



VALUING INTEGRITY

What happens once you lodge your complaint

How long does the process take?

The Department aims to resolve complaints related to the delivery of education services within 14 days. Complaints about the conduct of staff will generally take longer; particularly where they require a formal investigation.

Who can I contact to discuss the progress of my request?

You may contact the school where the complaint was lodged or the nominated contact officer at any time.

Finally

Public schools acknowledge the concerns of parents and welcome any questions you have. The Department and its schools are committed to responding promptly and helpfully to your enquiries, concerns, complaints, suggestions and compliments. Our policy on Disputes and Complaints is available from your local school, District Education Office or via the Internet: www.det.wa.edu.au



Department of
**Education
and Training**

The relationship between the home and school plays a very important part in your child's education. And you, as a parent or carer, play a vital role in your child's learning. Communication is key to the success of this relationship.

This brochure outlines the steps you should take if you have a query or concern or need to make a complaint about an issue relating to your child's education.

You are welcome to talk to your child's teacher or other member of school staff including the Principal whenever you need to.



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TALKING TO YOUR SCHOOL



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and Training**

At some point you may need to talk to your school about:

- Issues particular to your child such as attitude, progress, attendance, participation or social and emotional matters.
- The learning environment, quality of teaching, homework, general student behaviour, pastoral care, policies and procedures or conduct of staff.
- Access to support services such as:
 - student services
 - visiting teachers for students with disabilities or English as a Second Language students
 - specialist facilities eg language development centres, intensive language centres, socio-psycho educational resource units, education support units and centres
 - programs for students experiencing difficulties with learning, for gifted and talented students or for instrumental music.



So where do you start?

Before you contact your school clearly identify the problem. If there is more than one problem, make a list so the extent of the problem is clear to the school.

Seeking information from the right source can solve many problems.

- If you have any questions about your child's progress, the homework set or the assessment procedures, talk to the class teacher. Contact the school to arrange a convenient time for a telephone conversation or meeting.
- If the problem concerns the conduct of a teacher or member of school staff you should make an appointment with the Principal.

1 Discussion with your school

So you have decided you need to discuss your problem with the school. What happens next?

Contact the school:

- by telephone
- by fax
- by email
- in person
- in writing
- via the school's website

Complaints received in writing are responded to in writing.

Anonymous complaints are only acted upon if enough information is provided for the Principal to follow up.

It is important that you deliver your complaint in a non-threatening and non-abusive manner.

It is also important to not make frivolous or vexatious complaints or include deliberately false or misleading information.

Please note: Interpreters, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Education Officers and Aboriginal Liaison Officers are available to assist. Please contact your local school or district education office if you need this assistance. You can also have a friend or adviser present during any discussion.

The Department of Education and Training is obliged to report misconduct to the Corruption and Crime Commission. Therefore, once a complaint is made about the conduct of a Departmental employee, it may not be possible to withdraw it.

You need to make a conscious and voluntary decision whether to lodge a formal complaint with the school or simply discuss an issue with them. This needs to be stated clearly at the time of the discussion.

Matters relating to staff conduct may be investigated via a disciplinary process and the employee will be informed of the allegations contained in the complaint.

2 Review at a district level

If you have discussed the issue with your school and still feel that your complaint has not been addressed, you can now ask the matter to be reviewed by the District Education Office. If you consider there is a valid reason not to raise the issue with the school, you may refer your concern to your DEO directly. Contact the Manager of District Operations at your District Education Office. This can be done verbally or in writing. Details are listed in the White Pages under 'Education Department WA' or you can ask your school for assistance.

3 Review at central level

If you feel that your issue is still not resolved through these formal processes you may lodge a written complaint with the Director General:

Director General
Department of Education and Training
151 Royal Street, East Perth WA 6004

Alternatively, you may contact the Standards and Integrity Directorate at the Department of Education and Training: 1800 655 985 or email complaints@det.wa.edu.au.

4 Independent review

If your complaint is related to the school more generally including issues of school policy or its compliance or non-compliance, you may be able to lodge a complaint with the Ombudsman.

Ombudsman Western Australia
PO Box Z5386, St Georges Terrace
Perth WA 6831

Telephone: (08) 9220 7555 Free call: 1800 117 000