



Guidelines for Parents with Complaints Policy

Rationale:

The purpose of these guidelines is to provide a student or parent(s)/legal guardian with the opportunity to address issues and find solutions to a dispute or complaint. These steps should be followed to deal with issues which may arise at school.

1. Clarify the Issue

Before you approach the school or your child's teacher:

- be clear about the topic or issue you want to discuss
- focus on the things that are genuinely affecting your child
- always remain calm and remember you may not have all the facts
- think about what would be an acceptable outcome for you and your child
- be informed; check the relevant schools policies or guidelines

2. Contact the School

There are a number of ways you can informally raise concerns you have about your child and their education. You can:

- write a note to your child's teacher outlining your concerns
- make an appointment to speak on the phone or in person with their class teacher, the year level coordinator or home-group teacher; ensuring that you inform the school about the issue you wish to discuss
- consider speaking with the school's student welfare coordinator if you feel that this would be appropriate
- arrange any meeting times or phone calls through the school office (this is more convenient for both you and your child's teacher and does not interrupt teachers during the time they need to be with their students).

The class teacher or year level coordinator, together with any others who may be involved, should be given a reasonable amount of time to take the steps required to resolve or address your concerns. Remember, it may not always be possible to resolve an issue to your complete satisfaction.

3. Contact the Principal/Deputy/Head of School

Most concerns are resolved by following the first two steps above. However, if the issue remains unresolved after you have approached your child's teacher or other school staff you can then ask to see the deputy principal/head of school or principal.

To do this, you will need to request an appointment through the school office. Please note that:

- the principal may ask another senior staff member to speak with you on their behalf
- if a teacher is going to be present at the meeting it is more likely to occur outside of classroom hours
- you may choose to deal with this informally, or you may put the matter in writing to commence a formal process



If your concern is related to issues of school policy, as outlined in the School Handbook, or are in relation to the VRQA Minimum Standards, these should be raised more formally (in writing) with the principal or the school council.

4. **Ask for a Review by the School Council**

If you still feel that your complaint has not been addressed satisfactorily after speaking to the teacher and the principal, you can then ask the School Council to review the decision.

A written response will be forwarded to you.

5. **Contact Seventh-day Adventist Schools (Victoria) Limited Head Office**

Contact with the School's head office should only take place if all other steps have not led to a satisfactory resolution. All contact should be in writing to the Education Director educationdirector@adventist.org.au

Please Note

The complainant has the right to seek further resolution through relevant independent authorities, such as Independent Schools Victoria (ISV) and the Victorian Registration and Qualifications Authority VRQA).

References:

Victorian Department of Education

Parent Complaint – Government Schools 10/09/2014.

VRQA Minimum Standards: www.vrqa.vic.gov.au/Documents/schoolguide.doc

Equal Opportunity Act 2010

Commonwealth Privacy Act 2001

Ratified by Heritage College School Council February 2017