

Making a complaint at school

During the course of your child's enrolment at Whitfield State School, you may wish to make a complaint about an issue or concern you have with their education. Our school has processes and support networks to assist you to work through any concern you may have.

To achieve an effective resolution for all parties, when making your complaint, you should ensure you:

- Provide complete and factual information.
- Make your complaint calmly, reasonably and in a timely manner.
- Avoid making frivolous or vexatious complaints.
- Do not use deliberately false or misleading information.

Whitfield State School has a four-step procedure to assist parents/carers and school staff to reach an outcome that is in the best interests of the student.

1. Discuss your complaint with the class teacher

If your complaint is with your child's teacher or relates to an issue concerning your child's experience at school, make an appointment to discuss your complaint with the teacher. The teacher may be able to give you more information or suggest a solution. Together, you should be able to resolve most problems at this level.

The teacher will make a record of your complaint and report your meeting and any outcomes to the school principal.

2. Discuss your complaint with the principal

If after approaching your child's teacher your complaint remains unresolved, then contact the Executive Services Officer to make an appointment to see the school principal to discuss the issue further.

If your complaint relates to general school matters, including issues of school policy, you should raise your complaint directly with the principal or their delegate. The principal may refer your complaint to a deputy principal or Business Services Manager. The staff member will make a record of your complaint and work with you to come to a resolution.

Complaints to the principal may be lodged in person, by telephone or in writing a letter or email. Contact the office for the principal's email address.

If you are making a complaint about a staff member, then in most cases, the staff member will be told of the complaint and offered the right of reply. You have the right to have a support person throughout the process.

3. Contact your local education office

If you have discussed your complaint with the principal and still feel that you have not reached a resolution, you have the right to contact the Cairns office of the Department of Education and Training.

Addresses and telephone numbers for the Cairns office of the Department of Education and Training are listed in the White Pages of the local telephone directory and are available from the school office.

4. Independent review

If you have not been able to resolve your complaint through these formal processes, you can lodge your complaint with the Queensland Ombudsman. The Ombudsman may be contacted at:

Office of the Ombudsman

GPO Box 3314, Brisbane, Qld 4001
Email: ombudsman@ombudsman.qld.gov.au

Telephone (07) 3005 7000 or Toll Free 1800 068 908
Fax (07) 3005 7067

The role of Parents and Citizens' Associations (P&Cs)

Complaints about services that are run or managed by the P&C at your school, for example after school care or the tuckshop, should be directed to the P&C in the first instance.