

# MIMOSA PRE-PRIMARY & FOUNDATION PHASE SCHOOL

59 Ditton Ave  
Auckland Park  
2092

NPC 2018/207534/08  
[mimosaschool59@gmail.com](mailto:mimosaschool59@gmail.com)  
[www.mimosaschool.org.za](http://www.mimosaschool.org.za)  
011 726 8701



## MIMOSA'S COMPLAINTS & GRIEVANCE POLICY & PROCEDURE

Mimosa strives to be a community where we value dialogue and encourage it. We are a learning community that grows problem-solving, creativity and collaboration, emotional resilience and intelligence, and cultural flexibility. Being a Reggio Emilia inspired school we are all collaborators where we rely on close interaction between teachers, caregivers (parents/guardian), and children. We learn through interaction within our community and where communication takes place in an environment of transparency, respect, compassion, fairness and inclusion.

Within the reality of the schooling experience, it is recognised that from time-to-time misunderstandings, unintended harm or intentional harm will arise and that these need to be resolved satisfactorily in partnership with members of the school community. These situations can be opportunities to embrace dialogue, improve policies and protocols and ultimately strengthen the foundations of the school.

A complaint or grievance is an expression of dissatisfaction with a real or perceived issue at the school where a response or resolution is expected.

This policy and procedure should be used as guidance to anyone within the school community (staff members, caretakers, children) on how to appropriately resolve a complaint or a grievance. The complaint may be about an individual staff member (including the principal or anyone officially representing the school), a child, a caregiver (parent/guardian) or a school policy or procedure.

This grievance policy is based on the principles of non-violence communication which means that while the process intends to reach a resolution and provide a sense of fairness and restoration, this will be done through encouraging empathy and understanding rather than primarily by ascertaining blame.

## Communication

It is expected that all communication will be conducted in a manner whereby:

- Everyone is treated with respect.
- All parties are open to listening to the concerns raised.
- All members of the school community can expect that their concerns will be taken seriously.
- All parties conduct themselves in a respectful and courteous manner.
- Complaints will be addressed professionally, competently and in a timely manner and will be bound by the principles of procedural fairness and confidentiality.

Acceptable modes of communication:

- Verbal: Phone or face to face meeting
- Written: Letter, Email or Mobile message

## Options for resolving a complaint or grievance

There are both formal and informal options for the resolution of a grievance or complaint.

Use of informal options is recommended in the first instance as it may prevent the escalation of a minor disagreement to a more serious complaint.

The following informal options could be considered:

- Self-resolution - The parties themselves may resolve concerns in open discussion with the provision of relevant information or the clarification of issues. This option involves reflection and conversations respectful of each person's needs in the school.
- Supported self-resolution - The parties may be assisted to resolve possible misunderstanding, miscommunication, or lack of clarity about the issue in question by a support person such as the teacher, principal, board member or external counsellor providing professional advice or support.

In circumstances where no mutually acceptable resolution to the matter is reached through informal resolution, or in cases where the matter is considered to be serious, formal procedures can follow. All formal complaints/grievances must be clearly communicated as such to the grievance officer, who is an appointed member of the board. The officer can be reached on the email address: [mimosaboard@gmail.com](mailto:mimosaboard@gmail.com) with the subject line "Formal grievance".

All formal complaints/grievances will be well documented, traceable (dated and signed) and periodically reviewed by the board.

Formal complaint/grievance options could include:

- Intervention - The principal, deputy principal and/or board representative may meet with the party or parties separately or jointly. At discretion of the board, external services may be required for which Mimosa will support up to three sessions. If this does not resolve the issue, then the board makes a decision and notifies the parties of that decision.
- Investigation - A complaint about a person concerning an alleged serious breach of legislation, school policy or procedure may require an investigation and external services consulted at discretion of the board.

Note: This process is not applicable in a complaint of a child protection nature, which must be addressed in accordance with child protection laws and reporting obligations.

For a staff member, an investigation may be appropriate in those matters involving allegations of potential misconduct or misbehaviour which may result in disciplinary action.

The nature and scope of an investigation will depend on the circumstances of each matter and any relevant issues which need to be taken into account, such as whether the school had followed the relevant policies and procedures.

### Confidentiality

The school will maintain confidentiality and anonymity as far as is reasonable. This means that the school will evaluate the use of information in order to refer the complaint, manage the complaint, provide support through the process or review and/or decide on actions and outcomes as appropriate. The school will treat your complaint with respect and sensitivity. However, it may not be possible that all communications with us, or any documents you may supply to us, will necessarily be kept confidential. Although we endeavour to deal with complaints with appropriate discretion, we reserve our right to disclose details of the matter to other persons who, in our opinion, need to know them in order to facilitate the resolution of the complaint.

### Resolution for a complainant may include:

- feeling that their concern has been considered seriously
- knowing that the school is now alerted to a possible problem

- achieving an outcome which may be different from the one they sought, but which they perceive to be well considered
- receiving a verbal or written apology
- achieving a change to a policy, procedure or practice that would prevent a recurrent of similar complaints

Resolution for the school may involve:

- reaching a compromise solution
- dismissing the complaint, e.g. if this decision accords with legislation or government policy or related school policy or procedures
- upholding the complaint and implementing a specific action, such as overturning a decision, giving an apology
- improving processes (i.e. changing procedures and school practices)
- increasing staff development training or performance improvement
- improving implementation of school policies and procedures (e.g. issuing updated documentation or reminders)
- taking other actions to ensure that the matter is handled appropriately in future.

Potential improvements that could be made to school policies, procedures or practices that would resolve the complaint and prevent a recurrence of similar complaints can be assessed and initiated by the principal and/or appointed staff or community member.

With many languages of expression and communication, we embrace the ability to contribute, reflect, and grow in the Mimosa School community.