

# Blakeview Primary School complaint management and resolution process

## Raising a complaint

We recognise that sometimes things go wrong and you may feel that your expectations are not being met. If you have an unresolved complaint or want to provide feedback, we would like to hear from you. It's important to work together, talk, listen and find solutions in a courteous and respectful manner, so we can improve our services.

## Before making a complaint

Before making a complaint you should:

- clearly identify issues and the resolution you are after
- provide complete and factual information
- cooperate with any requests for more information
- not include deliberately false or misleading information
- treat staff handling the complaint with courtesy and respect.

## Types of concerns and complaints

You may choose to make a complaint if you believe that the school has:

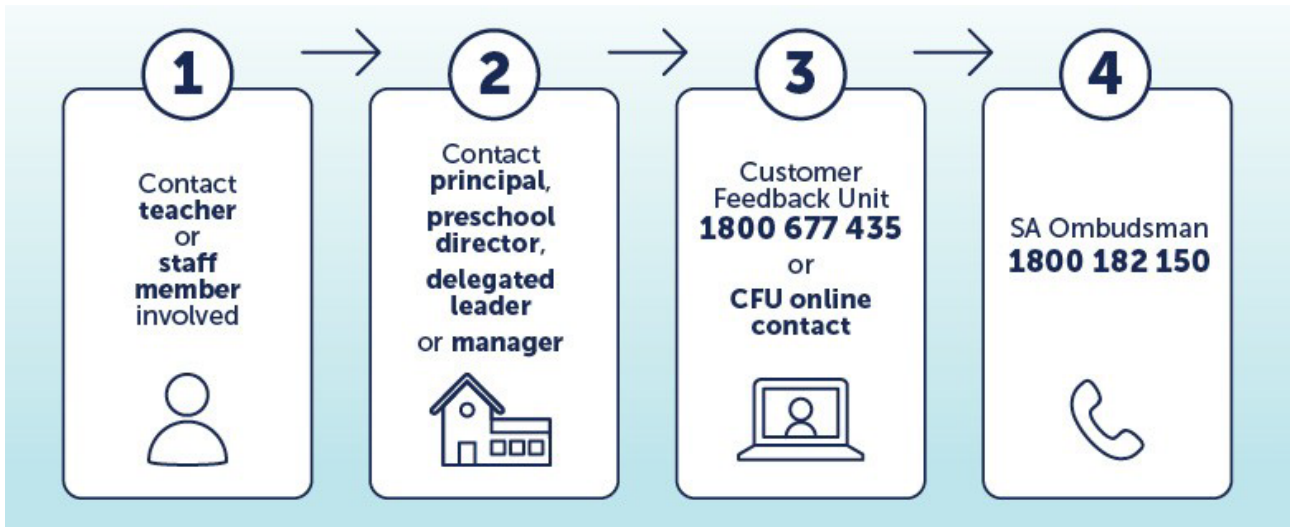
- done something incorrect
- failed to do something they should have done
- acted unfairly or impolitely.

Your complaint or feedback may be about:

- the type, level or quality of service
- the behaviour and decisions of staff
- a policy, procedure or practice.

Complaints and feedback may be about something we have to do because of state or federal law. We will talk to you and help you understand the requirements and why they exist.

## Process



## Level 1- complaint handling and early resolution

### In person at a school or preschool

You should contact the original decision maker first to discuss the matter and raise your concerns directly. This might be a Teacher, Leader or Principal. Making a complaint in person to the school can often be the quickest way to resolution. School contact number is 08 8254 7555.

When making a complaint in person, it's important to take time to prepare. Consider the following:

- make an appointment or set up a meeting with the Teacher, Principal or delegated leader
- set out important points for what to talk about to help make it clearer for you
- allow time for planning and thinking
- determine what you would like to know
- be as specific and factual as possible
- let the school know before the meeting what you want to know so they can respond at the meeting
- know what outcome you are seeking
- if it's suitable to bring someone to the meeting (a friend or advocate)
- take any supporting documents and a pen and paper to the meeting
- make a note of the people involved (for example who the complaint has already been lodged with)
- follow up any unresolved concerns after the meeting in writing.

### In writing

If your complaint is complex, submitting it online (in writing) may be the best option because:

- setting out important points can help make your concerns clearer
- it enables facts of situations as you know them to be described with clarity (be as specific and factual as possible)
- it allows time to plan and think

Ratified: 23/05/2023

Review: 23/05/2025



- it encourages a return response by email that you can keep and refer back to. Contact **dl.1854.info@schools.sa.edu.au**
- it gives the staff time to review the complaint and provide a thorough response.

