



TOORAK PRIMARY SCHOOL
Canterbury Road, Toorak Vic 3142

COMPLIMENTS AND COMPLAINTS POLICY 2022

PURPOSE

Toorak Primary School (TPS) works to maintain positive relationships with the school community and to do our best to address any concerns as soon as they arise.

TPS welcomes feedback from the school community on all aspects of school performance and will use it to inform the development of policy and practices. All compliments and complaints will be taken seriously, and considered in the context of the expectations about values and behaviours set out in the TPS Code of Conduct.

The Department of Education and Training (DET) recommends that concerns and complaints should be addressed at the school level wherever possible.

The purpose of this policy is to:

- provide an outline of the compliments and complaints process at Toorak Primary School so that parents and members of the community are informed of how they can offer compliments and raise complaints or concerns about issues arising at our school
- ensure that all complaints regarding Toorak Primary School are managed in a timely, effective, fair and respectful manner.

SCOPE

This policy relates to compliments and complaints brought by parents, carers, students or members of our school community and applies to all matters relating to our school. In some limited instances, we may need to refer a complainant to another Department of Education and Training process where there are different processes in place to manage the issue including:

- Complaints and concerns relating to fraud and corruption will be managed in accordance with the department's [Fraud and Corruption Policy](#)
- Criminal matters will be referred to Victorian Police
- Legal claims will be referred to the Department's Legal Division
- Complaints and concerns relating to child abuse will be managed in accordance with our Child Safety Responding and Reporting Obligations Policy and Procedures

POLICY

Guidelines for Compliments

TPS appreciates the time taken to compliment our school, staff and students. Compliments are an opportunity for our leadership team to identify best practice and acknowledge those involved. All compliments received in writing through the school email address, toorak.ps@edumail.vic.gov.au or the school office will be forwarded to the Principal and Assistant Principal.

Compliments received in recognition of our school will be shared with staff at meetings and may be communicated through school communications channels to the school community where appropriate.

Compliments will be used to provide positive feedback to individual staff members. They will be stored in the staff member's employment file for future reference.

All compliments regarding our students will be shared with the relevant student(s), their class teacher and where appropriate, acknowledged at assemblies and through school communications channels.

Guidelines for Complaints

Preparation for raising a concern or complaint

Toorak 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 Toorak Primary School (see “Further Information and Resources” section below).

Complaints process

Toorak Primary School is always happy to discuss with parents/carers and community members any concerns that they may have. If there are concerns regarding a student, the initial complaint should be reported to the classroom teacher. If this is not suitable, it can be reported to the Year Level Leader. The classroom teacher or Year Level Leader will escalate the issue if it is not able to be resolved at the classroom level. If parents wish to speak to the Principal or other members of staff, an appointment can be made through the school office. Where possible, school staff will work with you to ensure that your concerns are appropriately addressed. We value and encourage 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:

- be considerate of each other’s views and respect each other’s role
- be focused on resolution of the complaint, with the interests of the student involved at the centre
- act in good faith and cooperation
- behave with respect and courtesy
- respect the privacy and confidentiality of those involved, as appropriate
- operate within and seek reasonable resolutions that comply with any applicable legislation and Department policy.
- recognise that schools and the Department may be subject to legal constraints on their ability to act or disclose information in some circumstances.

Complaints and concerns process for students

Toorak Primary School acknowledges that issues or concerns can cause stress or worry for students and impact their wellbeing and learning. Toorak Primary School encourages our students to raise issues or concerns as they arise so that we can work together to resolve them.

Students with a concern or complaint can raise them with a trusted adult at school, for example, with your classroom teacher, Year Level Coordinators, Wellbeing officer or a member of leadership. This person will take your concern or complaint seriously and will explain to you what steps we can take to try to resolve the issue and support you.

You can also ask your parent, carer or another trusted adult outside of the school, to talk to us about the issue instead. Information about our parent/carer complaints and concerns process is outlined further below. The parent/carer process also applies to students who are mature minors, refer to: [Mature Minors and Decision Making](#).

Other ways you can raise a concern or complaint with us include:

- participating in our Attitudes to School Survey (for Grades 4-6)

Further information and resources to support students to raise issues or concerns are available at:

- [Report Racism Hotline](#) (call 1800 722 476) – this hotline enables students to report concerns relating to racism or religious discrimination
- [Reach Out](#)
- [Headspace](#)
- [Kids Helpline](#) (call 1800 55 1800)
- [Victorian Aboriginal Education Association](#) (VAEAI)

Complaints and concerns process for parents, carers and community members

Preparation for raising a concern or complaint

Toorak 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 Toorak Primary School Policy tab on the school website

Formal Complaint Process

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 through the front office 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 Assistant Principal, Principal or nominee 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.
4. **Timelines:** Toorak Primary School will acknowledge receipt of your complaint as soon as possible (usually within two school days) and will seek to resolve complaints in a timely manner. Depending on the complexity of the complaint, Toorak Primary School may need some time to gather enough information to fully understand the circumstances of your complaint. We 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, Toorak Primary School will consult with you and discuss any interim solutions to the dispute that can be put in place.

Resolution

Where appropriate, Toorak 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, Toorak Primary School may also ask you to attend a meeting with an independent

third party, or participate in a mediation with an accredited mediator to assist in the resolution of the dispute.

Escalation

If you are not satisfied that your complaint has been resolved by the school, or if your complaint is about the Principal and you do not want to raise it directly with them, then the complaint should be referred to the South Eastern Victoria Region by contacting sevr@education.vic.gov.au.

Toorak Primary School may also refer a complaint to the South Eastern Victoria Region. 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](#).

Record keeping and other requirements

To meet Department and legal requirements, our school must keep written records of:

- Serious, substantial or unusual complaints
- Complaints relating to the Child Information Sharing Scheme and Family Violence Information Sharing Scheme, to meet regulatory requirements - refer to Child and Family Violence Information Sharing Schemes for further information

Our school also follows Department policy to ensure that record-keeping, reporting, privacy and employment law obligations are met when responding to complaints or concerns.

Communication

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

- Available publicly on school website
- Included in staff induction processes
- Hard copy available from school administration upon request

FURTHER INFORMATION AND RESOURCES

The Department's Policy and Advisory Library (PAL):

- [Complaints - Parents](#)

The Department's parents' website:

- [Raise a complaint or concern about your school](#)
- [Report racism or religious discrimination in schools](#)

Other related school policies

TPS Community Communication and Code of Conduct 2018
Statement of Value and School Philosophy

Policy review and approval

Policy last reviewed	June 2022
Consultation	[School Council Policy Committee, June 2022]
Approved by	Principal
Next scheduled review date	June 2024

