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# Customer complaints management

## Our values

We are committed to fostering a school environment that is supportive, respectful, compatible with human rights and provides all students with opportunities to engage in quality learning. Effective partnerships with parents, carers, students and school staff is an essential part of us achieving this goal. We want to know what we are doing well, but also if there are any areas where we can improve or do things differently.

## Purpose

Ashwell State School appreciates and acknowledges that parents, carers, students and community members have a right to make a complaint. As a department, we welcome opportunities to improve our services and achieve our vision of equity and excellence in a high performing education system. This document outlines how Ashwell State School will manage these complaints.

## What is a customer complaint?

A complaint is a customer complaint if the person is unhappy with the service or action of our school or staff, and directly affected by the service or action they are unhappy with.
In our school, the person making a complaint will usually be a parent, carer, student or other school community member, but could also be anyone else directly impacted by something at our school.
Some complaints must be managed using different processes. These include:

- issues about harm, or risk of harm, to a student attending a state school, which must be managed in accordance with the *Student protection procedure*; and
- complaints about certain decisions made under legislation - refer to the department's *Complaints and grievances management policy* for more information
- complaints about integrity or misconduct matters, which should be reported to the Intake, Referrals and Partnerships team
- complaints related to privacy, which should be reported to the Privacy team.

## Roles and responsibilities

We treat everyone with respect, courtesy and fairness, and aim to act compatibly with human rights. **Our responsibilities** include:

- following the customer complaints management framework and procedure when managing complaints;
- resolving complaints promptly; and
- providing information about our processes, timeframes and any available review options.

**If someone makes a complaint, they also have responsibilities** including:

- cooperating respectfully and understanding that unreasonable conduct will not be tolerated;
- giving us a clear idea of the issue or concern and a possible solution;
- providing all relevant information when making the complaint;
- understanding that addressing a complaint can take time; and
- letting us know if something changes, including if help is no longer needed.

## Complaints management process

At Ashwell State School, our complaints management process involves the following steps:

### i. Receipt

The complaint should be made where the problem or issue arose. At Ashwell State School, we ask parents, carers, students or community members who would like to make a complaint to either email principal@ashwellss.eq.edu.au or visit the school office to make an appointment to meet with the principal or another member of staff.

The following information should be provided when making a complaint:

- what happened, including when and where it occurred, and who was involved; and
- what outcome or solution you are seeking to address your issue or concern.

We accept anonymous complaints, however it is important to understand that this could limit how a complaint is assessed and resolved, and it may also prevent an outcome being provided.

If you are deaf or hard of hearing, have difficulties speaking, use a language or dialect other than English and need support such as a translator or interpreter, please let us know.

### ii. Assessment and management

We will examine the issue(s) raised and try to resolve the complaint. We aim to do this promptly, but understand that we have many other responsibilities and it may not be possible to make contact or resolve a complaint immediately.

### iii. Providing an outcome

Once we finish examining the complaint, we will let the person who has made the complaint know the outcome and any available review options.

## Review options

If the person who has made the complaint is dissatisfied with the way we handled their complaint and/or if they believe the outcome is unreasonable, they can contact the regional office to ask for an internal review. An internal review is a process that examines if the complaint management process was appropriate and/or if the outcome reached was reasonable. Please note an internal review is not a re-investigation of the original complaint. A Request for internal review form should be completed and the request should be submitted to the regional office within 20 days.

There is also an external review option (for example, the Queensland Ombudsman or Queensland Human Rights Commission), which becomes available once the department's complaints process has been exhausted.

## More information and resources

The following resources contain additional information:

- Complaints and grievances management policy
- Customer complaints management framework and procedure
- Compliments and customer complaints website
- Making a customer complaint: Information for parents and carers
- Student code of conduct factsheet.

### Endorsement

Principal

P&C President

Effective date: August 2026

Review date: August 2030