



Complaints Procedure - School Community (See also Complaints and Grievances Policy)

Rossbourne School takes a zero-tolerance approach to child abuse and is fully committed to ensuring that its strategies, policies, procedures and practices meet all Child Safety Standards as specified in Ministerial Order No. 1359

PURPOSE

The purpose of this procedure is to:

- provide an outline of the complaints process at Rossbourne School so that parents and other members of the community are informed of how they can raise complaints or concerns about issues arising at the school
- ensure that all complaints regarding Rossbourne School are managed in a timely, effective, fair and respectful manner.

See also Rossbourne School: Complaints and Grievances Policy

SCOPE

This policy relates to complaints brought by parents, carers, or other members of the school community and applies to all matters relating to the school. In some limited instances, the Principal may need to refer the complainant to the School's governing body i.e. School Council, where there may be different mechanisms in place to review certain decisions.

PROCEDURES

Rossbourne 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 the 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:

- raise and discuss issues in a courteous and respectful manner
- acknowledge that the goal is to achieve an outcome that is in the affected person's best interests and acceptable to all parties

- act in good faith and respect the privacy and confidentiality of those involved, as appropriate
- recognise that all parties, including the broader school community, have rights and responsibilities that must be balanced
- recognise that the school may be subject to legal constraints on its ability to act or disclose information in some circumstances.

Preparation for raising a concern or complaint

Rosssbourne School 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 school policies and procedures

Complaints Process

Rosssbourne School staff are always willing to discuss with parents/carers and community members any concerns that they may have. Concerns in the first instance should be directed to your child's teacher or to the staff member concerned. Where possible, school staff will work with you to ensure that your concerns are appropriately addressed.

Where concerns cannot be resolved in this way, parents or community members may wish to make a direct complaint to the Principal.

If you would like to make a formal complaint, in most cases, and depending on the nature of the complaint raised, the 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, telephone or arrange a meeting through the front office with the Principal or nominee, 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 by email, by phone or in person.
2. Information gathering: Depending on the issues raised in the complaint, the 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 Principal or nominee 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 you to produce a written summary of the complaint in the event you would like further action to be taken. 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: The school will acknowledge receipt of your complaint as soon as possible (usually within 48 hours), and will seek to resolve complaints in a timely manner. Depending on the complexity of the complaint, the school 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 or respond in writing where appropriate within 10 working days of the complaint being raised. In situations where further time is required, the school will consult with you and discuss any interim solutions to the dispute that can be put in place.

Resolution

Where appropriate, Rossbourne 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 if appropriate
- 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, you may be asked 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 a parent or community member is not satisfied that their complaint has been properly resolved by the school, or if their complaint is in relation to the Principal, then the complaint should be referred to the school's governing body i.e. School Council.

Rossbourne School may also refer a complaint to School Council if it is believed that we have done all we can to address the complaint.

See Rossbourne School policies and procedures including:

- ***Code of Conduct School Community***
- ***Complaints and Grievances Policy***
- ***Statement of Values and School Philosophy***
- ***Student Engagement and Wellbeing***
- ***Whistleblower Policy***

This procedure will be reviewed as part of the Rossbourne School policy review cycle.

Ratified by Rossbourne School Council: 12 August 2020

Review date: August 2024