

Parent Concerns and Complaints

HOW TO RAISE A CONCERN OR COMPLAINT ABOUT YOUR CHILD'S EXPERIENCE AT A VICTORIAN GOVERNMENT SCHOOL

Preparing to raise a concern or complaint

- Seek a copy of your school's parent complaint policy.
- Be clear about your concern and how the school's actions relate to it.
- Understand that you may be required to share information with the school to help them understand your concerns.
- Have suggestions about how to resolve your concern and be open to suggestions from the school about how to support your child.
- You may need to discuss your concerns with your child and how to resolve it.

Step 1. Speak with your school

The simplest and best way to address your concern is to speak with your child's school.

- **Depending on the school's policy, speak** with your child's classroom teacher, year level coordinator or another staff member first about your concern. If you are unable to resolve the issue, advise that you will raise your concern with the principal.
- **Schedule an agreed time to meet** so you can both focus on the issue.
- **Treat each other with respect**, listen to each other and be considerate of each other's role in the situation.

Remember, both you and the school want what is best for your child's education and wellbeing. By working together to resolve a concern, you will have the best opportunity to maintain a positive relationship and place your child in the best position to achieve their educational goals.

Step 2. Talk to the regional office

If you have worked with the school and are not satisfied with the outcome, you can speak with staff at the regional office who will be able to discuss your concerns. The regional staff member may also discuss your concerns with the school or other specialised team members as needed.

The regional staff member will contact you to explore potential outcomes.

For information about how to contact your closest regional office, visit: www.education.vic.gov.au (search: our office locations). You can also call **1800 338 663**.

Step 3. Talk to the central office

If you have discussed your concern with the region and are still dissatisfied, you can contact the Department's complaints team at the central office. The team will discuss your concerns, help everyone involved in the complaint, and will look at different ways to resolve the issue.

Remember, you need to speak with your school and the region before contacting the central office.

Sometimes the complaints team may forward your concern to the Independent Office for School Dispute Resolution. The Independent Office will review their processes with you and give you the option of working with them if you wish.

To contact the central office, call **(03) 8688 7885** (message callback service) or email: school.complaints@education.vic.gov.au

If you are still unhappy with the result, you can contact the Victorian Ombudsman on **(03) 9613 6222** or email: complaints@ombudsman.vic.gov.au



Interpreting services

You can use the National Translating and Interpreting Service by calling **131 450**.

Additional support

We understand that raising a concern or complaint with a school can be stressful for parents and carers.

You can have a support person to help you at any time while making a complaint including someone in your family, a friend, community member or someone from a support agency.

If you need assistance, please contact a support service such as **Parentline** on **13 22 89**.

For further information about our parent complaints process and policy, please visit: www.education.vic.gov.au (search: parent complaints)