



COMPLAINTS POLICY

PURPOSE

Broadmeadows Valley Primary School (BVPS) welcomes and encourages formal and informal constructive feedback. Constructive feedback is used to add value to the services we provide. BVPS welcomes feedback from students, families and members of the community as it helps us know what we are doing well and what we can improve. Feedback may include compliments and suggestions about how we can improve in the future.

From time-to-time feedback will be provided in the form of a complaint. Hence, the purpose of this policy is to provide an outline of the complaints process at Broadmeadows Valley Primary school so that parents and members of the community are informed of how they can raise complaints or concerns about issues arising at our school.

Through this policy we aim to ensure that all complaints regarding Broadmeadows Valley Primary school are managed in a timely, effective, fair and respectful manner. If BVPS receives a complaint the school will:

- outline the process for dealing with a complaint
- provide any reasonable assistance to lodge a complaint
- treat all complaints respectfully and maintain confidentiality and privacy
- act impartially and objectively
- provide an indicative time for addressing complaints or issues
- provide information of the progress of inquiries
- when extended time is required provide reasons for our decision

SCOPE

This policy relates to complaints brought by parents, carers, students or members of our school community and applies to all matters relating to BVPS. In some limited instances, BVPS may need to refer the complainant to another Department of Education and Training process where there are different mechanisms in place to review certain decisions. A copy of this policy will be held at the front office of the school and available to all community members.

DEFINITIONS

Complaint: a statement that something is unsatisfactory or unacceptable, expression of dissatisfaction, oral or written.

POLICY

Broadmeadows Valley Primary school welcomes feedback, both positive and constructive, and is committed to continuous improvement. We value open communication with our families and are committed to understanding complaints and addressing them appropriately. We recognise that the complaints process provides an important opportunity for reflection and growth.

BVPS values and encourages open and positive relationships with our school community. We understand that it is in the best interests of students for there to be a trusting relationship between families and our school.

When addressing a complaint, it is expected that all parties will:

- raise and discuss issues in a courteous and respectful manner
- acknowledge that the goal is to achieve an outcome that is in the affected student's best interests and acceptable to all parties
- act in good faith and respect the privacy and confidentiality of those involved, as appropriate
- recognise that all parties, including the broader school community, have rights and responsibilities that must be balanced
- recognise that schools and the Department may be subject to legal constraints on their ability to act or disclose information in some circumstances.

Preparation for Raising a Concern or Complaint

Broadmeadows Valley Primary School encourages parents, carers or members of the community who may wish to submit a complaint to:

- carefully consider the issues you would like to discuss
- remember you may not have all the facts relating to the issues that you want to raise
- think about how the matter could be resolved
- be informed by checking the policies and guidelines set by the Department and Broadmeadows Valley Primary school, see "Further Information and Resources" section below.

Complaints Process

Broadmeadows Valley Primary School is always happy to discuss with parents/carers and community members any concerns that they may have. Concerns in the first instance should be directed to the classroom teacher and/or Neighbourhood learning leader. Where possible, school staff will work with you to ensure that your concerns are appropriately addressed. Where concerns cannot be resolved in this way, parents/carers or community members may wish to make a formal complaint to the Principal.

If you would like to make a formal complaint, in most cases, depending on the nature of the complaint raised, our school will first seek to understand the issues and will then convene a resolution meeting with the aim of resolving the complaint together.

The following process will apply:

1. **Complaint received:** Please either email, telephone or arrange a meeting with the Assistant Principal or Principal, to outline your complaint so that we can fully understand what the issues are. We can discuss your complaint in a way that is convenient for you, whether in writing, in person or over the phone.
2. **Information gathering:** Depending on the issues raised in the complaint, the Principal, Assistant Principal or nominee may need to gather further information to properly understand the situation.

This process may also involve speaking to others to obtain details about the situation or the concerns raised.

- 3. Response:** Where possible, a resolution meeting will be arranged with the Principal or Assistant Principal to discuss the complaint with the objective of reaching a resolution satisfactory to all parties. If after the resolution meeting we are unable to resolve the complaint together, we will work with you to produce a written summary of the complaint in the event you would like to take further action about it. In some circumstances, the Principal may determine that a resolution meeting would not be appropriate. In this situation, a response to the complaint will be provided in writing.

A face-to-face resolution meeting provides the best opportunity to restore relationships between complainants and the school. Preparing a written summary of a complaint together with the complainant can be a useful strategy for ensuring that all parties understand the issues in dispute and reach an agreement about the most important issues that need to be addressed further.

- 4. Timelines:** Broadmeadows Valley Primary school will acknowledge receipt of your complaint as soon as possible (usually within 48 hours) and will seek to resolve complaints in a timely manner. Depending on the complexity of the complaint, Broadmeadows Valley Primary school may need some time to gather enough information to fully understand the circumstances of your complaint. The School will endeavour to complete any necessary information gathering and hold a resolution meeting where appropriate within 10 working days of the complaint being raised. In situations where further time is required, Broadmeadows Valley Primary school will consult with you and discuss any interim solutions to the dispute that can be put in place.

Resolution

Where appropriate, Broadmeadows Valley Primary School may seek to resolve a complaint by:

- an apology or expression of regret
- a change of decision
- a change of policy, procedure or practice
- offering the opportunity for student counselling or other support
- other actions consistent with school values that are intended to support the student, parent and school relationship, engagement, and participation in the school community.

In some circumstances, Broadmeadows Valley Primary School may also ask you to attend a meeting with an independent third party or participate in mediation with an accredited mediator to assist in the resolution of the dispute.

Escalation

If a parent/carer or community member is not satisfied that their complaint has been resolved by the school, or if their complaint is about the Principal, then the complaint should be referred to the Regional Office by contacting 1800 338 663 or email enquiries@education.vic.gov.au.

Broadmeadows Valley Primary school may also refer a complaint to the Regional Office if we believe that we have done all we can to address the complaint.

For more information about the Department's *Parent Complaints* policy, including the role of the Regional Office, please see: [Parent complaints policy](#).

COMMUNICATION

This policy will be communicated to our school community in the following ways:

- Available publicly on our school's website
- Included in staff induction processes and staff training
- Discussed at annual staff briefings/meetings
- Reminders in our school newsletter
- Hard copy available from school administration upon request

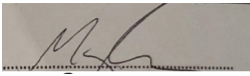
FURTHER INFORMATION AND RESOURCES

The following resources may be of further assistance:

- [Bullying](#)
- [Suspension](#)
- [Expulsion](#)
- [Student engagement](#)
- [School uniforms or dress code](#)
- [Attendance](#)
- [School zones](#)
- [All school policies](#)

EVALUATION AND RATIFICATION

This policy was last updated August 2021 and is scheduled for review as part of the 3-year evaluation cycle in accordance with the BVPS review schedule. Consultation with staff, School Council and other stake holder groups will take place as part of the review.

Policy	BVPS COMPLAINTS POLICY
BVPS Council President	Signed: 
BVPS Principal	Signed: <u> C. Fianco </u>
Reviewed	August 2021
Ratified	 / /2021