

# Parent and Caregiver Concerns and Complaints Protocol



## Policy Statement

YouthInc. Enterprise Academy believes that the safety and educational wellbeing of our students is our first priority. We will work with parents and caregivers to resolve any concerns and complaints that they may have about their child's education at the School. We acknowledge that parents and caregivers have the right to raise concerns and complaints about their child's school life.

Any concern or complaint will follow a process that is fair, impartial, accessible, confidential, respectful and responsive. YouthInc. Enterprise Academy also expects that parents and caregivers will be courteous, respectful and cooperative, and understanding about realistic and reasonable outcomes that can occur to resolve the concern or complaint.

As YouthInc. Enterprise Academy is an independent school, all concerns and complaints will be resolved from the School's point of view at the school level, as per the procedure outlined in this policy. However, you also have the right to refer any education or care concern to an external body, such as the Education Standards Board.

This policy does not apply when a parent has employed a third party (such as a legal representative) in relation to the complaint. However, parents and caregivers are entitled to support from a person such as a friend, colleague or a person provided through an appropriate support agency.

## Definitions

**Concern:** an issue of interest which is raised informally in order to improve or change a situation.

**Complaint:** an expression of grievance or resentment where the parent or caregiver is seeking redress or justice.

**Parent and Caregiver:** this term refers to the person who has legal custody of the child who is a student at YouthInc. Enterprise Academy.

*NB: We understand that sometime this may be more than one person, and that the people may not share the same opinion as to how the concern or complaint be handled. The School will give all relevant parties the opportunity to express themselves.*

## **Policy and Procedure Purpose**

This policy and procedure provides clear information to parents, students, staff and volunteers on how parent and caregiver concerns and complaints will be handled as a resolution is worked towards.

### **Concern procedure**

During a child's enrolment at the School, a parent or caregiver may find themselves in a situation where they are unsure or concerned about something involving the School. Most matters can be resolved very simply and easily through an informal discussion with the appropriate person.

1. Speak to, or email, a learning manager, coach or other relevant person at the School **OR** Call the Reception of YouthInc. Enterprise Academy, briefly explain the situation and ask the best person to speak to about the matter
2. Express your concerns and resolve the matter

YouthInc Enterprise Academy anticipates that the majority of concerns will be able to be resolved at this stage of the process. However, some matters may require resolution through our Complaint procedure.

### **Complaint procedure**

1. Make contact with the Reception of YouthInc. Enterprise Academy to inform us that you wish to make a complaint. You will be asked to provide complete and factual information about the complaint, including information about how this has been raised as a concern with a member of the School staff.
2. The appropriate person (learning manager, counsellor, coach or member of the leadership team) will contact you within 5 working days to work with you to consider the most effective way of resolving the complaint based on the information provided. Parents and caregivers will be kept informed of the progress and the outcome of the complaint.
3. If you are not satisfied after speaking with this staff member, you may choose to speak with the Principal or Principal's delegate, and your complaint will be forwarded. The Principal will acknowledge the complaint as soon as reasonably possible (within 5 working days).
4. The Principal will conduct an investigation into the complaint, if necessary, and communicate the outcome to all parties within 15 working days, in writing.
5. If you are not satisfied, you are entitled to ask the School Board to review the process and outcome decided by the Principal. The outcome of this review will be communicated to all parties in writing. The decision of the School Board will be final from the viewpoint of the School.

*NB: If a complaint is in relation to the Principal, then a written complaint must be referred to the School Board.*

### **Responsibility of School staff:**

On receiving a concern or complaint it is expected that staff members will:

- Make a time available as soon as is reasonably possible (within 5 working days) to discuss with the parent or caregiver (face to face, by phone, by email) their concern or complaint.
- Listen generously to the parent or caregiver
- Keep open communication between the parent or caregiver and the School about the progress of the concern or complaint.
- Consider relevant legislation, policy and guidelines and School procedures and/or seek advice/support from their site leader.
- Identify and discuss with the parent or caregiver possible courses of action that could be taken to resolve their concern or complaint and the timeframe within which this will occur.
- Follow up with parent or caregiver after a reasonable period of time has elapsed for any changes to take effect to ensure that they are satisfied with the outcome.
- Keep a written record of the concern or complaint, its progress and outcomes – **see *Recording of Concerns and Complaints***.

### **Recording of Concerns and Complaints.**

If a concern is easily resolved over the phone to the satisfaction of all parties, then recording of the issues may not be required.

However, other concerns and complaints will be recorded in SEQTA - Critical Incident and/or filed with the student's confidential paperwork.

Complaints will be acknowledged in the form felt to be most appropriate by the staff member involved, but this could include a phone call, email, or letter.

All meetings with parents or caregivers to discuss complaints will be documented and copies given to all parties so that all involved have the same understanding of what was discussed and agreed.

**Please note:** the Minister for Education does not have any power to directly intervene in any complaints relating to the operations of a non-government school, including YouthInc. Enterprise Academy.

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