



EAST PRESTON ISLAMIC COLLEGE

COMPLAINTS

GRIEVANCES

&

CONCERNS

POLICY

RATIONALE

East Preston Islamic College recognises the importance of fostering positive communication within the school community. A timely and professional response to complaints is an effective means of encouraging communication within the college, to build relationships with the college and provide valuable feedback.

AIM

To develop and implement a process by which all employees, students within the school, parents/caregivers and members of the wider college community can confidently raise concerns in the knowledge that they will be listened to and their concerns will be professionally managed in a timely, appropriate and confidential manner.

IMPLEMENTATION

At East Preston Islamic College we acknowledge that employees, students and parents/caregivers, and people from the wider college community, can sometimes feel aggrieved about issues that is happening at the College which appears to be unfair, unjust, unacceptable and unreasonable, which may cause concern.

An employee, student, parent or member of the school community can have a complaint about any decision, behaviour, act or omission (whether by the Principal, members of the leadership team or other staff/students or parents) that they feel is discriminatory or unreasonable.

Complaints about any aspect of East Preston Islamic College's operations or personnel will be handled responsively, openly and in a timely manner, with the aim of resolving the complaints.

- It is expected that written complaints will be acknowledged within **5 working days**;
- The proposed timeframe required to resolve the complaint will be indicated to the complainant as early as possible in the process;
- Complainants should be kept informed of progress towards resolving the complaint;
- It is important that those handling complaints should be independent of the issue of the complaint. If a conflict of interest arises for a staff member involved in the receipt or management of a complaint, the Vice Principal or Principal should be informed and alternate arrangements will be made;
- To protect confidentiality and privacy, staff involved in handling complaints resolution must ensure that information is restricted only to those who genuinely need to know in order to deal with the complaint. Some information about the specific complaint may need to be disclosed to others during its resolution. The complainant should be made aware that this might occur;
- When a complaint is documented all details will be recorded and filed appropriately;

- During the complaint process contact between the aggrieved parties will only occur with the mutual consent of all parties;
- Complainants should be reassured that their complaint will not lead to discrimination. The response to the issues raised by the complainant should be in a non-judgmental and courteous manner;
- The staff person, about whom the complaint is made shall have the right to be advised of the complaint and if appropriate, the identity of the complainant;
- Any person(s) who has lodged a formal complaint shall be entitled to either stop or withdraw from the process at any stage;
- Any person(s) lodging a formal complaint shall be entitled to the involvement of a support person who may be present and involved in all discussions at any stage of the process;
- Copies of this policy will be made available to all employees, students and parents/caregivers, and people from the wider college community.

The types of disputes that are covered and those grievances and problems that can arise include:

- Grievances over working or learning arrangements;
- A perceived conflict of interest;
- Bullying or psychological abuse, abuse of power or coercive management practices;
- Harassment and discrimination, for example on racial or sexual grounds;
- Behaviour that is inconsistent with the EPIC Employee Code of Conduct.

GUIDING PRINCIPLES:

Responsiveness

Complaints need to be resolved openly and responsively. It is expected that all written complaints will be acknowledged in writing within **5 working days** and resolved in a timely manner. The process and timeframes for resolution will vary depending on the nature, complexity and timing of the issue.

Fairness

The process needs to be fair to both the complainant and the person/s against whom the complaint is being made. All parties must be protected from victimisation, discrimination or retribution. The process shall be based upon principle that includes the complainant's right to:

- be heard;
- have their complaint treated seriously;
- be informed of the processes of complaints handling;

- be informed of the college's decision and reasons for that decision.

The person whom the complaint is made shall have the right to:

- be advised of complaint;
- collect sufficient detail to enable them to gather information and prepare a response to the complaint;
- have the opportunity to respond to the person investigating the complaint;
- and have their response taken seriously;
- be informed of the processes of complaints handling;
- be informed of the decision and reason for the decision.

