Warracknabeal Secondary College
Parent Concerns and Complaints

**Rationale:**
Warracknabeal Secondary College recognises it has a responsibility to ensure that high standards of conduct are maintained by staff and students at all times and that any parent concerns or complaints are managed and resolved fairly, efficiently, promptly and in accordance with relative legislation.

**Aims:**
- To provide a safe and supportive learning environment for all students
- To build positive working relationships between students, parents and staff
- To resolve any parent complaints fairly, efficiently, promptly and in accordance with relevant legislation
- To provide a safe working environment for staff
- To maintain a friendly and open environment which encourages positive dialogue between parents and staff

**Implementation:**
At certain times parents will have concerns that they may wish to take up with the school. In most of these cases, further information can usually be provided by a staff member, which should assist the parent to gain an appropriate understanding of the situation. Warracknabeal Secondary College recognises the importance of clear communication between the parent, staff and the student and encourages the use of a cooperative approach at every opportunity. Parents are encouraged to raise any issues so that they can be dealt with in a timely and professional manner.

**Concerns and Complaints covered by these procedures include:**
- General issues of student behaviour that is contrary to the College's Positive Learning Culture Policy
- Incidents of bullying or harassment in the classroom or schoolyard
- Learning programs, assessment and reporting of students
- Communication with parents
- School fees and payments
- School excursions
- Any other school related matter (except those detailed under DET Policy below)

**Procedures to assist parents in addressing concerns or complaints**
1. Parents should raise the matter either verbally or in writing at the earliest opportunity.
   - Try to determine the most appropriate staff member for your concern will be, ie: Classroom teacher, Sub-school Coordinator (Middle/Senior), Assistant Principal or Principal. (The General Office can assist you in this process if you can give them some indication of the concern being raised.)
   - If the matter is of a serious nature, an appointment should be made to see the appropriate person at the earliest opportunity.
• If the matter is of an urgent nature, immediately outline the seriousness of your issue with the General Office staff.

2. If parents feel the issue has still not been suitably resolved, then an appointment to meet with the principal should be made. Please inform them of the nature of the issue so that some background information can be sought prior to the appointment. The principal may request you to lodge a formal complaint in writing listing all of the relevant details.

3. Following your meeting with the principal, parents may need to:
   • Provide further information about the issue.
   • Be available for meeting with other appropriate staff within the school.
   • Allow the involvement of DET guidance officers, psychologists, social workers or other associated personnel from community agencies.

4. All issues and complaints should ultimately be resolved at the school level in order to provide the best possible outcome for students.

5. If the concern or complaint is substantiated in whole or in part, the school will offer an appropriate remedy at its discretion and dependent on all of the circumstances.

6. Only if the principal is unable to resolve a formal complaint should a complaint be made to the regional office.

   **Grampians Region**

   Postal address and location: 109 Armstrong Street North, Ballarat, 3350

   Phone: (03) 5337 8444
   Fax: (03) 5333 2135
   Email: grampians.mail@edumail.vic.gov.au
   Website: Grampians Region

Warracknabeal Secondary College is committed to seeking a resolution to all concerns sensitively and with a commitment to listening and responding to parents concerns in a professional manner. We therefore ask that all parties conduct any interactions in a positive manner and refrain from any verbal abuse and/or threatening behaviour. If any such interactions between parents or member of the public and school based personnel involves such unacceptable behaviour, then the interaction or meeting will be terminated. Any discussion may continue only at an appropriate time when an agreement to continue in a professional and positive manner is given.

The College will make information about procedure for making and addressing complaints readily available to parents within the school community in clear, easy to understand language.

The College will monitor parents’ concerns and complaints and consider issues raised through the parent complaints process, and any other relevant information from the parent opinion survey, when undertaking a review of the school’s policies, procedures and operations.

**DET Policy**

The procedures outlined above do not cover matters for which there are existing rights of review or appeal as detailed in the Victorian Government Schools Reference Guide. These include:

• Student discipline matters involving expulsion
• Complaints about employee conduct or performance that should be dealt with via performance management, grievance resolution or disciplinary actions.
• Child protection issues
• Complaints by staff members in relation to their employment
• Student Critical Incident matters
• Criminal matters
**Evaluation:** This policy will be reviewed as part of the school’s three-year review cycle.

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