

Government of South Australia  
Department for Education and  
Child Development

# Tarlee Primary School

## Concerns or Complaints Policy

Ratified by Governing Council: 2012  
Reviewed: 2015  
Next Review date:2018

## Statement:

At Tarlee Primary School, we believe that:

Learners, their families and the school are active partners in the learning process.  
Learners and their families are encouraged to building enduring and positive relationships with all educators.  
Learners will experience a positive, safe environment in which all partners and resources are respected and valued.  
Communication between partners is regular, honest, opened and valued.

## Rationale:

At Tarlee Primary School, we are committed to fostering a safe, harmonious and productive environment for everyone who is involved with the school.  
We acknowledge that, despite all the best efforts, interactions between educational partners, is, sometimes, less than ideal. To protect the enduring and positive relationships necessary for quality learning, there needs to be clear guidelines for all partners in these circumstances. The Tarlee Primary School Complaints Policy provides clear procedures for handling these conflicts.

This policy follows the Departmental guidelines for conflict management and resolution and is part of a series of inter related policies for the safety and wellbeing of students, parents, volunteers, visitors and any other person who come onto the school site. This policy should be read in conjunction with the following other site policies:

- Student Wellbeing Policy
- Anti Bullying Policy
- Behaviour Management policy
- Cyber Safety and Anti-Bullying Policy
- Acceptable use of Technology and the Internet
- Mobile Phone Policy
- Guide to Resolving Complaints for DECD Employees (For staff)

The Complaints policy is designed for all parties to reach a win/win solution where all parties feel satisfied that:

- They have been heard.
- There is a mutually agreed decision or solution
- They can move forward amicably.

## Complaints:

A complaint arises when one or many participants in an event feel:

- That they or others have been treated unfairly.
- One or more parties feel unable to fulfil their designated roles and responsibilities successfully and positively.
- Feel afraid to complain because they fear the consequences.
- Being excluded, discriminated or bullied.

This may involve interactions peer to peer between students; student and adult, or adult to adult. Handling a complaint requires that all parties try to remain calm - or wait until they can remain calm and following the steps set out in the flow charts attached (appendix A and B). Staff are provided with the flow chart (appendix B) as part of their site induction package and families are provided with the flow chart (appendix B) as part of the enrolment package. Students are explicitly taught, by modelling in actual and role played scenarios, the complaints procedures and are provided with a copy of the complaints procedures (Appendix A). Complaints procedures are displayed in all teaching and administrative areas of the site.

## Responsibilities:

### Students will:

- Be aware of the complaints procedures.
- Attempt to remain calm.
- Use POOCH problem solving method. (appendix C)
- Listen to and respect the opinions and feelings of others.
- Follow the steps set out on the flow chart (appendix A). Inappropriate behaviour will result in the implementation of other policies including (but not confined to) the Behaviour Management, Anti-Bullying, Cyber Safety and Anti-Bullying Policies.
- Seek the help of a trusted adult (teacher or the principal if it involves another student).
- Deal with the complaints in a place that is safe and appropriate to finding a win/win situation. Students should not attempt to resolve a problem in the middle of a lesson but wait until the lesson is over.
- Refrain from discussing the complaints with other students not directly involved in the complaint.
- Use reasonable and sensible attitudes in the effort to reach a win/win decision or solution
- Abide by the decision or solution agreed upon.

### Staff will:

- Be familiar with the complaints procedures for themselves and students.
- Attempt to remain calm when dealing with a complaint.
- Listen to and respect the opinions and feelings of others.
- Follow the steps set out on the complaints procedure flow chart (Appendix B). Inappropriate behaviour will result in the implementation of other policies relating to staff conduct.
- Seek the help of the principal as mediator (if required).
- Deal with the complaints in a place that is safe and appropriate and as soon as practicable.
- Maintain confidentiality by refraining from discussing the complaints with others not directly involved in the complaints and dealing with the complaints in a place that is appropriate - such as the office.
- Inform the principal (and other necessary staff) of both the complaints and decision/solution involving students.

- Inform the principal of both complaints and decision/solution involving family or community members and the school.
- Use reasonable and sensible attitudes in the effort to reach a win/win decision or solution.
- Abide by the decision or solution agreed upon.
- Follow up on any complaints and decision/solution involving students to ensure a decision/solution has been reached and that the parties are abiding by the decision/solution.
- Keep appropriate and confidential documentation as requested by either the principal or the Department.

### Families and members of the Community will:

- Be aware of the Tarlee Primary School Complaints procedures.
- Attempt to remain calm when dealing with a complaint.
- Listen to and respect the opinions and feelings of others.
- Follow the steps set out on the complaints procedure flow chart (Appendix B or D).
- Deal with the complaints in a place that is safe and appropriate and as soon as practicable.
- Maintain confidentiality by refraining from discussing the complaints with others not directly involved in the complaints and dealing with the complaints in a place that is appropriate.
- Use reasonable and sensible attitudes in the effort to reach a win/win decision or solution.
- Abide by the decision or solution agreed upon.

