

Rationale:

- Parents may have concerns that they wish to take up with the school. At Murtoa College we welcome feedback and encourage parents to raise any issues so that they can be dealt with fairly, efficiently and in accordance with relevant legislation.
- Murtoa College is knowledgeable about its obligations under the **Child Safe Standards** (Ministerial Order 870 – effective August 1, 2016) to protect students from all forms of child abuse. To this end, all necessary precautions will be taken to ensure that all parent complaints and concerns do not pose a risk to child safety.

Aims:

These procedures cover concerns and complaints about:

- General issues of student behaviour
- Incidents of bullying and harassment
- Learning programs, assessment and reporting
- Communication
- School fees and payments
- General administrative issues
- Any other school related issues except as detailed below.

This policy does not cover matters where there are existing rights of review or appeal, as detailed in the Victorian Government School Reference Guide:

- Student discipline matters involving suspension
- Complaints about employee conduct or performance and complaints that should be dealt with by performance management, grievance resolution or disciplinary action
- Complaints by the Department's employees related to their employment
- Student critical incident matters
- Other criminal matters

Implementation:

The school expects a person raising a concern or complaint to:

- Do so promptly, as soon as possible after the issue occurs
- Provide complete and factual information about the concern or complaint
- Maintain and respect the privacy and confidentiality of all parties
- Acknowledge that a common goal is to achieve an outcome acceptable to all parties
- Act in good faith, and in a calm and courteous manner
- Show respect and understanding of each other's point of view and value difference rather than judge and blame
- Recognise that all parties have rights and responsibilities which must be balanced

Murtoa College will address any concerns and complaints received from parents:

- Courteously
- Efficiently
- Fairly

- Promptly or within an agreed timeline
- In accordance with due process, principles of natural justice and the Department's regulatory framework.

Process

In the first instance, a complaint should be made to the school. The complainant should telephone, visit or write to:

- The student's teacher if the issue or incident happened in class
- The year level coordinator or student wellbeing coordinator if students from various classes are involved
- The assistant principal about issues relating to staff members or complex student issues
- The principal about issues relating to school policy, school management, staff members or very complex student issues

If you are unsure who to contact, then contact should be directed to the principal or assistant principal in the first instance.

Complainants may seek the services of an advocate if they feel they are unable to express their concern clearly. An advocate can be a friend or someone from a support organisation who does not receive a fee for service.

All parties involved in addressing a complaint may seek the services of a mediator when there is difficulty coming to an agreement.

The principal will keep a record of complaints.

If a person with a concern or complaint is not satisfied with the outcome determined by the school, they should contact the Horsham regional office.

Evaluation:

Murtoa College will regularly review its policy and procedures to effectively address parent concerns and complaints as part of the normal school council policy review cycle.

This policy was last ratified by School Council in....

June 2017