where necessary the matter may be referred to the police and/or a Trespass Notice may be issued by the Principal.
- Parents discussing complaints with staff may be accompanied by an advocate if they feel they are unable to express their concern clearly. An advocate can be a friend or someone who is available through an appropriate support organisation who does not receive a fee for service. Similarly, the school, the parent or other involved parties may seek to involve a mediator to try to resolve any unresolved complaint.
- The investigating staff member will record the details of the investigation. All records of parent complaints, conversations, subsequent investigations, meeting notes and outcomes will be stored at the school and remain the property of DEECD.
- Following the investigation, the investigating staff member will communicate with the parent to provide their findings and an appropriate course of action, if any.
- If the scope of the investigation is beyond the capacity or jurisdiction of the school, the matter will be referred to the appropriate authority and the parent will be informed of the referral.
- Cranbourne East Primary School will make every attempt to resolve a concern or complaint as quickly as possible. If the complaint involves many students and a range of issues, the school will need more time to investigate and resolve it.
- Should the complaint involve complex issues, Cranbourne East Primary School might need to take advice from the DEECD's Regional Office which may take more time. The school will tell the parent/complainant the new timeline for addressing the complaint and the reasons for any delays. In all cases, the school will try to resolve a concern or complaint within 20 school days.
- Cranbourne East Primary School will make every effort to resolve concerns and complaints before involving other levels of DEECD. If in the view of the parent the matter remains unresolved, the parent will be provided with details as to how they can refer the matter to DEECD's South-Eastern Regional Office.
- The principal will determine whether or not an anonymous complaint will be investigated.
- Cranbourne East Primary School will develop a variety of policies relating to areas where complaints often arise, so that all parties are sure of the school's position.
- All staff will be made aware of our school's complaints handling procedures and will be supported with training on how to minimise, respond to, and manage parent complaints.
- Cranbourne East Primary School's Parent Concerns and Complaints Policy will be published on the school's website.

Evaluation:

This policy will be reviewed as part of the school's three-year review cycle.

Ratified by School Council: 8 October 2014