



# Complaints (and Feedback) Policy

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## Policy

The Beehive Montessori School Inc. is committed to encouraging feedback from students, parents and staff (past and present) and responding to concerns and issues about management and education.

Beehive is committed to ensuring a respectful learning environment that is safe, positive and supportive for all students. The Beehive Montessori School implements the National Child Safe Organisation Principles through its Child Safe Organisation Framework to underpin all Beehive's policies, procedures, practices and strategies to ensure the provision of an environment where children feel respected, valued, supported and safe from harm.

## Background

The School encourages constructive feedback, which may assist in improving the School.

The School recognises that there may be disagreement with actions, priorities, procedures and environments of the School. Appropriate mechanisms should be in place to provide a forum for expression of complaints and feedback, and where possible, mutually acceptable resolution.


## Implementation

1. The School is committed to creating a culturally safe environment that welcomes feedback and has a pathway to follow for making and dealing with complaints (see attached).
2. The School recognises that empowering students to understand their rights, to report problems and effectively support them to address the issue raised is critical. In addition to the complaints procedures outlined, students:
  - 2.1. have access to a complaints system that is accessible and responsive to their needs, such as the 'Speak Up' posters, the Student Council, weekly class meetings and complaints box in each classroom;
  - 2.2. are provided the opportunity for regular classroom discussion of the process for making a complaint or raising a concern; and
  - 2.3. may make a complaint or raise a concern with any staff member they feel comfortable with, either in person, in writing, or via another adult/their parent.
3. Complainants are encouraged to give their names and are reassured about confidentiality;
4. Staff are trained to identify and respond to complaints;

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5. Complaints, including anonymous complaints, may be made by letter, email, in person or on the phone, in which case the person who is the initial point of contact at the School shall:
  - 5.1. identify the communication is a complaint (rather than for example merely a provision of information);
  - 5.2. not attempt to resolve the complaint; and
  - 5.3. refer the complaint to the Principal, or to the Chair of the Board in the event the complaint is about the Principal;
6. The Principal shall record the complaint, including anonymous complaints, in the Complaints Register and acknowledge receipt of the complaint within 48 hours (where the complainant is known).
7. With regard to anonymous complaints (where there is no name or address supplied or if the complainants do not wish to be identified) the School and the Principal shall:
  - 5.1. determine what action, if any, should be taken, depending on the nature of the complaint;
  - 5.2. at no time and in any way imply that it 'will not accept' an anonymous complaint.
8. The School shall follow a fair and equitable complaints process outlined in the Complaints Pathway (see below).
9. Fairness, which must be accorded to both the complainant and the person whom the complaint is against, requires that:
  - 9.1. each party has the opportunity to be heard, in person or in writing as appropriate and to respond to the allegations and/or evidence offered by the other;
  - 9.2. issues or facts which are disputed are investigated;
  - 9.3. the investigator is free from bias or the perception of bias, and in particular, is not 'judge in his or her own cause';
  - 9.4. any complaint outcome is supported by the evidence, necessitating a finding on the balance of probabilities in the event of a dispute of fact;
  - 9.5. the complaint outcome is finalized by an adjudicator, who may also be the investigator, who is free from bias or the perception of bias; and
  - 9.6. the outcome is consistent with established School policy.

However, procedural fairness does not otherwise dictate the outcome of a complaint.
10. The School ensures all information is handled responsibly and with strict confidentiality.
11. The School shall commit to early intervention and independent, fair and impartial investigation for all issues whether they are educational, management or personal.
12. All parties to a complaint shall treat each other with mutual respect and in accordance with the Code of Conduct.
13. Not all complaints can be resolved to the satisfaction of the complainant. In such cases, there must be an end to the process at some point to be determined by the School, but it should be demonstrable at that end point that the complaint has been properly and fairly dealt with.

14. The School shall attempt to resolve conflicts to the mutual satisfaction of the School and the complainant. If this is not achieved within 14 days, either party may start the Resolving Disputes process outlined in the Beehive Montessori School Constitution.
15. Consistency of treatment may be a factor in dealing with complaints with similar attributes. Guidance may be sought from other sources such as the Association of Independent Schools of Western Australia (AISWA), relevant education legislation, other Schools or the Catholic Education Office.
16. If there is a complaint against the Board the procedures in the Constitution shall apply.
17. The Board shall use its best endeavours to clearly communicate its reasoning and decisions on its adjudication of complaints.
18. The Board is the final adjudicator of complaints, and once the Board makes its adjudication no further communication with the parties to the complaint will be entered into.
19. The Principal and Chair of the Board shall conduct an annual review of the Complaints Register in order to determine any trends that may need to be addressed. Complaints, concerns and safety incidents are analysed to identify causes to inform continuous improvement.
20. The Director General of the Department of Education is responsible for ensuring that the school observes the registration standards, including the standard about its complaints handling system. Any student, parent or community member is entitled to contact the Director General with concerns about how the School has dealt with a complaint. Information is available on the Department of Education website. While the Director General may consider whether the School has breached the registration standards, she does not have power to intervene in a complaint or override the School's decision.
21. The School regularly reviews, evaluates and improves child safe practices.