CONFIDENTIALITY

To protect confidentiality and privacy, staff involved in handling complaints resolution must ensure that information is restricted only to those who genuinely need to know in order to deal with the complaint. Some information about the specific complaint may need to be disclosed to others during its resolution. The complainant needs to be informed of this.

MAKING A COMPLAINT

It is expected that any complaint will, in the first instance, be made to the college.

A formal complaint may be made by visiting the college and completing the Complaint, Grievances and Concerns forms located at the administration office.

As a general rule, it should be directed to:

- The Vice Principal, where there are issues relating to staff members or complex student issues or
- The Principal, if there are issues relating to college policy or college management, or if earlier attempts at resolution have been unsuccessful.

If you are unsure of who to contact, the Vice Principal will assist.

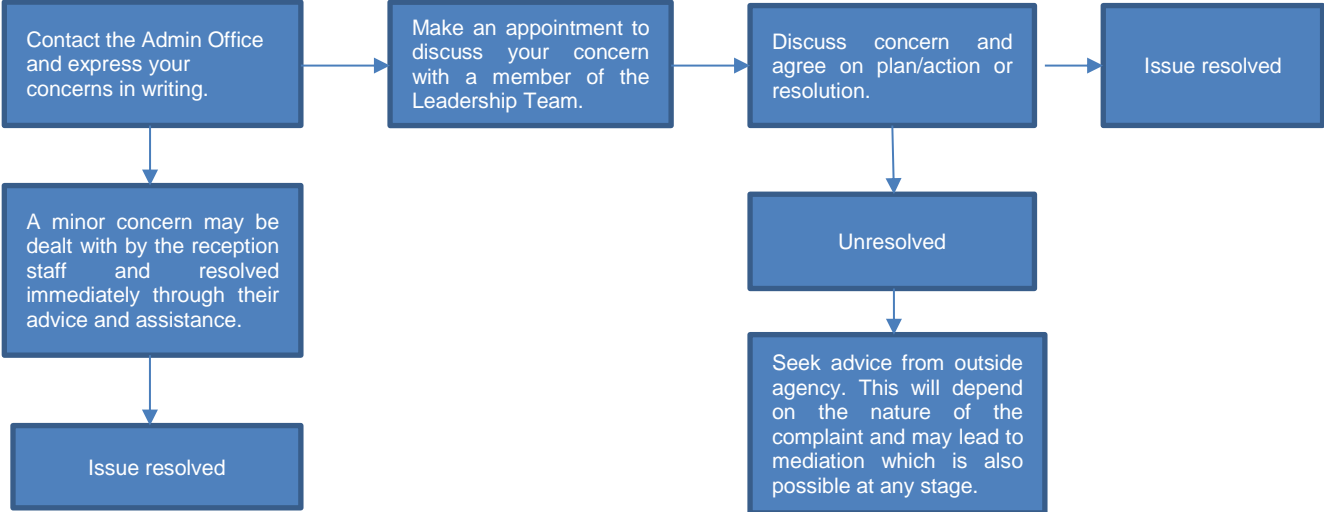
Complainants should be aware even though the Vice Principal and Principal are happy to meet with you, please make an appointment to ensure that you are not disappointed if they are not available, and that you do not waste your time by coming to the school.

COMPLAINTS- PARENTS AND MEMBERS OF THE COLLEGE COMMUNITY

At East Preston Islamic College we have a hierarchy put in place to quickly deal with academic and behaviour concerns. Any issues or complaints arise, the first action should be to follow the hierarchical order below:

- 1. Class Room Teacher (Primary)/Homeroom Teacher (Secondary)
- 2. Year Level Leader/Coordinator;
- 3. Educational Support Coordinator for support, Head of Discipline & Well-being for behaviour or Head of Teaching & Learning for academic concerns.
- 4. Vice Principal or Principal. Should you not be satisfied with the outcome of your concern, the Principal will meet with you again to discuss your concern.

