

# HALLS GAP PRIMARY SCHOOL



## COMPLAINTS MANAGEMENT POLICY

### **Rationale:**

Our school has both a desire and a responsibility to ensure that high standards of conduct are maintained by staff, parents and students at all times, and that complaints are managed and resolved fairly, efficiently, promptly and in accordance with relevant legislation.

Halls Gap Primary School values EXCELLENCE, RESILIENCE AND COMPASSION, all values that the school will uphold to manage concerns and complaints from parents.

### **Aims:**

- To provide a harmonious, positive and productive school environment.
- To resolve complaints fairly, efficiently, promptly and in accordance with relative legislation.

Halls Gap PS aims to handle all concerns or complaints based on the understanding that the school;

- √ Provides a safe and supportive learning environment,
- √ Builds relationships between students, parents and staff,
- √ Provides a safe working environment for staff.

### **Implementation:**

From time to time parents may have concerns that they wish to take up with the school. At Halls Gap PS we welcome feedback and encourage parents to raise any issues so that they can be dealt with in a timely and professional manner. The school aims to work with the school community to support each student's needs. We can only do this through a cooperative approach.

These procedures cover concerns and complaints about:

- General issues of student behaviour that are contrary to the schools code of conduct/engagement policy
- Incidents of bullying or harassment in the classroom or in the school yard
- Learning programs, assessment and reporting of student learning
- Communication with parents
- Schools fees and payments
- General administrative issues
- Any other school-related matters except as detailed under DET Policy below.

The following procedure should be used to assist parents in addressing any concerns within the school community.

1. Parents should raise the matter by verbal or written communication to the school. Please remember that the person you wish to speak to (Principal or Teacher) may have other commitments at the time of your communication. You should make an appointment to see the appropriate person especially if the matter is of a serious nature. Many concerns can be clarified by speaking directly with your child/ren's Classroom Teacher. Should you feel the concern or complaint is more serious than this; an appointment should be made directly with the Principal. Outline the seriousness of your issue with the person you initially speak to if you believe an urgent response is necessary.
2. If you feel the issue is not resolved make an appointment to see the Principal. Inform them of the nature of the issue when you make the appointment.
3. Following your meeting with the Principal you may need

- To provide further information
  - To be available for further discussion with appropriate people within the school.
  - To consider the involvement of DET guidance officers, psychologist, social workers or personnel from community agencies.
4. All issues and complaints should ultimately be resolved at the school level in order to provide the best possible outcome for students.
  5. If a concern or complaint is substantiated in whole or part, the school will offer an appropriate remedy at its discretion and depending on all the circumstances.

Halls Gap PS is committed to seeking a resolution to all concerns sensitively and with a commitment to listening and responding to parents concerns positively and professionally. Therefore we ask that all parties conduct any interactions in a positive manner and refrain from verbal abuse and/or threatening behavior.

If any interaction between parents or members of the public and school based personnel involves such unacceptable behavior, any discussion or meeting will be terminated. Discussion may only continue at an appropriate time when an agreement to continue in a professional and positive manner is given.

The school will make information about procedures for making addressing concerns and complaints readily available to parents within the school community, in clear and easy to understand language, in a range of formats that are accessible to everyone so that no-one is disadvantaged.

The school will monitor parent concerns and complaints and consider issues raised through the parent complaints process, and any other relevant information from the parent opinion survey, when undertaking a review of the school's policies, procedures and operations.

#### **DET Policy:**

These procedures do not cover matters for which there are existing rights of review or appeal as detailed in the Victorian Government Schools Reference Guide. Those matters include:

- Students discipline matters involving expulsion
- Complaints about employee conduct or performance complaints that should be dealt with by performance management, grievance resolution or disciplinary actions
- Complaints by the Departments employees related to their employment
- Student Critical Incident Matters
- Other criminal matters.

#### **Evaluation:**

This policy was last updated 16<sup>th</sup> August, 2018. It is scheduled for review 16<sup>th</sup> August, 2021..



**Parent Concern or Complaint Record**

<b>Parent Name</b>				
<b>Contact Details</b>				
<b>Date</b>				
<b>Form by which complaint was made (tick).</b>	Face-to-Face	Telephone	In Writing (Copy attached)	Email (Copy Attached)
<b>Staff member taking this concern or complaint</b>	<b>Name:</b>  <b>Role:</b>			
<b>Description of the Concern or complaint.</b>  (Add further pages as required).				
<b>Action taken on the concern or complaint</b>				
<b>Outcome of action taken</b>				
<b>Future recommendations</b>				
<b>Signed and Dated by</b>				
.....		.....		
<b>Complainant</b>		<b>Staff member taking the complaint</b>		

This complaint has been sighted by the principal:

Signed:  
Date:

A copy of this has been filed in the Principals complaints management file.

## **Parent Information Regarding Concerns and Complaints**

Our school welcomes feedback and encourages parents to raise issues so they can be dealt with speedily and resolved to the satisfaction of all concerned.

The following guidelines have been developed to assist parents in addressing such concerns:

**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 student'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 schools and the department may be subject to legal constraints on their ability to act or disclose information in some circumstances.

**Preparation for raising a concern or complaint. Halls Gap Primary 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 the policies and guidelines set by the Department and **Halls Gap Primary School.**

The process to raise a concern:

1. Raise the matter with the school via telephone, note, letter, email, or personally at the office.
2. Contact with the school will best advise you as to who is the most appropriate person to make an appointment with. This may be a class teacher or the Principal.
3. Staff at the school will be able to explain school policy or DET requirements that may relate to your concerns. They may also refer you to the wide range of educational information on the school's website or the Department's website at [www.education.vic.edu.au](http://www.education.vic.edu.au).
4. If the issue is not resolved, make an appointment to see the Principal to further discuss the matter. The Principal has the responsibility to ensure all issues are appropriately addressed and resolved. After this meeting you may need to:
  - Be prepared to monitor the situation with follow up phone calls or meetings with relevant staff member(s).
  - Be available for further discussions with appropriate people at school as required.
  - Consider involving the support of outside agencies such as advocates, guidance officers or social workers. This can be arranged through the school.
5. If the matter is still unresolved you may seek advice from the Grampians Regional Office, phone 5337 8444. The role of the Region is to provide additional advice, support and feedback to the school in seeking a positive solution.
6. All issues and complaints must ultimately be resolved at the school level and the principal is the key person in reaching a satisfactory outcome. The school is committed to seeking a resolution to all concerns sensitively and with a commitment to listening and responding positively to all concerns.