



## **Complaints and Notifications Policy 2023 – 2025**

### **Rationale:**

Winthrop Primary School aims to create a school culture that welcomes, encourages, and initiates regular two-way school-home communication. It is recognized that caring parent and teachers want 'the best' for children. Clearly defined resolution processes facilitate parents and school personnel to focus on early resolutions to issues and concerns to foster and support children's academic progress, their physical development and social and emotional well-being.

Winthrop Primary School's Complaint Management Policy provides a school-based policy based on the following Education Department Policies and Guidelines:

- Complaints and Notifications Policy - July 2021
- Code of Conduct – 2021
- School Communities Working Together Communication Protocols

**Winthrop Primary School aims to adopt a solution focused approach to resolving complaints. Our aim is to:**

- ensure complaints lodged at Winthrop Primary School are resolved in a prompt and efficient manner.
- promote the highest standard of professionalism in resolving issues and concerns.
- ensure the resolution of complaints in accordance with the principles of procedural fairness.
- endeavor to acknowledge written complaints within 5 school days and to resolve local complaints within 14 days.

### **Purpose:**

Winthrop Primary School values communication between home and school to ensure the best possible education for your child. Our communication strategy includes:

- A welcome induction to the school for new parents at the commencement of the year
- A transition program at the end of the year for kindy and pre-primary
- An open invitation to new parents to ring the school to make an appointment with the Business Manager to provide a tour of the school
- Classroom Parent meetings organised by class teachers at the commencement of the school year
- An electronic newsletter produced each fortnight
- School website designed to provide information on school policy and procedures and current initiatives
- An open invitation to parents to organize a meeting any time of the year with your child's class teacher
- Fortnightly assemblies
- Parent forums/workshops

- Invitation to parents to participate in organized committees such as the Parents and Citizens Association and School Board.

## **Guidelines:**

### **As a member of the Winthrop Primary School Community, we agree to:**

- Demonstrate mutual respect of the role of teacher and parent in meeting the needs of each individual child
- Adopt a proactive approach to communication and building a sense of community
- Interact courteously and appropriately
- Be open to new learning and value positive contributions
- Approach problems calmly with the aim of finding a positive solution
- Maintain confidentiality
- Demonstrate positive support and advocacy for Winthrop Primary School.

Any person affected by service provision, or the actions of a school can make a complaint. You can make a complaint anonymously, however, it may be difficult to resolve it if we can't talk to you about details of your complaint, clarify issues or get further information.

You can make a complaint about:

- the provision of education
- any decision, including those about enrolment or support for your child's learning
- our policies or procedures
- the conduct or behaviour of a staff member.

This complaints process cannot be used for:

- public interest disclosures (whistle blower)
- disputes and grievances between staff members
- mandatory reporting responsibilities (mandatory reporting legislation requires only specific people or professionals to report suspected child sexual abuse)
- matters relating to family court (restraining orders, access agreements)
- complaints relating to Catholic and independent schools, or other government agencies.

Confidentiality of the information shared throughout the process is important to everyone involved and ask that you contribute to that. Respecting people's choices about what information is shared and with whom is important to achieving a positive outcome. If your complaint is about another person, we will usually tell them what has been said to give them a chance to respond.

You can choose to remove yourself from the complaint process at any time. If you lodged your complaint in writing, then you should withdraw it in writing. If you withdraw your complaint verbally, the staff member will make a note of the contact and any reason you provide at the time.

## **Procedures**

People making a complaint or notification are encouraged, in the first instance, to contact

their School to discuss their complaint.



[Understand the complaints process - Department of Education](#)

Contact the school as early as possible if you have concerns.

- Identify your concern. This helps to direct attention at the problem rather than the emotion that often results from the concern. (Writing may clarify your concern)
- Arrange an interview with your class teacher by making an appointment. It pays to mention the reason why you want the appointment. Not only is it a courteous thing to do, but it also gives the teacher an opportunity to prepare for the meeting the same way that you have.
- Discuss what is bothering you using a solution focused approach. You are meeting with your child' teacher because you have identified a problem which can best be solved through his/her active involvement. Ensure facts are correct, and you show willingness to be part of the solution.
- If you are not satisfied with the resolution, make an appointment, or provide a written complaint addressed to the Deputy Principal.
- If you are not satisfied with the resolution, address your written complaint to the principal.
- If your complaint is relating to staff misconduct, you may wish to lodge the complaint with the principal in the first instance.

**Class Teachers:**

- Always maintain confidentiality.
- Resolve parent concerns and complaints where possible by listening attentively, clarifying concerns, and showing a willingness to find a solution
- Communicate outcomes of parent concerns and complaints to a school administrator where appropriate.
- Refer parent complaints to a school administrator where appropriate.

**Principal:**

- Maintain confidentiality and impartiality in dealing with each matter.

- Ensure, wherever appropriate, that concerns, and complaints are resolved at the school level.
- Ensure that the process for managing complaints includes recording and monitoring of complaints and their outcomes to enable improvements to be identified and implemented.
- Ensure that enquiries, concerns, and complaint procedures are communicated clearly to parents and community members.
- Ensure that school policies and procedures are modified, where necessary, to address areas of concern.
- Ensure that complainants and respondents are aware that they can have a friend or adviser present during any discussion.
- Refer the complaint, where appropriate, to the Co-ordinator of Regional Operations, South Metropolitan Education District Office.

***Complaints can be made:***

- Verbally
- By letter
- By email
- Online [Understand the complaints process - Department of Education](#)

Help is available at the school to support complainants to formulate, write and lodge a complaint. Complaints can be lodged with the school using any of the contact methods listed above.

**Information that may be useful when raising a concern or making a complaint:** name and contact details

- copies of any relevant correspondence or documents relating directly to the complaint
- complaint
- what you consider is needed to resolve the complaint.

**Enquiring on the progress of a complaint:** Complainants may enquire as to the progress of their complaint at any time by directly contacting the appropriate person. This person will be identified for them at the time of lodging a verbal complaint, or in the acknowledgment letter for a written complaint.

The complexity of your complaint will have an impact on how it is managed, it and the amount of time it may take to resolve.

**Outcome of a complaint:** When your complaint has been assessed and the process is complete, we will let you know the outcome and explain the reasons for any decisions.

Some possible outcomes are that we may:

- provide an explanation
- provide feedback to the individual or school
- action taken to fix the matter or improve the situation
- acknowledge that the solution could have been handled better or differently
- to engage in a restorative process

If one of the outcomes recommends a change to a policy or procedure, we will include that information in our response to you.

Let us know if you are not satisfied with the outcome of your complaint, or you believe it was not handled properly.

**Independent Review:** If you are not happy with the handling of your complaint or believe the outcome is unreasonable, then you may wish to request an independent review at any stage throughout the process.

The [Ombudsman Western Australia](#) investigates complaints about the decision making of government agencies. The Ombudsman always observes an independent and impartial approach to the conduct of investigations as well as always observing procedural fairness.

Reviewed:	Next Review:
April 2023	April 2025