

St Monica's Primary School	System Update: 19.12. 2022	
Version 0.1	Date of Next Review: 19. 12. 2024	

Student Complaints Procedure

Introduction:

St Monica's Primary School is committed to the establishment of a culturally safe environment in which the diverse and unique identities and experiences of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander young people are respected and valued.

All students at St Monica's Primary School have the right to feel safe and secure. Students also have the right to tell someone how they feel, including if they are unhappy or have a concern about their care.

If a child feels unsafe or is unhappy with something that happened, or is happening, at our school they have a right to raise this with their Classroom Teacher, the Principal or other Staff Members.

This procedure outlines what students can do if they have a concern or complaint & who they can talk to and what will happen once they raise it.



Definitions:

Complaint: A 'Complaint' is something you make when you are unhappy about something or someone.

Concern: A 'Concern' is when you have a worry about something or someone.

Both a complaint and a concern can be shared with anyone, e.g. your parents, teachers or friend. If you tell a teacher or another member of staff at our school about a complaint or concern, it will be taken seriously, and we will listen to what you have to say.

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Things to Think About When Making a Complaint:

- » Is my complaint about something which affects the whole school or a group of students?
- » Could I solve the problem by talking to my Parent or Carer, Classroom Teacher, a Teaching Assistant, or someone else in school?
- » When making a complaint, we ask that you make it as soon as possible so we can properly investigate it and resolve any problems you have.
- » If you are making a complaint about someone you shouldn't complain directly to them – talk to your Parents or Carer, another Teacher, Deputy Principal or Principal.

What Will Happen If I Raise a Concern or Make a Complaint?

- » A meeting will be held with a Staff Member (Classroom Teacher, Deputy Principal or Principal) to discuss your concern or complaint.
- » During the meeting, the Staff Member will make notes of what was discussed, as well as additional discussions that have been held about the concern or complaint.
- » You don't have to worry if another Staff Member or your Parents or Carers are told about your concern or complaint; you are not in trouble. It just means that the person you told thinks it is best to tell them to keep you safe and happy at school.



What Will the Staff Member or Adult Ask Me?

When you raise a concern or make a complaint, the Staff Member or Adult you tell will talk to you about the following things:

- » The main problems you have, your options and how it might be dealt with by staff.
- » If any actions will be taken by the school as a result of your concern or complaint.

What If Someone Raises a Concern or Complaint About Me?

- » If a concern is raised or a complaint made about you, you will be asked to talk to the adult responsible for receiving the complaint, so you have the chance to tell your side of the story.
- » You will always be treated fairly by the school when looking into the seriousness of the concern or complaint.

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Complaints Procedure:

St Monica's Primary School recognises the right of an individual student to feel free to voice a concern or make a complaint. Staff Members will endeavour to investigate, address and, if required, resolve the concern or complaint in an open and fair manner. If a student has a concern or wishes to make a complaint that they would like the school to address, the guidelines below should be followed:

Step One – Informing a Staff Member

The student should choose to discuss the concern or complaint with a Staff Member that they feel most comfortable with.

The student may take a friend, Parent or Carer along for support.

1. Concern is raised with a trusted person
2. Matter is investigated
3. Meeting with relevant parties
4. Resolution agreed by all parties
5. Matter is documented in Student File
6. Monitoring and evaluation

Step Two – Student Wellbeing Leader / Deputy Principal

If the concern or complaint cannot be resolved by the initial Staff Member in Step One.

The student is encouraged to speak to the Student Wellbeing Leader / Deputy Principal to attempt to resolve the concern or complaint.

The student may take a friend, Parent or Carer along for support.

1. Concern is raised with a trusted person
2. Matter is investigated
3. Meeting with relevant parties
4. Resolution agreed by all parties
5. Matter is documented in Student File
6. Monitoring and evaluation

Step Three – Meeting with the Principal

If the concern or complaint cannot be resolved by the Student Wellbeing Leader / Deputy Principal in Step Two.

The student is encouraged to speak to the Principal to attempt to resolve the concern or complaint.

The Principal will consult with other Staff Members previously involved in attempting to resolve the concern or complaint. The Principal's decision is final.

1. Concern is raised with a trusted person
2. Matter is investigated
3. Meeting with relevant parties
4. Resolution agreed by all parties
5. Matter is documented in Student File
6. Monitoring and evaluation

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All students should be aware that in some instances confidentiality cannot be guaranteed if the matter is serious or criminal in nature. Students need to be aware that school staff may be obliged to share information with relevant school leaders and/or the social worker, police or outside agency depending on the nature of the concern.

Teaching Staff Members and other employees have mandatory reporting obligations in accordance with the *Victorian Children, Youth and Families Act 2005*. Mandatory reporters must make a report to child protection, if:

- » In the course of practising their profession or carrying out duties of their office, position or employment they form a belief on reasonable grounds that a child is in need of protection from physical injury or sexual abuse.

References:

Australian Government National Office for Child Safety - *Complaint Handling Guide: Upholding the Rights of Children and Young People 2022*

Commission for Children & Young People (CCYP) – *Standard Seven, Processes for Complaints and Concerns are Child-Focused 2022*

Victorian Government - *Children, Youth and Families Act 2005*