COMPLAINTS MANAGEMENT POLICY

Objectives

- To ensure that complaints lodged at this school are resolved in a prompt and efficient manner.

- To promote the highest standard of professionalism in dealing with our community.

Rationale

At Edney Primary School our staff acknowledges any concerns or complaints from parents and other school community members and welcomes any questions or feedback. Parents and school community members can be confident that staff will listen and respond to their needs and concerns. Staff at this school are responsible for managing the resolution of disputes and complaints lodged with us. We will make every effort to promptly resolve disputes and complaints lodged with us according to the principles of procedural fairness.

Our school will maintain processes to ensure concerns and complaints are addressed promptly and in accordance with the principles of natural justice. Every effort will be made to resolve any issues at the local level.

This policy is based on good practice and system wide policy from the Department of Education. It ensures that concerns and complaints are dealt with promptly, consistently and fairly and contribute to continuous improvement.

Principles Underlying the Policy

- In all matters the educational well-being of students is the first priority.
- All persons in the school community, including students, parents, administrators, teachers and support staff, have a right to be treated with respect and courtesy.
- Parents and community members are able to raise concerns and complaints about any aspect of school life and have them dealt with fairly and promptly.
- Processes for managing concerns or complaints are straightforward, reflect principles of natural justice and operate within the regulatory framework of the Department of Education.

Where we cannot resolve a complaint, the complainant, Principal or Coordinator Regional Operations- South Metropolitan Regional Office can forward written complaints to the Director General of the Department of Education.

BROAD GUIDELINES

- Complaints can be made verbally or in writing.
- A complaint can be made about the provision of education or conduct of any Department employee.
- An employee who is subject to a complaint is entitled to be informed of the substance of the complaint.
- Members of the school executive will maintain confidentiality and impartiality when dealing with each matter and seek to resolve matters at the school level where possible.
- Persons lodging a complaint are welcome to have a friend or advisor present during any discussions.

Help is available at the school to support complainants to formulate, write and lodge a complaint. Written complaints should be addressed:

"PRIVATE AND CONFIDENTIAL"
The Principal
Edney Primary School
204 Newburn Road
HIGH WYCOMBE WA 6057

Minimum information when making a complaint:

You should provide the following information when making a complaint:
- your name and contact details;
- copies of any relevant correspondence or documents directly relating to the complaint;
- the nature/details of the complaint; and,
- what you consider is needed to resolve the complaint.

In the case of a verbal complaint, where you do not want to be identified or to lodge the complaint in writing, we will endeavour to work directly with you to resolve the matter.

If a verbal complaint is complex or very serious the complainant may be required to restate the complaint in writing or sign a written summary prepared by the Principal.

A written or verbal complaint which contains personal abuse, inflammatory statements or material that is clearly intended to intimidate will not be addressed and the complainant will be informed accordingly.

Responsiveness:

We will acknowledge receipt of written complaints within 5 school days. We seek to resolve local complaints within 14 days. If, because of the serious nature of the complaint, it is deemed necessary to forward it on to another section of the Department; we will do this without delay.

In all cases you will be kept informed of the progress of your complaint.

Enquiring on a complaint's progress:

You may enquire as to the progress of your complaint at any time by directly contacting the appropriate person. At the time of lodging a verbal complaint, or in the acknowledgment letter for a written complaint, this person will be identified for you.

Outcome of a complaint:

We will advise you verbally or in writing of the outcome of the complaint. The outcome of all written complaints will be provided to you in writing.

When a complainant is unhappy with the outcome of a complaint:

If you are not satisfied with our attempts to resolve your complaint, you may wish to express your concerns to the Coordinator of Regional Operations South Metropolitan District, Mr Phil Lockhart at the Regional Education Office for assistance in resolving the issue. This will involve an independent review of the situation and may include mediation.

Rejecting a Complaint*:*

Complaints judged to be vexatious, trivial or without substance, or where it is judged to not warrant further action, will not be progressed. You will be advised of this decision in writing.

Definitions

Complaint
The expression of dissatisfaction with any aspect of government education and training. It may be general in nature or relate to particular staff, a part of the organisation, a policy or a decision. Any person may lodge a complaint; however, staff employed by the Department of Education cannot use this process if they are acting in an official capacity. A complaint must contain sufficient detail to enable it to be addressed and recorded.

