Doncaster Gardens Primary School
School/Parent Relationships Policy

Philosophical Basis:
Schools and parents need to work cooperatively to optimise the educational opportunities and performance of each child. Parents have a right to raise concerns they may have about staff, programs and procedures, and to have them addressed appropriately. Complaints should be handled objectively and with sensitivity, and not in a reactive or subjective manner. It is important that parents feel valued and involved with the school and they are encouraged to express their views.

Guidelines:
• The school is open to the concerns of parents and students.
• Parents only have the right to discuss school procedures and follow up resolutions/consequences for their child.
• Complaints are received in a positive manner.
• Parents can expect to be taken seriously and approach any member of staff about their concerns.
• Parents and staff are to respect each other’s point of view and value difference rather than judge and blame.
• Information about complaints is clear and readily available for parents.
• Concerns are dealt with speedily and those who have raised them are kept informed about progress.
• It is not acceptable for students to receive adverse treatment because their parents have raised a complaint.
• Clear confidential files and records are kept.
• Privacy and confidentiality is respected and maintained as far as possible.
• Resolution of the matter is sought.

Implementation:
• The Parents’ Concerns and Complaints Procedure document will be available for parents to refer to when having a concern/complaint.
• All complaints need to be addressed in a timely manner.
• Initial contact by parents would normally be made to the appropriate class or specialist teacher.
• In all instances a member of the senior staff is to be informed of any parental complaints.
• If staff members are approached about a matter that lays outside their area of responsibility it should be referred immediately to the appropriate person. The parents who made the complaint are to be informed when a matter is referred.
• Matters incapable of resolution at a particular level should be referred to the appropriate senior person, with parents kept informed of the action being taken.
• Complaints from members of the public will be treated in a similar way to complaints from parents, although most complaints from the public will be referred to the Principal.
• The school will keep comprehensive records of complaints and other parental concerns. This may be required because:
  - it may become the cause of future legal action;
  - patterns in the records may indicate a need for action;
  - the Principal should be able to check the records regularly.
• There may be some parents who will wish to go directly to the Principal with their concerns, and this should be requested. However, it should be explained that the Principal may be delayed in responding to the concern eg following up information from all parties involved.
• Confidentiality is an important issue for students, parents and staff. It is essential that any complaint is treated in a confidential manner and with respect.
• The school will arrange to provide support for staff members against whom a complaint is made; this would normally be provided by a colleague who is not otherwise involved.
• Anonymous complaints will be recorded, with no further action taken.

Evaluation:
• Records of parent complaints and their outcomes will be kept.
• This policy will be reviewed every three years as part of the policy review cycle.

September 2015