## On the phone

When making a complaint or providing feedback on the phone think about the following:

- call at an appropriate time (for example when there are no distractions for you)
- try to remain calm so you can be clear about the issue
- be as specific and factual as possible
- wait until you are prepared (it might be helpful to develop a list of questions to ask beforehand)
- consider emailing the questions before making a call so that you can be given a response.

What may happen when I make a complaint or provide feedback?

You may receive:

- an opportunity to express your concern, explain your point of view and clarify misunderstandings
- an opportunity for staff to clarify their actions and help you to understand the requirements if a decision is related to a law or policy
- an acknowledgement that the complaint has been received
- advice about who will be managing the complaint, likely timeline and possible next steps
- reference to relevant policy, procedure or guideline.

What may happen after a complaint is made and followed up?

After the complaint is made and followed up:

- the complaint may be substantiated (upheld, confirmed), partially substantiated, unsubstantiated or the complaint may be resolved
- there may be a review or change of decision, practice or procedure or further information on a topic may be received
- there may be acknowledgement that the matter was handled appropriately or could have been handled better
- there may be a statement confirming the decision, practice, procedure or a statement of regret, if warranted

## Level 2- central complaint resolution

If you are not satisfied that the complaint has been addressed after you have exhausted options at the school level and with the Principal, the Customer Feedback Team is the next level contact.

The role of Customer Feedback is to give advice about the issues behind a school or decision and to confirm if departmental policy and procedure has been followed. Customer Feedback liaise with schools to help all parties explore appropriate options for resolution. The Customer Feedback Team are not a disciplinary or investigative

Ratified: 23/05/2023

Review: 23/05/2025



body. They accept anonymous complaints and feedback. If there is enough information they will action and/or respond. However, if there is little information and no contact details, the matter can't be followed up.

Customer Feedback aim to provide an outcome within 20 working days. Where this cannot occur due to the complexity of the matter or other extenuating circumstances, the customer will be provided with regular updates.

**Contact 1800 677 435 (free call) or online feedback and complaints form**

## Level 3- external complaint resolution

You may seek an external review from an independent body if all avenues to resolve the complaint have been used and the matter remains unresolved. An external review can be sought through the [Ombudsman SA](#).

External agency contact: Ombudsman SA (OSA) **Free call: 1800 182 150**

Email: [ombudsman@ombudsman.sa.gov.au](mailto:ombudsman@ombudsman.sa.gov.au)

## Unreasonable conduct by parents/carers/guardians

Unreasonable conduct is any behaviour by parents which, because of its nature or frequency, raises substantial health, wellbeing, resource or equity issues for the department, staff, other service users or the parent themselves.

- All customers will be treated with fairness and respect. Behaviour that is aggressive, violent, disrespectful or abusive will not be tolerated.
- Staff safety and wellbeing is paramount when dealing with unreasonable behaviour under the department's workforce health and safety and duty of care obligations. There is a need to balance the right for someone to make a complaint with the rights of staff to safety and respect, and the rights of other customers to equal time and resources.

## What is unreasonable conduct?

Unreasonable behaviour can be separated into 5 categories of conduct:

1. Unreasonable persistence
  - an unwillingness or inability to accept reasonable and logical explanations including final decisions
  - bombarding staff with phone calls, visits, letters, and emails after being asked not to do so.
2. Unreasonable demands
  - issuing instructions or making demands to staff on how the complaint should be managed, its priority or the outcome that should be achieved
  - demanding services that can't be provided, when this has already been explained. For example, revenge or punishment.
3. Unreasonable lack of cooperation
  - sending a constant stream of disorganised information without clearly defining the issues
  - providing little or no detail with a complaint
  - arguing frequently and with intensity that a particular solution is the correct one.
4. Unreasonable arguments

Ratified: 23/05/2023

Review: 23/05/2025



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- failing to follow a logical sequence
  - not supported by any evidence or based on conspiracy theories
  - false, malicious or inflammatory comments.
5. Unreasonable behaviours
- swearing, yelling or derogatory, racist, sexist or defamatory remarks
  - harassment, intimidation, threats or violence
  - rude, confronting and threatening correspondence
  - emotional manipulation and stalking (online or in person).

## Outcome of unreasonable conduct

Depending on the severity of the behaviour, unreasonable conduct can:

- change or limit your access to staff, students, school or preschool sites and department offices
- result in the issue of a warning or a prohibition on a school or preschool site
- result in police involvement.