

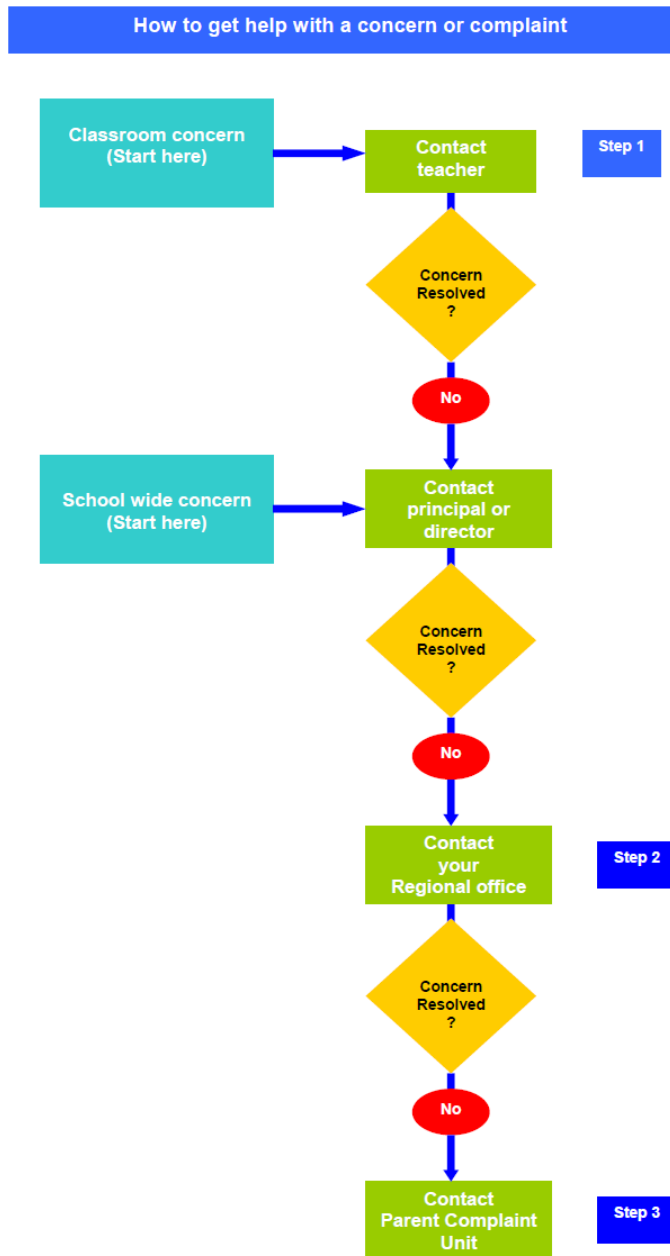
Additional information:

DECD Parent concerns and complaints policy procedures.

Ombudsman SA: <http://www.ombudsman.sa.gov.au/>

Some useful contacts:

SACE Board: 8372 7400
DECD International Education Services: 8226 3402
Parent Complaint Hot-line: 1800 677 435
Kids helpline: 1800 551 800



Parent Complaints Unit
Level 6
31 Flinders Street
ADELAIDE SA 5000
Phone: 1800 677 435
Email: DECDparentcomplaint@sa.gov.au



East Murray Area School
Phone: 8578 7053

PARENT CONCERNS AND COMPLAINTS

Parents are partners in the education of children. Regular two-way communication between parents and schools is essential in helping children achieve their potential. Parents and schools need to know if there are concerns that effect the learning of children.

Mallee & Coorong Regional Office
20 Beatty Tce
MURRAY BRIDGE SA 5253

Phone: 8532 0700
Fax: 8532 5065

Any written or verbal complaints that contain personal abuse, inflammatory statements, and comments of a threatening nature or intended to intimidate will not be addressed and the parent will be advised accordingly.

Step 1: Talk to the school

If your concern or complaint relates to an issue concerning your child's teacher, you should talk to the teacher as soon as possible. Contact the school and organise a mutually convenient time to meet or have a telephone conversation.

If the matter is not resolved, is school wide or you wish to have a person act as a mediator, you may want to meet and raise the issue with the director or principal.

All DECD sites have a complaint policy — which might identify other staff members that may be able to assist you with your concern. For example, the school counsellor, year level manager or coordinator. The complaint policy is available from the front office and/or located on the sites website.

DECD is committed to a complaints procedure that ensures anyone with parental responsibilities for a child can raise a concern or complaint, with confidence that it will be heard and responded to within an appropriate and timely fashion.

Interpreters and Aboriginal Education Coordinators are available to assist parents in communicating with their school. Please contact your school or regional office for assistance.

Step 2: Contact your local DECD regional office

If you don't feel the issue has been addressed by the school, contact the regional director at your local DECD regional office. The phone number can be found on the front page of this brochure or obtained from your school.

Regional office staff will:

- refer, if appropriate, any complaint that has not been raised at the school level to the school
- determine the appropriate person to handle the complaint
- acknowledge receipt of the complaint in writing
- make an *assessment* of the complaint and if required, a negotiated /mediated solution or undertake a *formal review* following DECD guidelines
- if no solution or agreement can be made a decision in relation to the complaint will be made according to the weight of the evidence and on the balance of probabilities.



Hint:

It may be helpful to write down the answers to these questions for reference when discussing a concern or complaint:

*What happened, or what is the problem?
When did it happen?
Who was involved?
Where did it happen?
Why did it happen?
Did anyone see it?
How does it affect my child?
Who can help solve the problem?
What is an acceptable solution?*

All of the parties involved in a DECD complaint management process can bring a support person to any of the meetings held to resolve your complaint

Step 3: Contact the Parent Complaint Unit

If your complaint remains unresolved after working together with the school and regional director, you should submit, in writing, your complaint to:

Manager, Parent Complaint Unit
Level 6
31 Flinders Street
ADELAIDE SA 5000

email DECDparentcomplaint@sa.gov.au

You should include information about the complaint including why it remains unresolved and an outline of what actions could be feasibly taken to resolve the complaint.

The Parent Complaint Unit, on behalf of the Chief Executive, will:

- acknowledge receipt of the complaint
- assess and make a recommendation to the Head of Schools that:
 - ◇ a review is not warranted and that the complainant is to be advised that no further action is considered necessary and that the complaint is now concluded; or
 - ◇ a review is necessary; or
 - ◇ the complaint should be referred to an external agency for investigation or review.

The Head of Schools will review the advice and decide that the complaint (in full or in part):

- can be resolved (all parties agree on an appropriate response)
- should be dismissed (complaint is either unsubstantiated, vexatious, outside of reasonable expectations in relation to confidentiality, cooperation, courtesy and respect or is orientated towards conflict)
- remains unresolved and that an independent review by an external agency is required.