



# **Bowen State School**



## **Complaints Policy**



### **Phase 1 - Receiving and clarifying the complaint**

Any member of staff can receive a complaint.

All complaints are received in the following manner:

- being respectful and helpful
- giving the person your undivided attention
- not being defensive, apportioning blame
- remaining positive
- not perceiving anger as a personal attack.

When a staff member receives a verbal complaint they:

- listen carefully to the issues being raised
- summarise the issues to clarify and check that they understand what the complainant is telling you
- empathise and acknowledge the complainant's feelings
- find out what the complainant wants to happen as a result of the complaint
- tell the complainant that they may use the support of a third party in progressing the complaint, if they feel this is needed
- resolve the complaint if possible, or assure the complainant that an appropriate staff member will address their complaint
- advise the complainant what will happen with their complaint
- thank them for their complaint.

Complaints are sometimes made with the assistance of an advocate, interpreter or by a third party (as agreed between the complainant and the principal). In this case staff will receive and clarify a complaint from more than one person.

Many complaints are resolved at the first point of contact with information and/or an explanation, together with an apology and recognition of the effect the situation has had on the person. Some complainants may also want an undertaking that action will be taken to prevent the problem recurring.

When the complaint is not resolved immediately, the complaint is referred to the principal as soon as is practicable.

A member of staff who receives a verbal complaint that is not resolved informs the complainant of the further options of:

- putting their complaint in writing, or
- assisting the member of staff to record, in writing, the particulars of their complaint.

In general, if the complainant agrees to put the complaint in writing, the member of staff takes no further action unless or until a written complaint is received.

However, if the complaint relates to a report about harm (whether physical/emotional/sexual) of a student under 18 years attending a state educational institution, refer to [Student Protection](#), for detailed obligations of all Education Queensland employees.

Once the complainant indicates that they would like to register a formal complaint verbally, the member of staff makes a written outline of the issues concerned. The record is read to the complainant, with opportunity for appropriate amendments and the complainant is asked to sign, where possible, the written version of the complaint. The staff member also signs (indicating their personal designation, for example, 'Year 6 Teacher, XYZ State School') and dates the complaint.





The principal or delegate investigates complaints by:

- collecting and analysing information relevant to the matter
- working collaboratively with all people involved
- finding the facts relating to the matter
- identifying any contributing factors to the matter
- consulting the relevant [DET Procedure Register](#) on issues that relate to the complaint
- documenting the investigation report or outcome.

#### **Phase 4 - Making a decision about the complaint**

Based on the facts gathered in Phase 3 about the complaint, the principal or delegate makes a decision on the complaint.

#### **Notifying the complainant of the decision**

Within 28 days of the receipt of the complaint, the principal provides the complainant with either:

- a written response, including reasons for the decision, or
- a written notification that their complaint has been referred to an internal or external agency.

#### **Phase 5 Review Phase**

If the complainant is not satisfied with this response, they are encouraged to discuss it further with the school principal and/or advised to contact the [regional office](#).

Further review of the decision is available from the Queensland Ombudsman as described in [Making a Complaint](#).

Principal  
Bowen State School  
Date 12/2/2018

P&C/School Council  
Date 12/2/2018

Date of review Feb 2019

