

Complaints Policy

Monmia Primary School



MONMIA PRIMARY SCHOOL

- Learn and Achieve -

This policy was last ratified by School Council in: 2022
School Council President: Amanda Deakin

Rationale

This policy relates to complaints brought by students, parents, guardians, or members of our school community and applies to all matters relating to our school.

In some limited instances, we may need to refer a complainant to another policy or area if there are different processes in place to manage the issue including:

- Complaints and concerns relating to fraud and corruption will be managed in accordance with the department's Fraud and Corruption Policy
- Criminal matters will be referred to Victorian Police
- Legal claims will be referred to the Department's Legal Division

Complaints and concerns relating to child abuse will be managed in accordance with our Child Safety Responding and Reporting Obligations Policy and Procedures. For further details refer to the policy page [here](#)

Aim

The aim of this policy is to:

- provide an outline of the complaints process at Monmia Primary School so that students, parents, guardians 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 and concerns regarding Monmia Primary School are managed in a timely, effective, fair and respectful manner.

Implementation

Monmia Primary School 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.

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.

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 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 Department policy.
- recognise that schools and the Department may be subject to legal constraints on their ability to act or disclose information in some circumstances.

Complaints and concerns process for students

Monmia Primary School acknowledges that issues or concerns can cause stress or worry for students and impact their wellbeing and learning. Monmia Primary School encourages our students to raise issues or concerns as they arise so that we can work together to resolve them.

Students with a concern or complaint can raise them with a trusted adult at school, for example, with their classroom teacher, education support staff and Principal Class. This person will take their concern or complaint seriously and will explain to them what steps we can take to try to resolve the issue and support the student.

Students can also ask their parent, guardian or another trusted adult outside of the school, to talk to us about the issue instead. Information about our parent/guardian complaints and concerns process is outlined further below.

Other ways students can raise a concern or complaint with us include:

- talking to a member of the junior school council about the concern and any suggestions they have for resolving it
- participating in our Attitudes to School Survey (for Grades 4-6)

Further information and resources to support students to raise issues or concerns are available at:

- [Report Racism Hotline](#) (call 1800 722 476) – this hotline enables students to report concerns relating to racism or religious discrimination
- [Reach Out](#)
- [Headspace](#)
- [Kids Helpline](#) (call 1800 55 1800)
- [Victorian Aboriginal Education Association](#) (VAEAI)

Complaints and concerns process for parents, guardians and community members

Preparation for raising a concern or complaint

Monmia Primary School encourages parents, guardians 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 Department and Monmia Primary School (see “Further Information and Resources” section below).

Support person

The complainant is welcome to have a support person to assist them in raising a complaint or concern with our school. Please advise us if a support person will be coming providing their name, contact details, and their relationship to the complainant.

Raising a concern

Monmia Primary School is always happy to discuss with parents/guardians and community members any concerns that they may have. Concerns in the first instance should be directed to your child’s teacher, Assistant Principals or Principal. Where possible, school staff will work with you to ensure that your concerns are appropriately addressed.

Making a complaint

Where concerns cannot be resolved in this way, parents, guardians or community members may wish to make a formal complaint to the Principal or Assistant Principals, noting that formal complaints should be directed to a member of the school’s leadership team.

If a parent, guardian or community member would like to make a formal complaint, in most cases, depending on the nature of the complaint raised, our school will first seek to understand the issues and will then convene a resolution meeting with the aim of resolving the complaint together. The following process will apply:

1. **Complaint received:** Please either email (monmia.ps@education.vic.gov.au), telephone (9364 1007) or arrange a meeting through the front office with the Assistant Principals or Principal, to outline the complaint so that we can fully understand what the issues are. We can discuss the complaint in a way that is convenient, whether in writing, in person or over the phone.
2. **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.
3. **Response:** Where possible, a resolution 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 after the resolution meeting, we are unable to resolve the complaint together, we will work with the complainant to produce a written summary of the complaint in the event they would like to take further action about it. 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.
4. **Timelines:** Monmia Primary School will acknowledge receipt of the complaint as soon as possible (usually within two school days) and will seek to resolve complaints in a timely manner. Depending on the complexity of the complaint, Monmia Primary School may need some time to gather enough information to fully understand the circumstances of the complaint. We will endeavour to complete any necessary information gathering and hold a resolution meeting where appropriate within 10 working days of the complaint being raised. In situations where further time is required, Monmia Primary School will consult with the complainant and discuss any interim solutions to the dispute that can be put in place.

Please note that unreasonable conduct (e.g. vexatious complaints) may need to be managed differently to the procedures in this policy.

Resolution

Where appropriate, Monmia Primary School 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, Monmia Primary School 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 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 South Western Victoria Region by contacting swvr@education.vic.gov.au or 1300 333 232.

Monmia Primary School may also refer a complaint to South Western Victoria Region if we believe that we have done all we can to address the complaint.

For more information about the Department's parent complaints process, including the role of the Regional Office, please see: [Raise a complaint or concern about your school.](#)

Record keeping and other requirements

To meet Department and legal requirements, our school must keep written records of:

- Serious, substantial or unusual complaints
- Complaints relating to the Child Information Sharing Scheme and Family Violence Information Sharing Scheme, to meet regulatory requirements - refer to Child and Family Violence Information Sharing Schemes for further information

Our school also follows Department policy to ensure that record-keeping, reporting, privacy and employment law obligations are met when responding to complaints or concerns.

Communication

This policy will be communicated to our school community in the following ways:

- Available publicly on school website
- Included in staff induction processes
- Annual reference in school newsletter
- Hard copy available from school administration upon request

Further Information and Resources

The Department's Policy and Advisory Library (PAL):

- [Complaints - Parents](#)

The Department's parents' website:

- [Raise a complaint or concern about your school](#)
- [Report racism or religious discrimination in schools](#)

For further details refer to the school policy page [here](#) to obtain the Statement of Values and School Philosophy and Communication with School Staff policies.

Evaluation

The program leaders will review this policy as part of the school review cycle.

Policy last reviewed

June 2022

Consultation

June 2022

Approved by

Principal

Next scheduled review date

June 2024. Every 2 years