## Related Documentation and Resources

[The Privacy Act 1988](#)

[Incorporated Associations Act 2015 Schedule 1\(18\)](#)

[Ombudsman of Western Australia: Complaints Handling](#)

[School Education Act 1999 WA](#)

[AS/NZS 10002:2014](#)

[Department of Education](#)

Discrimination and Equal Opportunity Policy

Privacy Policy

Code of Conduct

Parent Communication Pathway

[Beehive Montessori School Constitution](#)

[Are you listening? Guidelines for making complaints systems accessible and responsive to children and young people](#)

[Australian Student Wellbeing Framework](#)

[Royal Commission's Creating Child Safe Institutions](#)

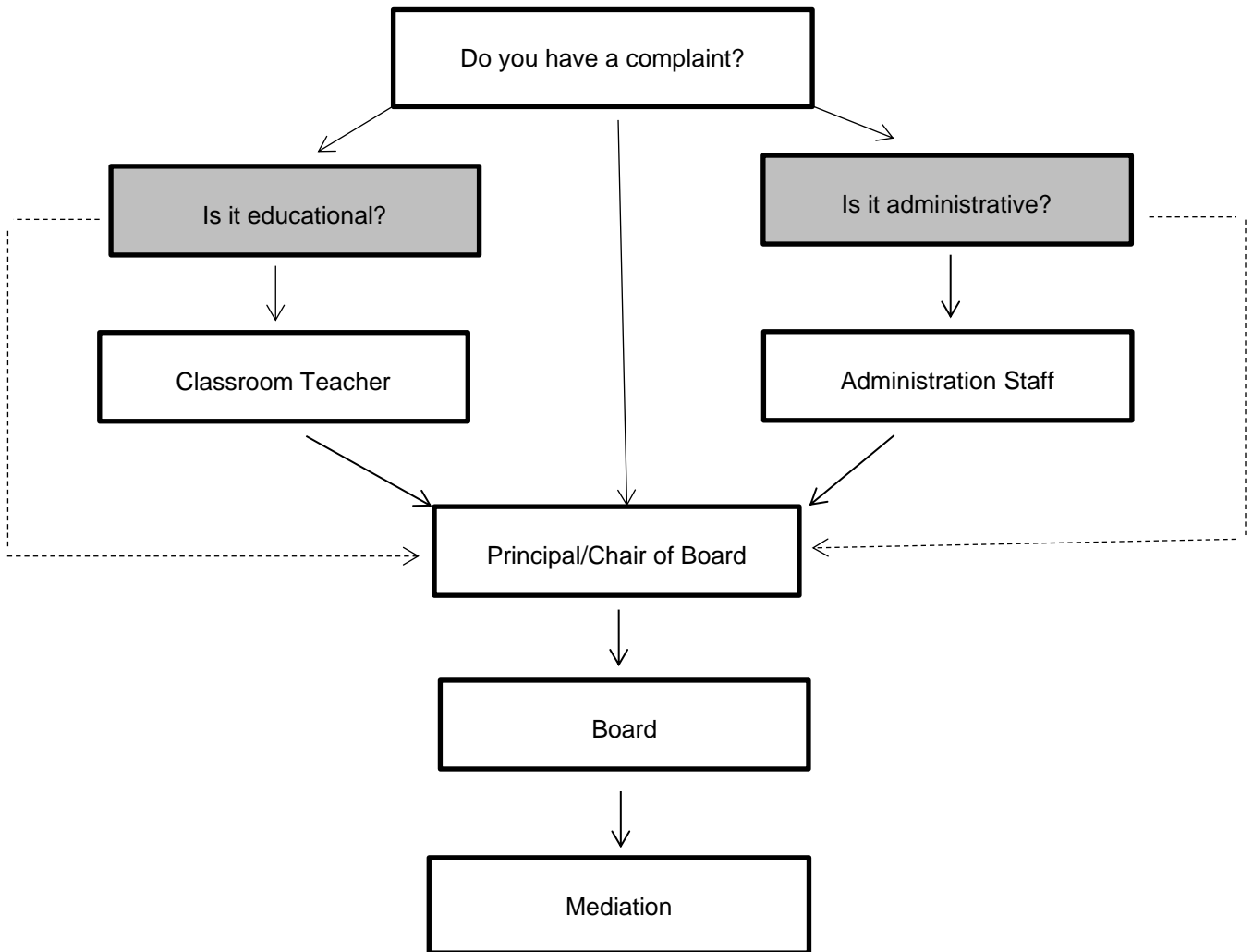
[National Principles for Child Safe Organisations](#)