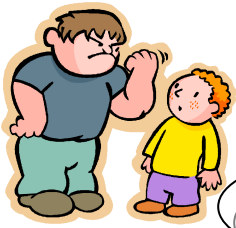
**Please note: If any family or community member has a complaints with student of the school, they must approached a staff member – Teacher or Principal not the student.**

### The Principal will:

- Keep appropriate and confidential documentation on each complaints as directed by the Department or other statutory body.
- Act as a mediator in the complaints procedure as appropriate.
- Be aware of all complaints and decisions/solutions that involve students, staff and the school in the wider community.
- Follow up on all complaints and the decisions/solutions made as a part of the complaints procedure process.
- Disseminate information to students, staff, family and community regarding strategies in dealing with complaints as appropriate.

# Grievance Procedures

When you have a problem



1. Talk with the person if you feel you can. Ask a friend to help you



2. Resolved



2. Not resolved

3. Speak to an adult at school



4. Resolved



4. Not resolved

5. Speak to the Principal



6. Resolved



6. Not resolved

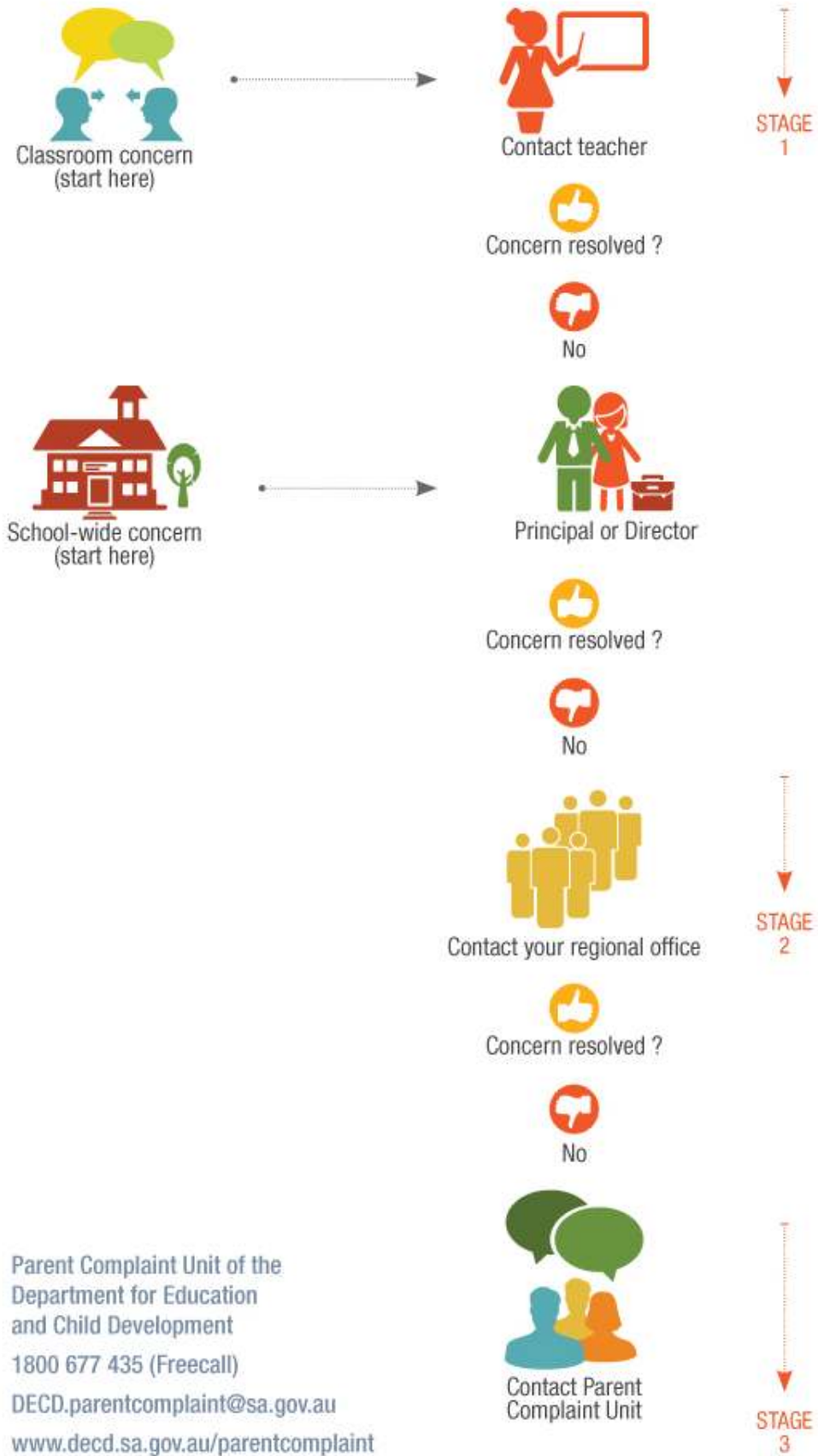
7. Ask your Mum or Dad to speak to the Teacher / Principal



8. Resolved



## How to get help with a concern or complaint



# POOCH decision-making model



**P**

Problem

What is the problem?

**O**

Options

What can you do?

**O**

Outcomes

What could happen?

**C**

Choice

What is your decision?

After you carry out your decisions, ask yourself:

**H**

How?

How did it turn out?

Remember:

- 🐾 Decision-making is a skill
- 🐾 Like any skill, it takes practise to get good at it!

# Making Decisions

**Problem**

What is the problem?

**Options**

What can you do?

**Outcomes**

What could happen if you took this option?

**Choice**

What is your decision?

My decision is.....



How did it turn out?



Appendix D DECD's complaint flow chart.

