



## Grievance Process for Parents, Caregivers, Volunteers and Students

### Guide to Raising a Concern or Complaint

Melrose Primary School is all about our children. We create and uphold a nurturing environment for our children, families, teachers, volunteers, and the wider community. We are a small rural school of educators and learners who strive for excellence in education, and we are innovative and collaborative in our approach. We aim to maintain a sense of belonging for all our children encouraging them to reach their full potential.

Good relationships within our school allow staff members to fulfil their roles and also give students a greater chance of success. Melrose Primary School recognises that issues may sometimes arise that will cause people to feel aggrieved.

**A grievance is when we feel uncomfortable with the words, views or actions of another towards our self or others.**

When this happens, we need to know the correct way to satisfactorily have concerns heard and acted upon. Concerns may relate to relationships, student and or staff performance or school policies.

### CONCERNS SHOULD BE TAKEN UP IN THE FOLLOWING WAYS

#### For Parents, Caregivers and Volunteers

It is important that concerns and or grievances are kept confidential, and although at times you may wish to seek support from friends or an advocate, it is very important to do so wisely. When the matter is discussed in the student's hearing, it is important that the student understands that you have confidence that the issue will be resolved confidentially at the school level. Criticism of the school or teacher does not support the child's education as it undermines trust and confidence.

The working principles on which our school aims to resolve grievances are:

1. The safety of all members of the community are upheld
2. The inherent dignity of each person honoured
3. The freedom to participate fully in all learning opportunities provided
4. Keeping an open mind. The first task is to seek clarification of the facts.

If a parent/caregiver has a grievance with a member of a Melrose Primary School staff member, they are encouraged to contact the staff member and discuss the matter. Any parent/ caregiver who does not feel their grievance has been attended to in an appropriate manner or do not want to contact the staff member in the first instance has the right to take the matter to the Principal.

Be aware of your emotions. Reflect, plan and rehearse what you need to say before approaching the teacher or Principal. It may help to jot down a few points before the meeting. Try an opening statement such as “There is a misunderstanding that we need to clear up” or “There is a problem we need to solve together”.

Remember that you and the school have one thing in common and that is a commitment to the learning and wellbeing of your child.

### **For Students**

For many day-to-day minor issues students usually seek the advice of their peers and parents. As such peers and parents are asked to assist in developing skills and strategies that promote a lasting resolution and healing of relationships.

The school curriculum covers developing positive relations and conflict resolution skills and strategies. In the event of a minor grievance students are encouraged to resolve it by talking to the student on a one to one basis. It is important that students do not use threats or involve friends or other students as this may be interpreted as harassment.

For matters that are beyond the ability of an individual student to resolve, they are encouraged to speak to their Teacher, or another member of staff with whom they feel comfortable.

Should the matter be of a more serious nature the Principal is expected to be involved.

Any student who does not feel as though their grievance has been attended to in an appropriate manner has the right to take the matter to the Principal.

### **GRIEVANCE PROCEDURE – School Policies**

Melrose Primary School supports the right of all members of the school community who believes our school policies are not being supported or enforced appropriately to have their grievance addressed. The usual procedure to be followed in addressing a grievance, in the first instance, is to approach the person with whom you have the grievance. However, if you feel you are unable to do this, the following steps are recommended.

#### **STUDENTS**

1. Arrange a time to speak to another staff member you feel comfortable to talk with.
2. Let the staff member know what you consider to be unjust or unfair.
3. If your problem is not resolved talk to the Principal.

#### **PARENTS**

1. Arrange a time to speak to the teacher.
2. Let the teacher know what you consider to be unjust or unfair.
3. If the grievance is not addressed meet with the Principal.

If you believe the grievance has not been dealt with appropriately or resolved to your satisfaction, you can contact the Department for Education Complaint Unit on 1800 677 435 or email

[DECD.EducationComplaint@sa.gov.au](mailto:DECD.EducationComplaint@sa.gov.au)

Please see the Raising a Complaint with DfE on our website by clicking [here](#)