Raising Concerns and Complaints Policy and Processes

Preamble
Diamond Valley College’s approach to handling concerns and complaints is based on our values of:

· **Respect**
  Building relationships between students, parents and staff

· **Responsibility**
  It is responsible behaviour to raise concerns and complaints with respect

· **Excellence**
  Show respect and understanding of each other’s point of view.

Aims
To effectively address parent’s concerns and complaints.

Types of concerns and complaints covered
These procedures cover concerns and complaints about:

· general issues of student behaviour that are contrary to Diamond Valley College’s code of conduct

· incidents of bullying or harassment in the classroom or college grounds

· learning programs, assessment and reporting of student learning

· communication with parents

· college fees and payments

· general administrative issues

· any other school-related matters except as detailed below.

Issues relating to College policy, school management, staff members or very complex student issues.
Types of concerns and complaints NOT covered

These procedures do not cover matters for which there are existing rights of review or appeal.

Those matters include:

- student discipline matters involving expulsions
- complaints about employee conduct or performance and complaints that should be dealt with by performance management, grievance resolution or disciplinary action
- complaints by DET employees related to their employment
- student critical incident matters
- other criminal matters.

EXPECTATIONS

Diamond Valley College expects a person raising a concern or complaint to:

- do so promptly, as soon as possible after the issue occurs
- provide complete and factual information about the concern or complaint
- maintain and respect the privacy and confidentiality of all parties
- acknowledge that a common goal is to achieve an outcome acceptable to all parties
- act in good faith, and in a calm and courteous manner
- show respect and understanding of each other’s point of view and value difference
- recognise that all parties have rights and responsibilities which must be balanced.

RAISING CONCERNS OR COMPLAINTS

The complainant should phone, visit or write to:

- the student’s teacher or homegroup teacher about learning issues and incidents that happened in their class or group
- the year level or Sub School Coordinator if students from several classes are involved
- the appropriate Assistant Principal about issues relating to staff members or complex student issues
- the Principal about issues relating to College policy, school management, staff members or very complex student issues.

If you are not sure who to contact ask to speak to the Junior (7-9) or Senior (10-12) Assistant Principal.
Complainants can seek the services of an advocate when they feel they are unable to express their concern clearly. An advocate can be a friend or someone who is available through an appropriate support organisation.

All parties involved in addressing a complaint may seek the services of a mediator when there is difficulty coming to an agreement.

Diamond Valley College will ensure that the complainant is aware of these supports. A complainant who wishes to use these support services should ensure the person addressing the concern or complaint is aware of their intention and is in agreement.

**MANAGING PARENT CONCERNS AND COMPLAINTS INFORMATION**

**Complaint resolved**
A complaint is considered to be resolved when the complainant and the school, regional office or central office agree on an appropriate response or remedy. Possible responses and remedies include:
- an explanation
- an acknowledgement of each other’s perspective and agreement on ways to manage differences
- an apology or expression of regret
- an admission of fault
- a change of decision
- a change of policy, procedure or practice
- agreement on what constitutes acceptable behaviour
- an undertaking that unacceptable behaviour will change
- the waiving of debt related to school fees and payments
- a refund of parent payments
- the provision of counselling or other support.

Remedies should be implemented as soon as possible.

**Complaint dismissed**
A complaint can only be dismissed:
- after it has been investigated
- if an investigation has determined that the complaint cannot be substantiated.

**Complaint unresolved**
A complaint is considered to be unresolved if the complainant does not agree on a course of action and/or a remedy, or if the remedy cannot be implemented. In such cases, a school must involve its regional office to assist in resolving the complaint.
ADDRESSING CONCERNS OR COMPLAINTS

All complaints will be noted and acted on promptly by the staff member who receives the complaint. All complaints made in writing will be acknowledged and the complainant will be informed of the timeline for the investigation.

Should the complaint involve complex issues advice may be sought from external organisations to Diamond Valley College. The complainant will be informed if this alters the agreed timeline. In all cases, Diamond Valley College will try to resolve a concern or complaint within 20 school days.

REFERRAL OF CONCERNS OR COMPLAINTS

If a person with a concern or complaint is not satisfied with the outcome determined by Diamond Valley College, they should contact the North Western Victoria Regional Office of D.E.T.

Intranet Supporting Documents

- Communication Policy

External Links

- www.education.gov.au/about/contact/parent complaint

Review Date

This Policy shall be reviewed by School Council by May 2017 or prior if deemed necessary.