

POSITIVE HOME/SCHOOL RELATIONSHIPS A PARENT'S GUIDE FOR RAISING AND RESOLVING CONCERNS

Context

The Heights School aims to provide an environment which fosters respect for self, others and the environment and which prepares students for a changing world.

Individual responsibility is encouraged within the policies and practices of the school.

Students, teachers, parents and caregivers make up the school community, with the partnership of educating the students being shared by parents and caregivers and teachers.

Positive partnerships and good relationships between home and school give our children a better chance at success.

Within this community it is therefore assumed that all conversations and communication will be based on mutual respect

Sometimes parents and caregivers are unsure whom to contact about information, issues or concerns and this document provides the guidelines to assist communications. The most important step to take is to talk to the school.

Roles and Expectations Parents/students can expect:

- a safe learning environment
- a rigorous, relevant and challenging curriculum
- information about school policies, procedures and operations
- opportunities to put forward their points of view and express concerns and opinions
- opportunities to be involved and to participate in school activities
- to be treated fairly and equitably

The school expects:

- Support for school policies and procedures such as behaviour management, school uniform, assessment and reporting, anti-harassment and anti-bullying
- Concerns will be raised at school through the procedures outlined in this document
- Parents and staff to model respectful relationships through calm discussion and resolution of the difficulties.
- If parents wish to speak with someone at the school that they contact the front office to leave a message. Staff will make every effort to return your call within 24 hours.
- Parents do not enter classrooms or offices about a major concern. These matters need to be dealt with privately at an agreed time.
- Under no circumstances should a parent/caregiver approach another child at school to resolve an issue about behaviour.
- Confidentiality will be maintained

Types of Concerns and Contacts

- Sometimes parents/ caregivers seek to make additional interviews for important reasons. If this is the case parents/caregivers are asked to make an appointment in advance with the teacher concerned, state the reason for the request and give an estimate of the time required. Another teacher or Coordinator may be present at the interview to ensure comprehensive responses to queries.
- Alternatively, there are times when teachers may seek additional interviews with parents/ caregivers. They, too, will make an appointment in advance, state the reason for the request and give an estimate of the time required. Once again, another teacher or Coordinator may be present at the interview to ensure comprehensive responses to queries.
- Parents/caregivers or teachers may also seek telephone interviews. These should be only for a minor matter, and are more likely to be informal.
- From time to time email is a useful tool for short and informal communication, if this is a manner agreed in advance by parent, caregiver and teacher.
- Parents/caregivers with questions about classroom teaching and learning matters should initially address their concerns to the relevant teacher. Further communication should be with the Sub School Leader.
- Concerns about subject or curriculum matters should be addressed to the class teacher or subject teacher in the first instance. Further communication should be with the appropriate subject Coordinator.
- Parents/caregivers with questions about welfare matters should address their concerns to the relevant Home Group/Class teacher. Further communication should be with the appropriate Year Level Coordinator.
- Matters of concern about student management and harassment issues should be addressed to the Home Group/Class teacher in the first instance.
- Contact with the Student Counsellor may be initiated by a telephone call, and would generally be for concerns and enquiries parent/caregivers may have about friendship and emotional concerns.
- If there is a death, serious illness or other very serious matter in the family, it is important to discuss this with the Principal. This ensures that all relevant staff can be informed and the school is able to meet all the needs of the student and family in the most appropriate way.
- From time to time, parents/caregivers have a very serious concern or grievance. In these instances, these should be made in writing to the Principal. It is likely that these would result in an interview held at the earliest possible time.

Additional Contacts

If you feel that your issue has not been resolved you may choose to contact the regional office or the Parent Complaint Unit. For further information about solving concerns in public education schools refer to DECD Parent guide to raising a concern or complaint brochure.