Procedural Fairness

A process that demonstrates procedural fairness is one in which:

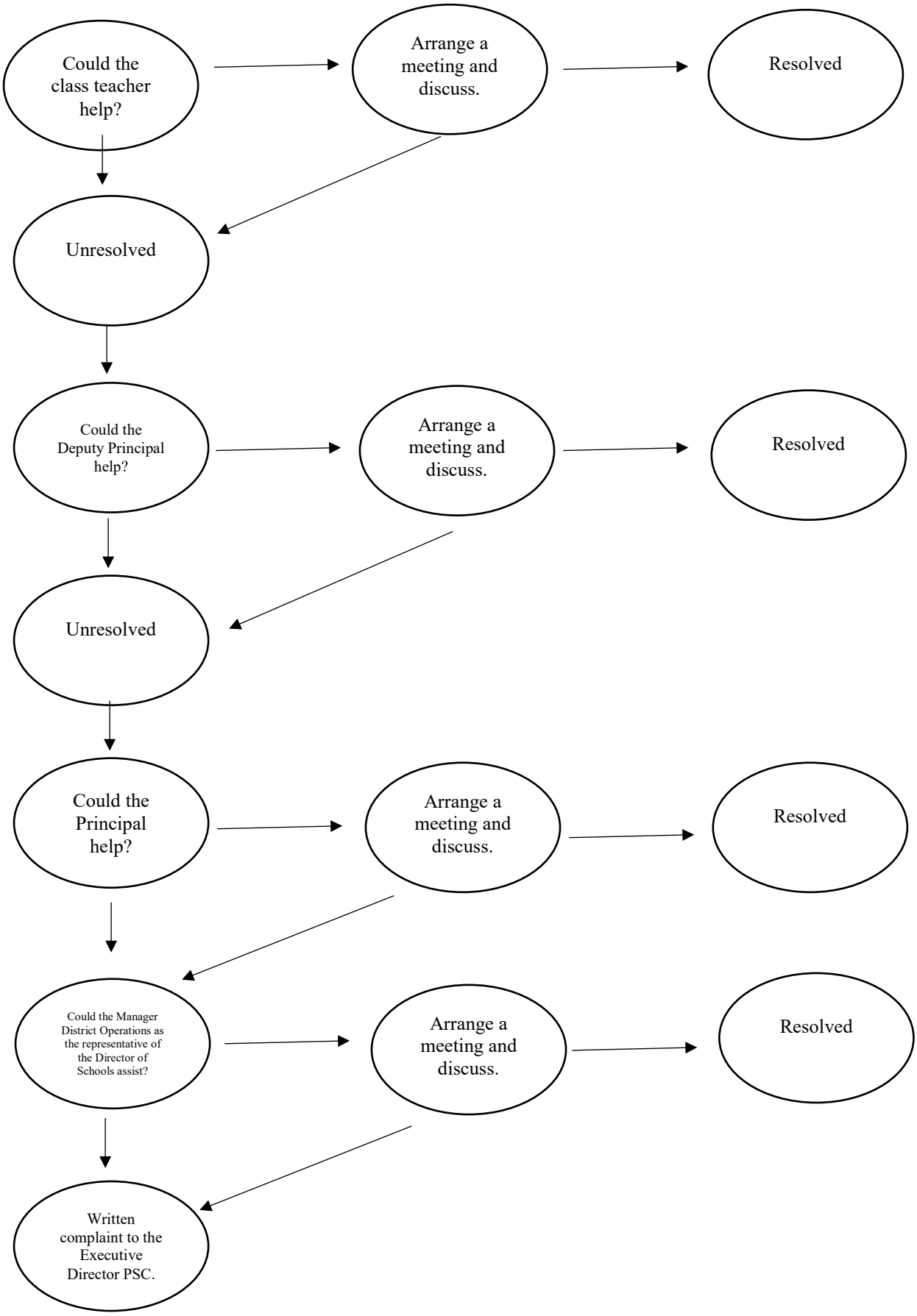
- decision makers act fairly and provide reasons for decisions;
- the person affected is given a fair hearing;
- all parties to a matter have an opportunity to put their case where an adverse decision or finding is made; and,
- all relevant arguments are considered and irrelevant arguments are excluded.

Locally Managed Complaint
A verbal or written complaint made in relation to a school or staff member and managed by the school.

Centrally Managed Complaint
A complaint lodged in writing with the Director General of the Department of Education, and managed at Central Office. Such complaints may be redirected to the local level to be managed if it is deemed appropriate.

Complainant
A person or persons lodging a complaint.

Ratified by School Board:

August 2021

Complaints Resolution Flowchart