

Talking with my school

Do you want to speak with someone at your school about a particular enquiry or concern?

As a parent or carer you play a vital role in your child's learning. Building a positive relationship between home and school plays an important part in the education of your child. Effective communication is the key to the success of this relationship.

Schools are committed to responding promptly and helpfully to your enquiries, concerns, suggestions and compliments.

Your school also provides information about support services for children with disability, intensive language classes, special programs, and its policies and procedures.

Where do you start?

Before contacting your school with an enquiry or concern you may want to:

- talk with family and friends to clarify your enquiry/concern
- write down your enquiry/concern
- make a list of all relevant information specific to your enquiry/concern
- take a support person with you if you feel nervous about talking about your enquiry/concern.

The next step is to make an appointment with the most appropriate person at your school.

Alternatively, you can write to the school. Enquiries/concerns received in writing are responded to in writing.

1. Discuss your enquiry or concern with the class teacher if it is about your child's:

- academic progress
- general behaviour
- homework
- assessment
- attendance
- social or emotional wellbeing.

In your discussion with the teacher:

- give all relevant information
- discuss all possible outcomes for addressing your enquiry/concern
- settle on an option that can be achieved with input from you, the teacher and your child.

2. Discuss your enquiry or concern with the principal if:

- you were not able to achieve a satisfactory arrangement regarding your enquiry/concern with the class teacher
- your enquiry/concern is about the conduct of a teacher or another member of the school staff
- your enquiry/concern is about another aspect of school life that is impacting on your child's education.

The principal will need time to discuss your enquiry/concern with all relevant parties but you can contact the school for progress updates.

Your enquiry/concern will be managed according to established school policy and procedures.

Anonymous enquiries/concerns are only acted on if enough information is provided for the principal to follow-up.



3. You may contact the regional education office or local education office if:

- your enquiry/concern has not been resolved by your school's principal
- there is a reason for not raising your enquiry/concern with the school directly.

Your school can help you with contact details for the coordinator of regional operations at the regional education office.

4. Consideration by the Director General

The next level for consideration of an unresolved enquiry/concern is to write to the Director General of the Department of Education.

You may lodge a written description of your enquiry/concern and the steps you have taken to achieve an outcome. The Director General may appoint someone to review your enquiry/concern.

Postal address:
Director General
Department of Education
151 Royal Street
EAST PERTH WA 6004

5. Independent review

Your final recourse for your unresolved enquiry/concern is an independent review by the State Ombudsman. The Ombudsman's approach is independent and impartial while observing procedural fairness and strict confidentiality at all times.

The Ombudsman can be contacted:
T: 9220 7555
T: 1800 117 000 (free for country callers)

Postal address:
Ombudsman Western Australia
PO Box Z5386
St Georges Terrace
PERTH WA 6831

Office location:
Level 12
44 St Georges Terrace
PERTH

Other useful contacts

The Standards and Integrity Directorate at the Department of Education offers general advice on matters related to staff conduct.

T: 1800 655 985 (free for country callers)

The Equal Opportunity Commission offers advice about discrimination.

General enquiries:
T: 9216 3900
T: 1800 198 149 (free for country callers)

Office location:
Level 2, Westralia Square
141 St Georges Terrace
PERTH

Postal address:
PO Box 7370
Cloisters Square
PERTH WA 6850