Parent Concern Policy

RATIONALE

Caring parents will always keep a watch on the development of their child. Education is a major part of our life and formal schooling plays a significant part. Parents and the Department of Education invest a great deal of time, funds and effort in trying to provide a well balanced education which allows children to reach their potential and take a rewarding part in our society.

Along the way, parents and teachers may have concerns about the progress both academically and socially of a child in school. It makes sense, if time and effort is to be invested in raising a concern, that we follow a productive procedure to allow it the best chance of achieving a positive result.

PURPOSE

This policy provides guidelines for the raising of and dealing with a problem in the Department of Education. It is designed to ensure a satisfactory result which:

- doesn’t punish the child by creating anxiety
- doesn’t remove him/her from the school and friends
- ends with good relationships between parents, the student and the school staff
- allows the child to see how to deal with a problem constructively

The basis will have been laid for positive relations that will help any future concerns.
GUIDELINES

Concerns must be directed through school staff. The Education Act prohibits direct contact by parents with other students while they are at school.

➢ Know the problem.

➢ Before you raise any concern, think the problem through. Know what is bothering you or your child.
➢ Be specific and be fair in describing the problem.
➢ Gather supporting details, but remember this is your concern. You are not representing the views of others. They should be raising their concerns themselves.
➢ Speak with the person who is best placed to solve the problem. This is usually your child’s class teacher.

➢ Arrange an interview with the class teacher.

➢ Ring the school office and arrange an appointment time or make an appointment time directly with the teacher.
➢ Make sure you mention why you are requesting an interview because you are more likely to have success if the teacher is aware of the problem prior to the meeting.

➢ Explain what is bothering you.

➢ You’re meeting with the class teacher to gain their support in solving a problem.
➢ Gaining the willing cooperation of the teacher means having the correct facts, being willing to see the other side, having a polite manner and showing your willingness to be part of a fair solution. You are more likely to find a successful outcome if you can try to:

➢ Start with polite greetings and come to the point.
➢ State your problem or concern calmly - be specific and fair.
➢ Show you want to be part of the solution.
➢ Listen as much as you talk.
➢ Keep an open mind – don’t throw away suggestions even if they have been tried. They could work.
➢ Try to compromise.
➢ Go over the agreed solution to ensure everyone is clear.
➢ Arrange a follow-up meeting or time to share progress.

Be patient, it won’t always happen overnight. Maintain your link with the teacher and keep communicating. Share information so you can work as a team.

CONCLUSION

Most concerns are resolved at the classroom level. Some concerns may need someone else because:

➢ The classroom approach has failed.
➢ The problem is not about the classroom or teacher.
➢ The matter is very serious and needs higher level intervention.

If negotiations are not resolved at classroom level please contact the deputy or principal. If they fail at this level district office support and formal grievance procedures are available.