



COMPLAINTS POLICY

BLACKBURN LAKE PRIMARY SCHOOL

FLORENCE ST BLACKBURN 3130

PURPOSE

The purpose of this policy is to:

- provide an outline of the complaints process at Blackburn Lake Primary School (BLPS) so that 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 regarding BLPS are managed in a timely, effective, fair and respectful manner

SCOPE

This policy relates to complaints brought by parents, carers, students or members of our school community and applies to all matters relating to our school. In some limited instances, we may need to refer the complainant to another Department of Education and Training (DET) process where there are different mechanisms in place to review certain decisions, for example, expulsion appeals.

POLICY

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.

BLPS 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.

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(s) 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 DET policy
- recognise that schools and the DET may be subject to legal constraints on their ability to act or disclose information in some circumstances

Preparation for raising a concern or complaint

BLPS 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
- be informed by checking the policies and guidelines set by the DET and BLPS (see “Further Information and Resources” section below).

Complaints process

BLPS is willing to discuss with parents/carers and community members any concerns that they may have. Concerns in the first instance should be directed to the child’s teacher, the level coordinator, or the Assistant Principal/Principal as appropriate.

School staff will work with you to ensure that your concerns are appropriately addressed. Where concerns cannot be resolved informally via discussion, parents or community members may wish to make a formal complaint to the Principal or Assistant Principal.

Formal Complaints Procedure for BLPS:

- 1. Submission of a formal complaint:** Please either email, 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. We can discuss your complaint in a way that is convenient for you, whether in writing, in person or over the phone.
- 2. BLPS Information gathering:** Depending on the issues raised in the complaint, the Principal, Assistant Principal or nominee 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. BLPS will acknowledge receipt of your complaint as soon as possible and will seek to resolve complaints in a timely manner. Depending on the complexity of the complaint, BLPS 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 as soon as practicable. 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.
- 3. Meeting:** Where possible, a 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 a resolution is not possible, the complaint will be **escalated**.

Resolution

Where appropriate, BLPS may seek to resolve a complaint by:

- an apology or expression of regret
- a change of decision
- a change of policy, procedure or practice

- offering the opportunity for student counselling or other support
- other actions consistent with school values that are intended to support the student, parent and school relationship, engagement, and participation in the school community.

In some circumstances, BLPS may also ask the complainant to attend a meeting with an independent third party, or participate in a mediation with an accredited mediator to assist in the resolution of the dispute.

Escalation

If after the resolution meeting, the matter is unable to be resolved together, BLPS will work with the complainant to produce a written summary of the complaint in the event that further action is taken.

If the complainant is not satisfied that the complaint has been resolved by the school, or if the complaint is about the Principal and the complainant does not want to raise it directly with them, then the complaint should be referred to the North Eastern Regional Office.

BLPS may also refer a complaint to North Eastern Regional Office if the belief has been formed that all has been done to address the complaint.

For more information about the Department's *Parent Complaints* policy, including the role of the Regional Office, please see: [Parent complaints policy](#).

REVIEW PERIOD

This policy was last updated and ratified by School Council on 26th November 2019 and is scheduled for review in Nov 2022.