



HELENSVALE  
STATE HIGH SCHOOL



# Raising a Concern

We **ASPIRE** for each and every student to succeed.  
We **BELIEVE** in One Student, One Community, Many Futures.  
We **VALUE** respect, responsibility, resilience.

During your child's school years, you may have cause to raise a concern or make a complaint about an issue with their education. The Department of Education and Helensvale State High School are committed to ensuring that all concerns raised are dealt with in a fair, equitable and respectful manner. There are processes and support structures in place to enable families to work through any issues they may have.

Raising your concern in a timely manner with the school provides an opportunity to identify issues and take action to improve service delivery and customer experience, while also driving a culture of continuous improvement across the school.

When managing a customer complaint or concern, Helensvale State High School appreciates and acknowledges that you have a right to:

- Complain or raise a concern
- Be treated with respect and courtesy
- Be treated equitably and fairly
- Be informed of the conduct that is expected of you.

## **Responsibility**

When raising a concern or making a complaint, it is in the best interest of complaint resolution to ensure that you:

### ***Complainant***

- cooperate in a respectful way and understand that unreasonable conduct will not be tolerated.
- raise the concern in person, by telephone, writing or email.
- provide a clear idea of the problem and the desired outcome.
- provide all relevant factual information and any supporting evidence if applicable, when the customer complaint is made.
- understand that complex customer complaints can take time to assess, manage and resolve.
- understand that some decisions cannot be overturned or changed.
- inform the school of changes affecting the concern or complaint, including if help is no longer required.
- do not make inappropriate or unreasonable demands on the school's time, resources or staff.
- never make frivolous or vexatious complaints or include deliberately false or misleading information.

### ***All staff involved in managing customer complaints***

- acknowledge to the complainant that their customer complaint has been received. Acknowledgement can be provided in writing or verbally.
- decide if a customer complaint is frivolous or vexatious.
- consider human rights when responding to a customer complaint.
- resolve customer complaints promptly.
- maintain appropriate records to support each step in the customer complaints management processes.
- provide procedural fairness to complainants and persons who are the subject of the customer complaint.
- keep an up-to-date customer complaints register.
- consider customer complaints management as part of planning and risk management activities.

### ***Additional responsibilities for principals or deputy principals***

- ensure information about how to raise a concern or make a complaint and how a complaint will be managed is available at the school website.
- seek advice from Regional Office as required.

Helensvale State High School respects the confidentiality of personal information provided throughout the complaints process however, you should be aware that if you are making a complaint about a staff member, in most instances the staff member will be told of the complaint and offered the right of reply. You also have the right to have a support person participate throughout the process as do members of staff.

## **Recording of conversations**

If you wish to document a meeting or contact we welcome you to take notes. Out of respect for all parties involved, if you wish to record audio you are asked to declare this at the beginning of the meeting or phone call. A staff member reserves the right to decline the meeting or contact be recorded.

## **Concerns within the community**

Helensvale State High School is also obliged by law to respect and protect the privacy of individual students and staff, so while we understand the interest of other students, staff and parents to know further information, we will not disclose or discuss this information with anyone but the staff member or student's family.

If your complaint relates to suspected official misconduct or criminal activity then you should make your complaint directly to the Crime and Misconduct Commission [www.cmc.qld.gov.au](http://www.cmc.qld.gov.au) or the Queensland Police Service [www.police.qld.gov.au](http://www.police.qld.gov.au).

Alternatively, if your concern relates to behaviour within the school community external to school hours please access support from the follow agencies as appropriate:

Emergency services - 000

Police Link – 131 444

ESafety commissioner - <https://www.esafety.gov.au/>

### **Procedure for raising a concern**

The following procedure may assist families and school staff to reach an outcome that is in the best interests of the child.

#### **Step 1: Discussing your concern with the relevant class teacher or year level dean**

- If your concern or issue is with your child's teacher or relates to an issue concerning the curriculum, make contact with that teacher as soon as possible. Your child's teacher will be best placed to discuss the curriculum within a particular subject and help find a solution to your concerns.
- If your complaint concerns your child's experience at school such as behaviour, attendance or bullying, make an appointment with the relevant year level dean.
- Share the information you have about the problem with the staff member.
- Give the staff member an opportunity to tell you all they know about the incident or problem.
- Together, the family and staff member should then take steps to resolve the problem at this level.

Please refer to the parent/carer channels of communication flowchart located on the school's website to direct your concern to the appropriate member of staff if it involves the following: IT, resource hire, attendance, finance (see links at bottom of page).

#### **Step 2: Discuss your concern with the Head of Department**

Where step 1 does not result in a resolution, make contact with the relevant Head of Department to discuss the issue further. Alternatively, you and the teacher may agree to ask the Head of Department to assist with a resolution.

#### **Step 3: Discuss your concern with the Deputy Principal**

Where the Head of Department has been approached as above but the issue remains unresolved, make contact with the Deputy Principal to discuss the issue further.

### **Early Resolution**

- The complainant will be contacted by the relevant staff member if additional information is required to confirm the concern raised or the outcome sought.
- The staff member will keep the complainant informed of any changes or emergent issues that impact the resolution of their customer concern or complaint.
- Procedural fairness must be afforded to a person who is the subject of the customer complaint and the complainant
- Staff will keep a record of the concern raised on OneSchool and may provide a record of the concern and any outcomes to the Principal.

### **Communicate the outcome**

- The complainant will be provided with:
  - a clear explanation of the final decision
  - any recommendations
  - any review options available to the complainant, including internal or external review, where applicable.

### **Parent and Community Code of Conduct**

As 'One Community' Helensvale State High School values the partnership between the school and families in providing the best possible educational outcomes for our students. We value the input of our school community and ensure that we have the best interests of our students at heart. We would like to work to resolve matters at the local level to support the academic and wellbeing needs of our students.

The school's Parent and Community Code of Conduct describes the ways in which parents, carers and visitors should conduct themselves while on Queensland state school grounds, at school activities, and when interacting with others in the school community.

The Code was created to support the health and wellbeing of staff and contributes to schools as safe and respectful workplaces. The Code reflects our three learning values of Respect, Responsibility and Resilience.

### **Related Document and Resources**

- [Parent/Carer channels of communication flowchart](#) – for non-curriculum based concerns
- [Parent/Carer channels of communication flowchart](#)– for curriculum based concerns
- [Parent and Community Code of Conduct](#)
- The Department of Education's Customer Complaints Management [policy](#) and [procedures](#)

Version number 05 | Version effective 10 August 2021 | Review date Semester 1 2023