COMPLAINTS, GRIEVANCES AND CONCERNS FLOWCHART FOR PARENTS AND WIDER COLLEGE COMMUNITY



RECORD KEEPING

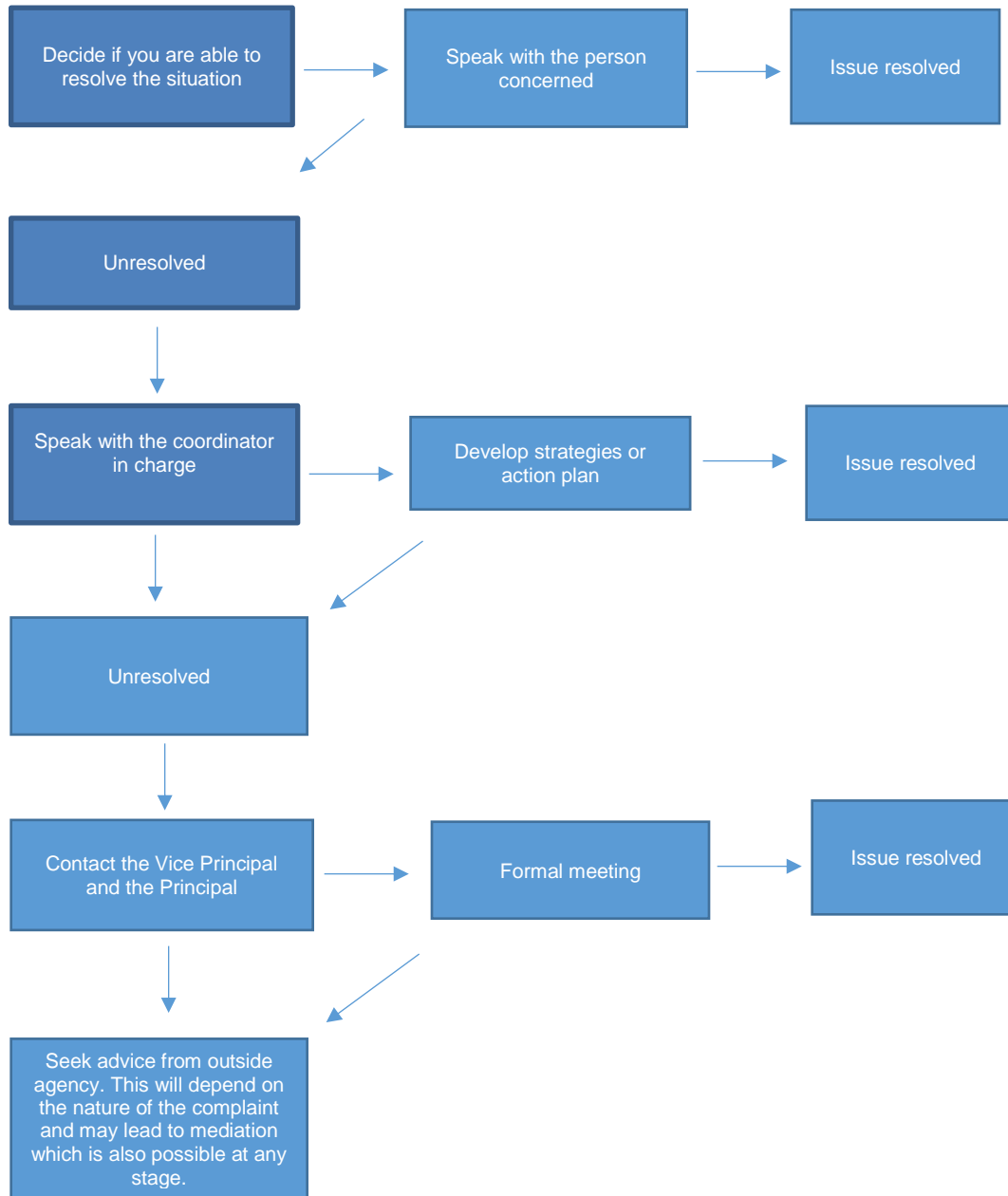
The administration staff will record the following details of the complaint in the school data base and keep a hard copy on file:

- Name and contact details of the person with the complaint;
- The date of the complaint was made;
- A brief description of the complaint;
- Any recommendations for future improvement in the college's policy or procedures.

