



COMPLAINTS POLICY

PURPOSE

The purpose of this policy is to:

- provide an outline of the complaints process at The Lake Primary School so that students, parents and members of the community are informed of how they can raise complaints or concerns about issues arising at our school
- ensure that all complaints and concerns regarding The Lake Primary School are managed in a timely, effective, fair and respectful manner.

SCOPE

This policy relates to complaints brought by students, parents, carers, or members of our school community and applies to all matters relating to our school.

POLICY

The Lake Primary School welcomes feedback, both positive and negative, and is committed to continuous improvement. We value open communication with our families and are committed to understanding complaints and addressing them appropriately. We recognise that the complaints process provides an important opportunity for reflection and learning.

We value and encourage open and positive relationships with our school community. We understand that it is in the best interests of students for there to be a trusting relationship between families and our school.

When addressing a complaint, it is expected that all parties will:

- be considerate of each other's views and respect each other's role
- be focused on resolution of the complaint, with the interests of the student involved at the centre
- act in good faith and cooperation
- behave with respect and courtesy
- respect the privacy and confidentiality of those involved, as appropriate
- operate within and seek reasonable resolutions that comply with any applicable legislation and Department policy.
- recognise that schools and the Department may be subject to legal constraints on their ability to act or disclose information in some circumstances.

Complaints and concerns process for students

The Lake Primary School acknowledges that issues or concerns can cause stress or worry for students and impact on their wellbeing and learning. The Lake Primary School encourages our students to raise issues or concerns as they arise so that we can work together to resolve them.

Students with a concern or complaint can raise them with a trusted adult at school, for example, with their classroom teacher, wellbeing or mental health co-ordinator, the principal or assistant principal. This person will take your concern or complaint seriously and will explain to you the steps we can take to try and resolve the issue and support you. You can also ask your parent, carer or another trusted adult to talk to us about the issue instead.

Other ways you can raise a concern or complaint with us include:

- talking to a member of the student representative council about your concern and any suggestions you have for resolving it
- participating in our Attitudes to School Survey (for years 4-6)
- participating in student voice teams

Complaints and concerns process for parents, carers and community members

Preparation for raising a concern or complaint

The Lake Primary School encourages parents, carers or members of the community who may wish to submit a complaint to:

- carefully consider the issues you would like to discuss
- remember you may not have all the facts relating to the issues that you want to raise
- think about how the matter could be resolved

Support person

You are welcome to have a support person to assist you in raising a complaint with our school. Please advise us if you wish to have a support person to assist you, and provide their name, contact details, and their relationship to you.

Raising a concern

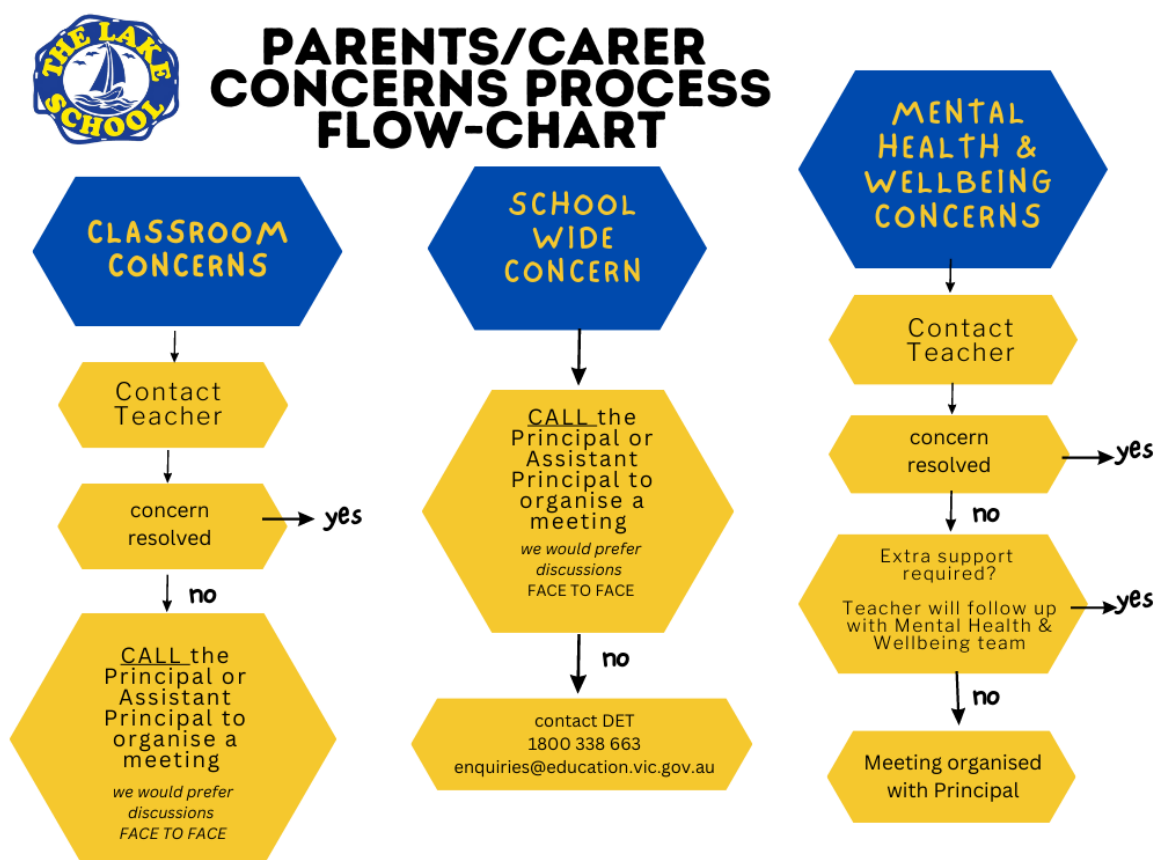
The Lake Primary School is always happy to discuss with parents/carers and community members any concerns that they may have. Concerns in the first instance should be directed to the classroom teacher. Where possible, school staff will work with you to ensure that your concerns are appropriately addressed.

