

Yarra Ranges SDS Vacation Care Program Complaints Resolution Policy

Rationale:

Yarra Ranges SDS School Council recognises that users of the respite program are free to raise and have resolved any complaints or disputes they may have regarding the service provider or the service. The following policy is based upon the Department of Health & Human Services, Victoria (DHHS) Service Agreement for Funded Organisations

Aims:

- To ensure that complaints and disputes are addressed promptly, fairly and respectfully without compromising services to the individual.
- To establish a system that clearly identifies the roles and responsibilities of the various levels of management when dealing with a complaint.
- To ensure that all users of the respite programs and all staff are made aware of the processes involved for reporting and dealing with a complaint.
- To comply with the standards for Disability Services in Victoria
- To increase program user awareness of the role of the Disability Services Commissioner (Vic)

Definition:

The DHHS definition of a complaint is taken from the AS ISO 10002 – 2006 Customer Satisfaction – Guidelines for Complaints Handling in Organisations. A complaint is defined as:

- a registered expression of dissatisfaction with any departmental service, provided, funded or regulated
- lodged by a complainant, their representative or advocate
- relating to a specific episode, occurrence or failure in provision of service that has resulted in an impact on any individual or group
- made verbally or in writing

A general expression of concern is not defined as a complaint, nor are appealable matters.

Implementation:

- Users are defined as the children and adolescents enrolled in the respite program and their representative e.g. parents and carers and any other individual or advocate who may be involved in their wellbeing e.g. a case manager
- Users will be given information about how they can make a complaint at the time of enrolment and at other times if they request it
- A full copy of this policy will be given to a user or their representative on request or at the time of making a complaint
- If a complaint is made directly to a Respite Support Worker it will be referred directly to the program coordinator without that staff member commenting on the issue
- All complaints are to be:
 - Registered and recorded by the program coordinator including details of outcome.
 - Investigated and otherwise acted upon.
 - Resolved at the local level as far as is practicable.
 - Referred to an external body when appropriate i.e. DHHS Region, DHHS Head Office, Ombudsman, Disability Services Commissioner or

Disability Services Board. Guidelines for this process are included in DHHS resources

- The result of consultation monitored
- Detailed and included in the Annual Complaints Return to the Disability Services Commissioner (Vic)
- Complaints may be dealt with in an informal manner in cases where the complaint is minor, the complainant wishes the matter to be dealt with informally or the complaint has arisen from a lack of or unclear communication
- Formal processes will be used when informal processes are unresolved, a complainant seeks a formal process or the School Council, Principal or other interested party believes that the complaint warrants formal investigation..
- The formal process involves:
 - Investigating the complaint including formal interviews, written statements, conveying the details of the complaint to the respondent in writing providing the opportunity for a written response.
 - Dismissing or accepting the complaint. Acceptance may involve DHHS, verbal or written warnings, conciliation or counselling etc.
 - Preparation of a detailed confidential report.
 - Monitoring of the situation.
- An internal process for managing complaints will be followed – refer to flow chart
- All reasonable steps will be taken to ensure that users are not adversely affected by making a complaint
- All staff will be made aware of this policy and the processes of dealing with a complaint
- Parties dissatisfied with the process can appeal to the previously mentioned external agencies.
- All matters must be treated with utmost confidentiality and professional respect at all times.
- The School Council President will be kept informed of all complaints.
- All users of the respite program will be advised about and have full access to this policy.

