



School Community and Consumer Complaint and Compliment Procedure

Key Accountability: School and Community Partnerships

Departmental Policy References: <https://education.nsw.gov.au/policy-library/policies/complaints-handling-policy>

Purpose

The aim of this policy is to communicate to the school community how the school manages complaints. It should be read in conjunction with the DEC policy *Complaints Handling Policy*.

Rationale

Complaint and compliment handling at Connells Point Public School is fair, efficient and accessible. The school has a respectful and productive workplace culture where consumers, members of the community, and staff can raise their concerns directly.

The NSW Department of Education and Communities (DEC) seeks to resolve difficulties, grievances and complaints in a prompt, impartial and just manner. The majority of complaints are resolved informally. However, some types of complaints need to be treated in special ways because of particular legislation, policies and procedures and may require the use of separate procedures or be referred to another unit within or outside the department.

https://education.nsw.gov.au/policy-library/associated-documents/School-complaint-procedure_AC.pdf

The purpose of this policy is to outline how complaints will be handled by the Department of Education. The complaint procedure is intended to:

1. Enable the school to respond appropriately to complaints
2. Resolve complaints in a timely, fair and helpful manner
3. Give the public confidence in our administrative process
4. Provide information to enhance services, systems and complaints handling
5. Prevent complaints or students from suffering detriment because a complaint has been made by them or on their behalf

Implementation

At Connells Point Public School you can expect we will:

1. Deal with your concern or complaint honestly and politely.
2. Look into the matter raised thoroughly, fairly and as quickly as possible.
3. Keep you up-to-date with what we are doing.
4. Explain our decisions.
5. Apologise if we have made a mistake.
6. Tell you what we are doing to put things right.
7. Focus on solving the problem.

Who can make a complaint or compliment?

Anyone can make a complaint or compliment including students, parents, carers and community members. We can assist you to make a complaint or compliment.

What can a complaint or compliment be about?

The complaint or compliment can be about any aspect of the service provided, or not provided, at Connells Point Public School including:

- The conduct or decisions of our staff.
- Our work methods, practices, policies or procedures.

How are complaints and compliments managed?

A complaint or compliment is managed in four steps:

1. Receiving and clarifying a complaint or compliment
2. Deciding how to handle a complaint or compliment
3. Finding out about the complaint or compliment
4. Making a decision about a complaint or compliment

1. Receiving and clarifying a complaint or compliment

Anyone at the school can receive your complaint or compliment in writing, by email, by phone, by fax or in person. A staff member who receives a complaint or compliment will determine and advise you whether the complaint or compliment can be resolved informally or whether it should be referred to a supervisor and why.

If you wish to utilise the DEC Official Form it can be downloaded:

https://education.nsw.gov.au/media/c-and-e/complaints_and-compliments_form.pdf

Often the first point of contact for complaints/compliment in person or by phone is our school office staff. They will take a complaint/compliment and refer it to the person delegated to deal with the nature of the issue. This may be the class teacher, assistant principal or principal. They will ask for some brief details from you about the nature of the complaint to assist in the assessment process.

In most cases, concerns about student behaviour, organisation and curriculum are referred to the class teacher or relevant Assistant Principal of that stage. Concerns about specific school activities are referred to the teacher delegated with responsibility. Concerns about a person, school policies or procedures are referred to the principal. The school will keep records of complaints/compliment received.

The beginning and end of a school day are busy times for teaching staff and it may not be possible to sort things out immediately due to other teaching responsibilities or staff absences. However, you can expect any matter that can be resolved informally to be actioned within five working days of receipt.

2. Deciding how to handle a complaint

If your complaint cannot be resolved in an informal way or is assessed as more serious or subject to special procedures, we **may** ask you to put it in writing including:

1. Your contact details.
2. Specific details of the problem.
3. The outcome you are seeking.

The principal will assess how the complaint should be managed including:

1. The formal procedure that is applicable.
2. Providing advice in writing on which procedure will be used and by whom.

3. Finding out about the complaint

If other procedures do not apply, the principal or delegate collects and analyses information relevant to the matter including facts and other contributing factors.

4. Making a decision about a complaint

If other procedures do not apply, the principal or delegate will provide you with a written response to a formal complaint within fifteen working days of receipt by the principal, including reasons for the decision. If you remain dissatisfied you may request a review of the decision.