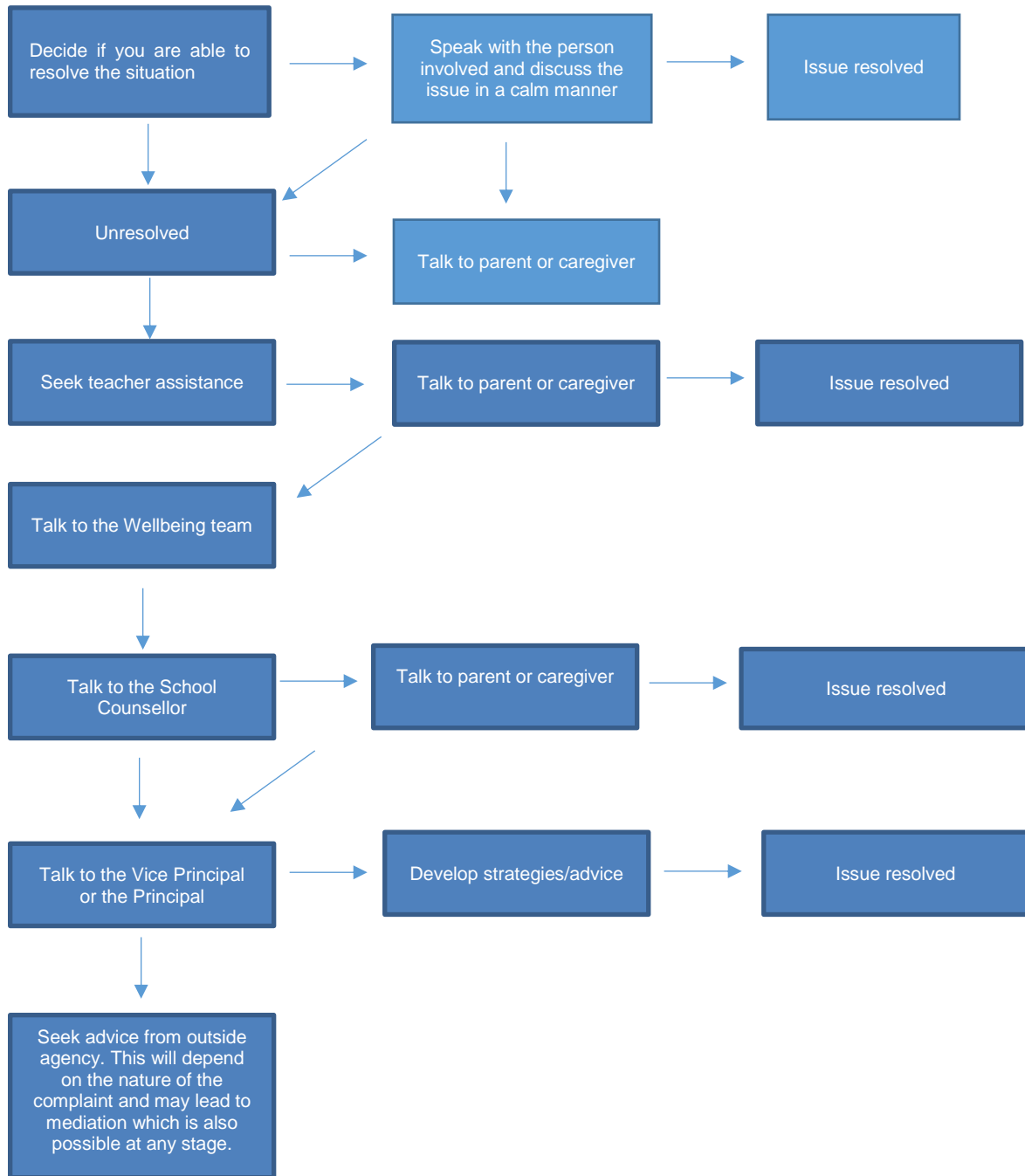
East Preston Islamic College will:

