

## *Complaints and Disputes Policy – Parent Information*

Woodbury Boston Primary School welcomes feedback from parents and carers. We take seriously any complaints and concerns that are raised. A full copy of the schools Complaints, Concerns and Disputes Policy can be obtained from the school admin.

Please see below for some brief information and 'FAQS' about our complaints system.

**A complaint will be treated as an expression of genuine dissatisfaction that needs a response.**

We wish to ensure that:

- parents and carers wishing to make a complaint know how to do so
- we respond to complaints within a reasonable time and in a courteous and efficient way
- complainants realise that we listen and take complaints seriously
- matters raised are investigated according to the school's policy and procedures, and
- we take action where appropriate.

### **"How should I complain?"**

You can contact the school in person, by telephone on (08) 9845 1185, at [admin@woodburyboston.wa.edu.au](mailto:admin@woodburyboston.wa.edu.au), by using the 'contact us' function on the school website, or by letter sent to Woodbury Boston Primary School, PO Box 65, Albany WA 6331. Please ask if you require some assistance in expressing your concern.

When you contact the school, please ask to speak to administration staff, your classroom teacher or the Principal. Be as clear as possible about what is troubling you.

Members of staff will be happy to help. It may be best to start with the person most closely concerned with the issue – for example, the classroom teacher or administration staff. They may be able to sort things out quickly, with the minimum of fuss. However, you may prefer to make an appointment to discuss the matter with the Principal.

### **"I don't want to complain as such, but there is something bothering me"**

It is important to us that you and your child are comfortable with what happens at school, and we want to hear your views and your ideas. Contact a member of staff, as described above.

### **"I am not sure whether to complain or not"**

If you have a concern, you are entitled to raise it. If in doubt, you should always contact the school, as we are here to help.

### **"My child has a complaint about another student at the school. What should I do?"**

We encourage the children to raise their concerns with a staff member while at school. If they do not feel they can do that, please contact the Principal as described above. **On no account should a parent contact another student, or their parent, directly.** Contact the school and let us address the matter.

### **“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 within five working days, 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 be given a date by which time you will receive a response. If a detailed exploration of the issue is needed, a letter or report will be sent to you as quickly as possible. 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.

Parents need to 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 complaint or concern will be treated in a confidential manner and with respect. Knowledge of it will be limited to the Principal and those directly involved. The Chairperson of the Governing Body may also need to be informed. It is the school’s policy that complaints made by parents and carers should not rebound adversely on their children. The school will not tolerate victimisation or adverse consequences shown towards a person who raises a complaint or concern.

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 other external authority. Matters of this nature would include an allegation or complaint of grooming, child abuse or a breach of the staff or student Code of Conduct. If information is passed to a third party, you will 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.

If you are not satisfied, the Principal will offer to refer the matter to the Chairperson of the Governing Body. Alternatively, you may wish to write directly to the Chairperson

(addressed to the Chairperson, c/- the school's address above.). The Chairperson will call for a full report from the Principal, and will examine matters thoroughly before responding to ensure that the complaint has been handled in accordance with the school's policy and procedure as well as to give further consideration. When notified of the outcome of the Chairperson's review and consideration, if you remain concerned, the opportunity of a meeting with the Chairperson will be offered. You may wish to be supported by a friend, but legal representation would not be appropriate at this stage.

