

# Mawson Lakes School – Complaint Resolution Process



Reviewed and Ratified by Governing Council: 9 September 2025  
(Principal: Tammy Lambden, GC Chairperson: Aaron Chirakis)

Mawson Lakes School Complaint Resolution Process aims to:

- ensure an open, accessible and transparent complaint management system
- ensure feedback, suggestions and complaints are managed effectively, fairly, confidentially and objectively
- inform and identify where service improvements can be made
- provide guidance on key principles and concepts of the complaint management system.

Mawson Lakes School's process aligns with the Department for Education [Complaint Management Policy](#).

## Before making a complaint

Before making a complaint you should:

- clearly identify issues and the resolution you are after
- provide complete and factual information
- cooperate with any requests for more information
- not include deliberately false or misleading information
- treat staff handling the complaint with courtesy and respect.

## Types of concerns and complaints

You may choose to make a complaint if you believe that the school has:

- done something incorrectly
- failed to do something they should have done
- acted unfairly or impolitely.

Your complaint or feedback may be about:

- the type, level or quality of service
- the behaviour and/or decisions of staff and/or students
- a policy, procedure or practice.

Complaints and feedback may be about something we have to do because of state or federal law. We will talk to you and help you understand the requirements and why they exist.

## Making a complaint

### Students

- Walk away and think
- Ignore the concern/person if possible
- Talk it out with person/people involved e.g. Can you please stop that because.../ When you...I feel...
- Seek help from a trusted adult (member of staff and/or parent/caregiver) if the issue continues
- Apply strategies from the Child Protection Curriculum
- Report any unsafe behaviour to a staff member

### Families

#### Step 1 – frontline complaint handling and early resolution

Talk to the school or the person that made the original decision. We encourage a process where the original decision maker is given the opportunity to resolve the concern or complaint wherever possible. This might be a teacher or a member of leadership. This is often the quickest and easiest way to resolve a complaint.

It is expected that staff will:

- acknowledge the complaint
- make a time available (face-to-face, by phone) as soon as reasonably possible to discuss the complaint
- consider relevant legislation, departmental policy and guidelines, school or preschool processes, and/or seek advice from their site leader
- identify and discuss possible courses of action that could be taken to resolve their complaint and the timeframe for this to occur
- where practicable, follow up, after a reasonable period of time for any changes to take effect, to ensure everyone is satisfied with the outcome. For example, at parent interview, telephone or email
- if appropriate (depending on the nature of the concern or complaint) keep a written record of the complaint, its progress and outcomes

If you're still not satisfied that your complaint has been addressed, you can contact that person's line manager. This might be a principal or another member of leadership. Ask to make a time to contact them to discuss your concerns. You may want to put your concerns in an email.

It's expected that when leadership staff handle a complaint they will:

- wherever possible, make every reasonable effort to resolve concerns or complaints at the local level in a timely and effective manner
- ensure that staff are familiar with the department's complaints policy and that school has a link to the policy
- ensure staff understand the complaint process and are aware of and have access to appropriate training
- advise all relevant parties once a complaint has been received
- consider whether the person making the complaint may require a support person at a meeting
- ensure the complaint is documented and appropriate action determined
- recommend to the Education Director any system improvements at a broader level that may reduce the likelihood of similar complaints
- seek advice and support from the Partnerships, Schools and Preschools Division, phone 8226 1290
- refer to [feedback and complaints about schools and preschools](#) and contact Customer Feedback as required
- advise families of their right to contact Customer Feedback, if a resolution at the school can't be found.

## Step 2 – central complaint resolution

If you're not satisfied that your complaint has been addressed at the local level, you can get help from the Customer Feedback Team:

- [online feedback and complaints form](#)
- [make a complaint or give feedback about a school or preschool](#)
- phone 1800 677 435 (free call).

The Customer Feedback Team can help you in relation to school complaints by:

- giving advice about the issues behind the complaint
- liaising with schools to ensure all options for resolution have been explored
- objectively reviewing complaints that have not been resolved at the local level, including through a review.

## Step 3 – external complaint resolution

If we haven't been able to resolve your complaint through steps 1 and 2, you may choose to seek independent advice from the [Ombudsman SA](#). The circumstances of your complaint will determine if they can help.

Free call: 1800 182 150

Email: [ombudsman@ombudsman.sa.gov.au](mailto:ombudsman@ombudsman.sa.gov.au)



## Staff

- Follow the Department for Education policy and refer to the [Employee Complaints Procedure](#)

## Review

Consultation will occur with students, staff and families. If appropriate, the Complaint Resolution Process will be revised.

Previously ratified June 2022