Making a complaint

Where concerns cannot be resolved in this way, parents or community members may wish to make a complaint to the Principal or Assistant Principal. If you would like to make a formal complaint, in most cases, depending on the nature of the complaint raised, our school will first seek to understand the issues and will then convene a resolution meeting with the aim of resolving the complaint together. The following process will apply:

1. **Complaint received:** Please telephone or arrange a meeting through the front office with the Assistant Principal or Principal, to outline your complaint so that we can fully understand what the issues are.

2. **Information gathering:** Depending on the issues raised in the complaint, the Principal, or Assistant Principal may need to gather further information to properly understand the situation. This process may also involve speaking to others to obtain details about the situation or the concerns raised.
3. **Response:** Where possible, a resolution meeting will be arranged with the Assistant Principal/Principal to discuss the complaint with the objective of reaching a resolution satisfactory to all parties. If after the resolution meeting we are unable to resolve the complaint together, we will work with you to produce a written summary of the complaint in the event you would like to take further action about it. In some circumstances, the Principal may determine that a resolution meeting would not be appropriate. In this situation, a response to the complaint will be provided in writing.
4. **Timelines:** The Lake Primary School will acknowledge receipt of your complaint as soon as possible (usually within two school days) and will seek to resolve complaints in a timely manner. Depending on the complexity of the complaint, The Lake Primary School may need some time to gather enough information to fully understand the circumstances of your complaint. We will endeavour to complete any necessary information gathering and hold a resolution meeting where appropriate within 5 working days of the complaint being raised. In situations where further time is required, The Lake Primary School will consult with you and discuss any interim solutions to the dispute that can be put in place.



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Please note that unreasonable conduct (e.g. vexatious complaints, aggression, swearing) may need to be managed differently to the procedures in this policy.

Escalation

If you are not satisfied that your complaint has been resolved by the school, or if your complaint is about the Principal and you do not want to raise it directly with them, then the complaint should be referred to the Department of Education by contacting 1800 338 663 or enquiries@education.vic.gov.au.

The Lake Primary School may also refer a complaint to the Department of Education if we believe that we have done all we can to address the complaint.

For more information about the Department's parent complaints process, including the role of the Regional Office, please see: [Raise a complaint or concern about your school](#).

This policy will be communicated to our school community in the following ways:

- Available publicly on school website
- Included in staff induction processes
- Included in our staff handbook/manual
- Discussed at parent information nights/sessions
- Annual reference in school newsletter
- Discussed at student forums/through communication tools
- Hard copy available from school administration upon request

Policy reviewed & Approved by	Principal & School Council 14/03/2023
Next scheduled review date	2024