

PINE RIVERS SPECIAL SCHOOL CUSTOMER COMPLAINTS MANAGEMENT PROCESS



1. OUR COMMITMENT

At Pine Rivers Special School, we value positive partnerships between students, families, staff and the wider community.

We recognise that from time to time parents, carers, students and community members may have concerns about decisions, actions or services provided by the school. We welcome feedback and are committed to responding to complaints in a respectful, fair, transparent and timely manner that is compatible with human rights and supports positive outcomes for all involved.

Our goal is to resolve concerns at the local level wherever possible while maintaining a safe, respectful and supportive learning environment for all students and staff.

2. WHAT IS A CUSTOMER COMPLAINT?

A customer complaint is an expression of dissatisfaction about the service or actions of the school or its staff by a person who is directly affected by that service or action.

Examples may include concerns relating to:

- communication
- student support
- school procedures
- school operations
- staff actions or decisions
- educational programs or services

Some matters are managed through separate Department of Education processes, including:

- student protection matters
- complaints involving corrupt conduct
- public interest disclosures
- legislative review processes
- employee grievances

3. OUR EXPECTATIONS

We treat all members of our school community with dignity and respect and expect the same in return.

When raising a concern, parents, carers and community members are expected to:

- communicate respectfully
- clearly identify the concern and desired outcome
- provide relevant information
- allow reasonable time for investigation and response
- engage constructively in the resolution process

Unreasonable, abusive, threatening or disrespectful conduct towards students or staff will not be tolerated and may result in limitations being placed on future communication in accordance with Department of Education procedures.

4. IMPORTANT EXPECTATIONS REGARDING STUDENTS

Parents, carers and community members must not approach, question, interview, discipline, photograph, video or otherwise engage directly with another student regarding a concern or complaint.

Students attending Pine Rivers Special School are under the care and supervision of school staff during the school day.

If a concern involves another student, parents and carers must raise the matter with the relevant teacher or school administration. School staff will investigate and manage the matter appropriately.

5. HOW TO RAISE A CONCERN

The Department of Education encourages concerns to be raised at the point where the issue arose. In most cases:

Step 1 – Classroom Level

Concerns regarding a student's learning program, communication, classroom issues or day-to-day matters should first be discussed with the classroom teacher.

Step 2 – Administration Level

If the matter is not resolved, or if the concern relates to a broader school issue, parents and carers should contact a Deputy Principal or member of the school leadership team.

Step 3 – Principal

Where concerns remain unresolved, or where the matter is significant in nature, an appointment can be made with the Principal.

Complaints may be made:

- in person
- by telephone
- by email
- in writing

Anonymous complaints may also be accepted; however, this may limit the school's ability to investigate or provide an outcome.

6. HOW WE MANAGE COMPLAINTS

When a complaint is received, the school will:

- acknowledge receipt of the complaint
- determine the most appropriate person to manage the matter
- gather relevant information
- provide procedural fairness to all parties
- consider available evidence
- communicate the outcome and any available review options

The school aims to resolve complaints as promptly as possible. Timeframes will vary depending on the complexity of the matter and the availability of relevant information.

6A. COMMUNICATION PROTOCOLS DURING COMPLAINT RESOLUTION

To ensure complaints are managed fairly, efficiently and consistently, Pine Rivers Special School may implement communication protocols during the management of a complaint.

These may include:

- Nomination of a single point of contact (for example, the classroom teacher, Deputy Principal or Principal) to coordinate communication regarding the matter.
- Consolidating multiple emails, phone calls or correspondence relating to the same issue into a single response.
- Determining the most appropriate method of communication, including email, telephone or face-to-face meetings.
- Setting reasonable timeframes for communication and responses to allow appropriate investigation of concerns.
- Limiting communication to matters that are relevant to the complaint being investigated.

The school is committed to ensuring all concerns are appropriately considered and responded to. However, where a matter has been fully investigated and an outcome provided, the school will not continue to revisit, reinvestigate or respond to the same issues unless significant new information is presented.

Where communication becomes excessive, repetitive, abusive, threatening, unreasonable or places an unreasonable demand on school resources, the school may implement communication management strategies consistent with the Department of Education's

Managing Unreasonable Complainant Conduct Procedure.

This may include:

- directing future communication through a nominated staff member;
- requiring communication to occur in writing;
- limiting the frequency of responses;
- declining to respond to correspondence that raises matters already addressed; or
- referring the matter to the appropriate Department of Education processes.

These measures are intended to support respectful, productive and effective communication while ensuring the school can continue to focus on providing high-quality educational services and support for students.

7. FINALISATION OF COMPLAINTS

Once a complaint has been investigated and a formal outcome has been provided, the matter will generally be considered closed. The school will not continually revisit, reinvestigate or respond to the same complaint where:

- the issues raised have already been investigated;
- a response has already been provided;
- no new relevant information has been presented; or
- the complaint simply expresses disagreement with the outcome reached.

Where significant new information becomes available, the school may determine that further consideration is warranted.

8. IF YOU ARE DISSATISFIED WITH THE SCHOOL'S RESPONSE

If you remain dissatisfied after the school's complaints process has concluded, you may seek an Internal Review through Metropolitan North Region.

Requests for Internal Review should be lodged with Metropolitan North Region within 20 days of receiving the school's complaint outcome.

Metropolitan North Region will determine whether the matter meets the criteria for review and will advise you of the next steps.

9. EXTERNAL REVIEW OPTIONS

If you remain dissatisfied following the Department of Education's internal review process, you may contact an external review body such as:

- Queensland Ombudsman
- Queensland Human Rights Commission
- Office of the Information Commissioner (for privacy matters)