- Make every effort to resolve the complaint at school level;
- Provide the complainant with a copy of the college's complaint's policy and procedures.
- Determine whether a concern or complaint should be managed through the college's complaints process or through other complaints processes of Government Authorities;
- Investigate thoroughly all issues contained in the complaint;
- Provide a response to the complainant as quickly as possible. Where deemed necessary or requested, this response will be in writing. Please note that the timeline will depend upon the complexity of the matter being investigated.

COMPLAINTS, GRIEVANCES AND CONCERNS FLOWCHART FOR EMPLOYEES



COMPLAINTS, GRIEVANCES AND CONCERNS FLOWCHART FOR STUDENTS



MANAGING COMPLAINTS

THE RESOLUTION PROCESS

Positive resolution of a complaint should aim to:

- seek resolution at the level at which the complaint is made;
- gain agreement of the parties, including those steps necessary to gain that agreement, and Steps include:
- The need to consider all the relevant information and the views of all parties. Each position must be heard, followed by a relevant response;
- Each party describes the dispute in their own words and then lists those issues of concern which are then explored. This exploration must be done in a safe, controlled and respectful environment in order to reach an acceptable solution;
- After issues of concern are discussed, parties must generate and discuss options for resolution. When an agreement is reached, all aspects of the agreement must be tested for workability and clarity to ensure that everyone understands the agreement and accepts it.

REVIEW OF DECISIONS

INTERNAL APPEALS PROCESS

- If the complainant feels that the complaint has not been resolved satisfactorily they may apply in writing to the governing body of East Preston Islamic College for a review of the decision;
- The application must set out the grounds on which the review of the decision is sought;
- The governing body will review the processes and determine if the appeal is to be dismissed or upheld and advise the complainant in writing of the outcome within **28 days** after the application for review has been received.

OUTCOME

If, after appropriate investigation and consideration, the college determines that a concern or complaint is substantiated in whole or part, it will apply an appropriate remedy. Depending on the circumstances, this may be:

- An explanation or further information about the issue;
- Disciplinary action against students or staff members;
- Mediation, restorative justice strategies, counselling or other support;
- An apology, expression of regret or admission of fault;
- A change of decision;
- A revision of college policies, procedures and practices.
- The college will implement the remedy as soon as practicable.

Please note that when a complaint by a parent results in disciplinary actions against a student(s), the college will not enter into discussion about the nature of the severity of the action being taken with anyone other than the parents of the student(s) being punished.

CHILD PROTECTION PROCEDURES

Any issues or incidents regarding abuse of children should be followed up by procedures outlined in the **EPIC Child Safety Policy and EPIC Mandatory Reporting Policy**.

REFERRAL OF COMPLAINTS TO EXTERNAL AGENCIES

A complainant with a complaint who is not satisfied with the outcome determine by the governing body can contact:

- Independent Schools Victoria (ISV) or
- The Victorian Registration and Qualifications Authority (VRQA)

MONITORING COMPLAINTS

The college will monitor all complaints when undertaking a review of the college's policies, procedures and operations.

The EPIC governing body will regularly review its policy and procedures to effectively address all complaints as part of its review schedule.

BREACHES OF POLICY

The School expects that any employees who become aware of a breach of these policies will advise the Vice Principal without delay to enable remedial action to be taken.

EVALUATION

This policy will be reviewed by the EPIC governing body as part of our 3-year cycle.

NEXT REVIEW

Next review date is 30th June 2020.