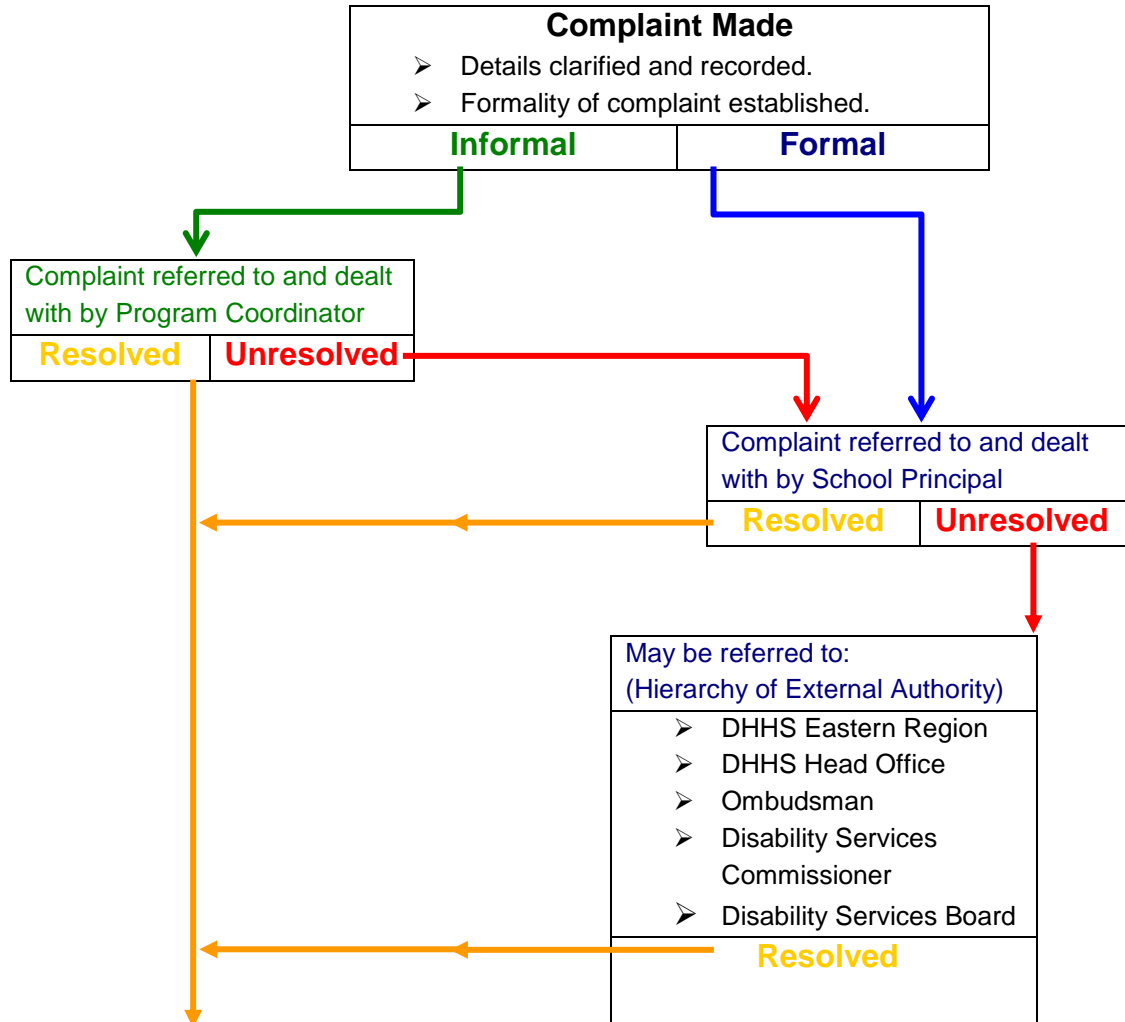
Date Implemented	
Author	
Approved By	(School Council President)
Approval Authority (Signature & Date)	
Date Reviewed	
Responsible for Review	Assistant Principal
Review Date	
References	Disability Act 2006

YARRA RANGES SDS VACATION CARE PROGRAM

COMPLAINT RESOLUTION FLOW CHART

Principal: Janet Taylor

Program Coordinator: Elaine Feyen



- Coordinator ensures that:**
- Result recorded
 - School Principal / School Council President advised at all stages.
 - Any appropriate action taken.
 - Details recorded via DHHS recording system
 - Details included in DHHS Annual Complaints Return.
 - Situation Monitored and reviewed as necessary
 - Management systems reviewed as needed.