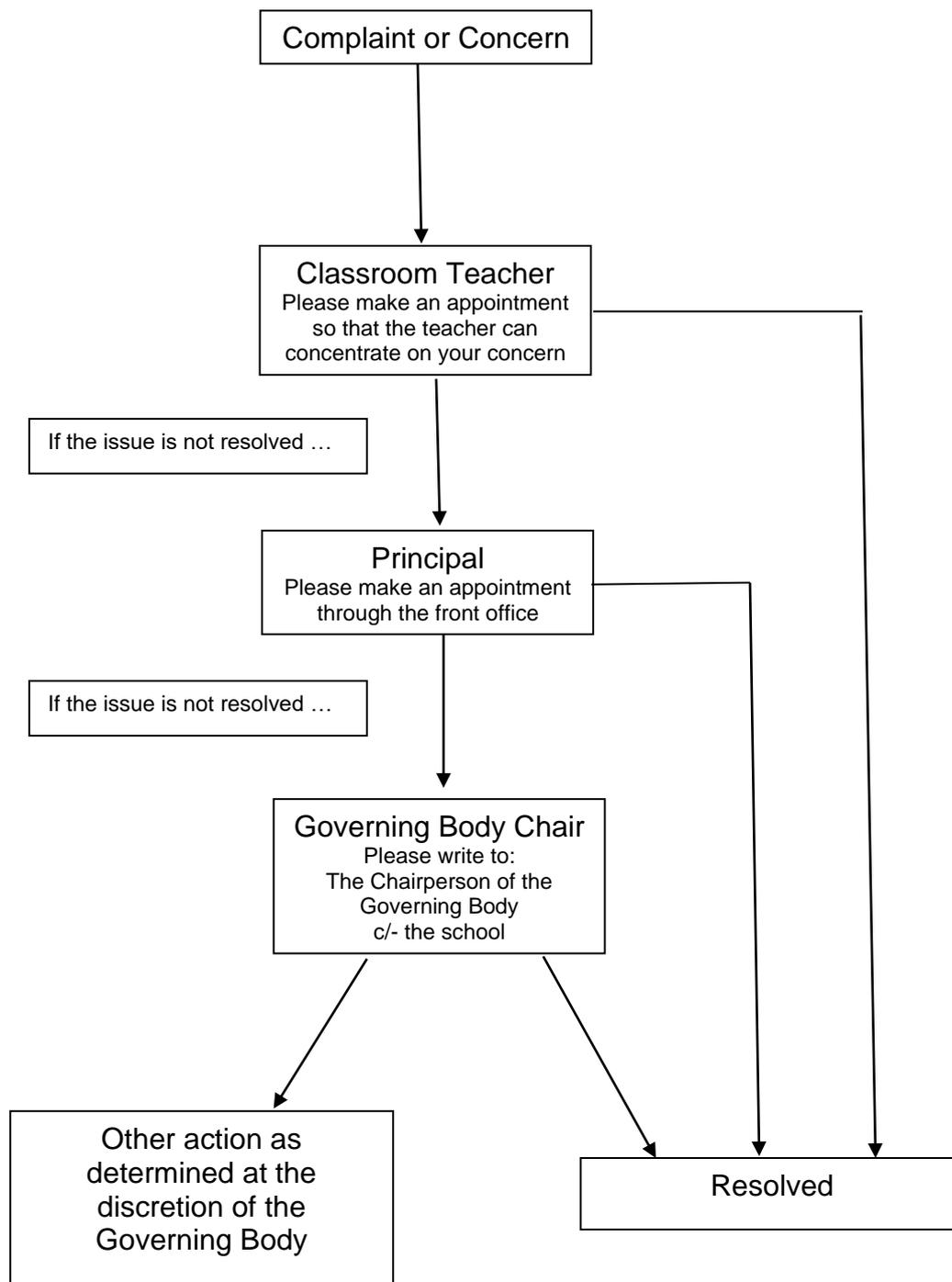
If the meeting does not bring about a resolution, the matter may be referred to a process of dispute resolution.

**The school recognises and acknowledges your right to make a complaint and we hope to work with you in the best interests of the children in our care.**

**Special note – students raising a concern or complaint**

This information is specifically for parents and carers in the school. The school also has a child friendly complaints process that is tailored to meet the needs of any students who wish to express a concern or complaint. The school employs multiple methods of letting students know they can express a concern, and how to go about it, including Parliament, class circles, through the Playground Carers, and through the Protective Behaviours curriculum taught in the school.

## Complaint Flow Chart



The Director General of the Department of Education is responsible for ensuring that the school observes the registration standards, including the standard about its complaints handling system. Any student, parent or community member is entitled to contact the Director General with concerns about how the school has dealt with a complaint. Information is available on the Department of Education website ([www.education.wa.edu.au/non-government-school-complaints](http://www.education.wa.edu.au/non-government-school-complaints)). While the Director General may consider whether the school has breached the registration standards, she does not have power to intervene in a complaint or override the school's decision.