

PERTH WALDORF SCHOOL GRIEVANCE AND CONCERNS FAQ's

“How should I complain?”

You can contact the school in the following ways:

- In person
- By telephone: (08) 9417 3638
- By email: pws@pws.wa.edu.au
- Or by letter: PO Box 1247, Bibra Lake, WA 6965

Please ask if you require some assistance in expressing your concern.

When you contact the school, please speak with the receptionist or ask to speak to another appropriate staff member. Be as clear as possible about what is troubling you. Members of staff will be happy to help.

There is a grievance and concern flow chart and report form that can help. Try to follow the grievance and concern procedure. It is on the website and available from the front office. It may be best to start with the person most closely concerned with the issue - e.g. the classroom teacher, or subject teacher. They may be able to sort things out quickly, with the minimum of fuss. However, you may prefer to take the matter to a more senior member of staff, for example, the Faculty Coordinator or School Administrator.

“I don't want to complain as such, but there is something bothering me”

The school is here for your child, and we want to hear your views. You can start by contacting a member of staff, as described above, or attending Listening Circle with the School Administrator (please see the Pabulum for the day and time that this is held).

“I am not sure whether to complain or not”

If, as parents you have concerns, you are entitled to raise them. If in doubt, you should contact the school, as we are here to help.

“What will happen next?”

If you raise something face-to-face or by telephone, it may be possible to resolve the matter immediately and to your satisfaction.

If you have made a complaint or suggestion in writing, we will contact you in a timely manner, to respond to your concerns and explain how we propose to proceed.

In many circumstances, the person you contact will need to discuss the matter with a colleague and consider it further before responding. You will receive a response. If a detailed exploration of the issue is needed, a letter or report may be sent to you. This will tell you of the outcome of your complaint. It will explain the conclusion, the reasons for it, and any action taken or proposed.

Please be aware that in some cases the school will not be able to discuss the details of action taken as it would be inappropriate. For example, if the action involved staff discipline. Under its legal obligation the school is also not able to divulge information on matters which require the involvement of a relevant government authority, without the permission of that government authority.

“What happens about confidentiality?”

Your grievance or concern will be treated in a confidential manner and with respect. Knowledge of it will be limited to the School Administrator and those directly involved. The Chairperson of the School Council may also need to be informed. It is the school’s policy that complaints made by parents and guardians should not rebound adversely on their children.

We cannot entirely rule out the need to make third parties outside the school aware of the complaint and possibly also the identity of those involved. This would only be likely to happen where, for example, a child’s safety was at risk or it became necessary to refer matters to the Police or another external authority. If information is passed to a third party, you will usually be informed, unless this is prevented by legal obligation.

“Can I remain anonymous?”

We would prefer to know the identity of a person making a complaint as it can help in investigation and resolution. Anonymous complaints will be noted and dealt with in accordance with the circumstances, available information and the action required.

“What if I am not satisfied with the outcome?”

We hope that you will feel satisfied with the outcome, or at least that your concerns have been fully and fairly considered and you have been heard.

If you are not satisfied, the School Administrator will offer to refer the matter to the Chairperson of the School Council. Alternatively, you may wish to write directly to the Chairperson whose contact details can be found on page 11 of the Grievance and Concerns Policy on the School website.

The Chair will call for a report from the School Administrator and will examine matters thoroughly before responding to ensure that the complaint has been handled in accordance with the school’s policy and procedures as well as to give further consideration. When notified of the outcome of the Chairperson’s review and consideration, the opportunity of a meeting with the Chairperson may be offered, if you remain concerned. You may wish to be supported by a friend, but legal representation would not be appropriate at this stage.

If the meeting does not bring about a resolution, the matter may be referred to arbitration. It is the arbiter’s task to look at the issues in an impartial and confidential manner. You would be invited to a meeting with a mutually agreed upon arbiter. You will be asked if there are any papers you would like to have circulated beforehand. As with the Chairperson’s meeting, you will be offered the opportunity to bring a support person with you.

The school recognises and acknowledges your entitlement to raise concerns and we hope to work with you in the best interests of the children in our care.