[Beehive Montessori School Child Safe Organisation](#)

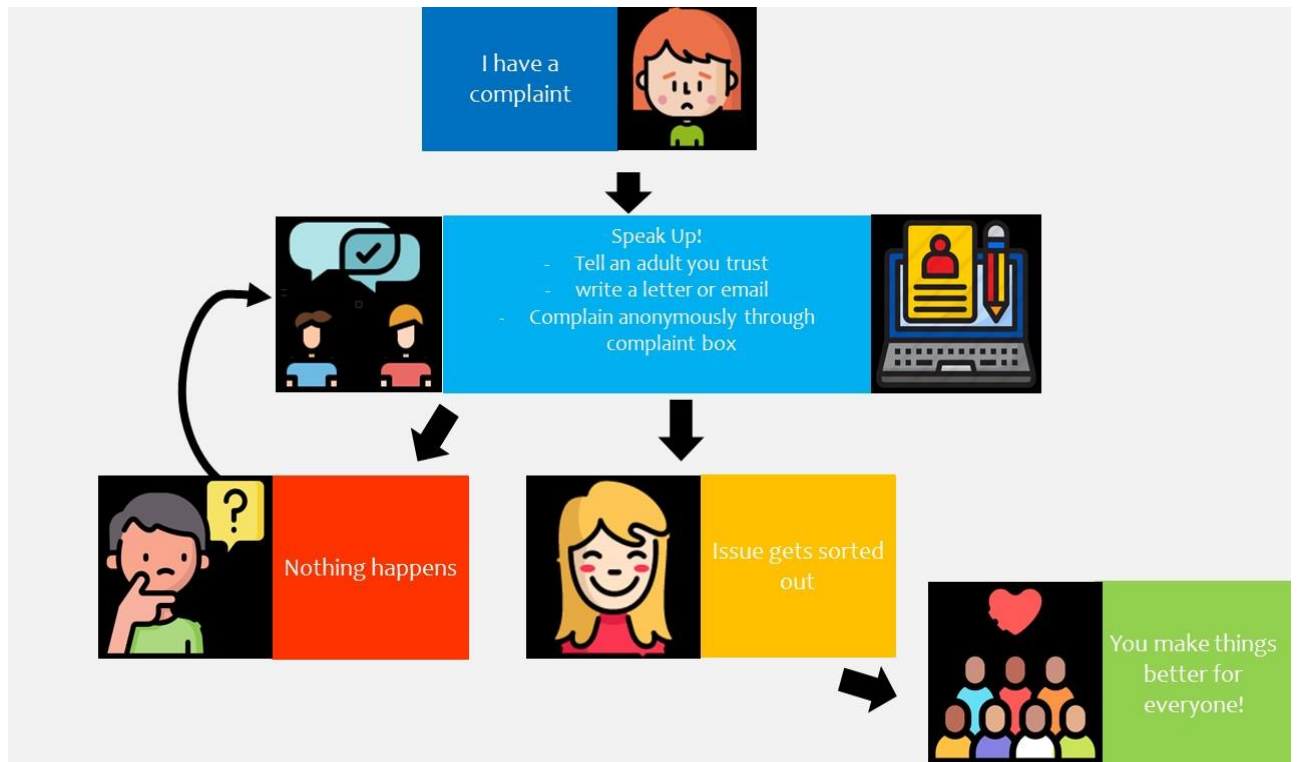
Speak Up classroom posters (sample attached)

*Approved 24/10/22 by the Board Policy Committee. Next review due 24/10/24*

COMPLAINTS PATHWAY  
(see also Communication Pathway for Parents)



Child Friendly Complaints Flow Chart



Sample Classroom Poster

# Speak up

To an adult you trust if you have  
a concern or complaint



We all have the right to feel safe  
and be heard