Australian Hindu Association

Special Religious Education

Complaints Policies and Procedures

Policy

As an approved provider it is expected that our teachers always maintain the highest level of professionalism in any conflict resolution process. This includes both the way they speak to and about a local school and how they represent themselves and their organisation. We expect our teachers to listen to the school's perspective and never assume ill intent. We expect our teachers to always try to resolve issues at a local level first, with courtesy and respectfulness. We are committed to open communication and taking ownership. This policy refers to the way approved providers will resolve complaints.

Types of Complaints

A. Parents may have concerns about the SRE curriculum or the SRE teacher

Approved providers will fully co-operate with any concerns a parent may have in regard to reportable conduct or allegations of abuse attributed to an SRE teacher or alternatively their concerns regarding the contents of the SRE curriculum. Approved providers will follow its procedures in regards to any such matter, including reporting to relevant authorities.

B. Schools may have concerns about the conduct of an SRE teacher.

Approved providers will fully co-operate with any concerns a school may have in regards to reportable conduct or allegations of abuse attributed to an SRE teacher. It is expected that the Department of Education will follow its procedures in regards to any such matter, including reporting to relevant authorities.

C. Approved providers may have concerns about the conduct of a student or a parent or a professional classroom teacher.

It is expected that a school will fully co-operate with any concerns an approved provider may have in regards to positive behaviour for learning. We would expect the school to follow its procedures in regards to any such matter, including reporting to relevant authorities.

D.SRE teachers may have concerns in regards to the implementation of SRE at a local school.

Approved providers must follow the Department of Education *School Community and Consumer Complaint Procedures* https://education.nsw.gov.au/policy-library/associated-documents/School-complaint-procedure_AC.pdf

1.Acknowledge complaint

Managing the types of complaints: Key Stages

Acknowledge a complaint from a principal as soon as possible, ideally within 3 working days. This can be done in person, by telephone, email or formally in writing. Where the acknowledgement was made verbally, it should be documented in writing.
Let the principal know that they will be kept up to date with the progress.
Keep the matter as confidential as possible by only sharing information with those who need to know about the complaint issues.
Listen carefully to the issues and, if at all possible, resolve the complaint directly at the local level.

2.Gather information

Gather enough information to allow a proper assessment of concerns as quickly as possible. The information to be gathered could include:

- Special Religious Education Procedures
- Relevant Department of Education policies and procedures e.g. Code of Conduct
- SRE curriculum teacher's manual
- Information from the approved providers' SRE manager/coordinator

3.Resolve

Complaints should be finalised as soon as possible and no later than 20 working days. Keep the principal updated on the progress of the complaint. If a delay is anticipated, inform the principal and provide reasons for the delay.

Consider any reasonable outcomes suggest by the principal. However, ultimately the local provider representative determines how a complaint is to be resolved.

Outcomes will depend on the circumstances of each complaint and take into account the role of SRE teachers as volunteers in a school and subject to the Department's policies and procedures and the principal as its appointed site manager.

4.Inform

The approved provider should provide information about the outcome to the principal and where necessary to the local providers' SRE coordinator and other providers in the case of a combined arrangement. When giving the outcome information, explain:

- The outcome of the complaint and any action to be taken, by whom and when
- The reasons for the decision
- Any internal or external options for review

In any case, the complaint outcome should be confirmed in writing to the principal. Email is acceptable. Complex complaints may require additional record keeping e.g. notes of contentious meetings. While it is good practice to provide as much information

as you can about outcomes, it is also important to keep confidential specific personal details.

If an SRE teacher is the subject of a complaint, he/she should be provided with

5.Implement actions

information about the outcome.
Take all reasonable steps to implement and monitor the outcomes of the complaint.
Where the outcomes involve a combined arrangement, other providers should be given

6.Record outcome

the same information as the principal.

The approved provider should document:

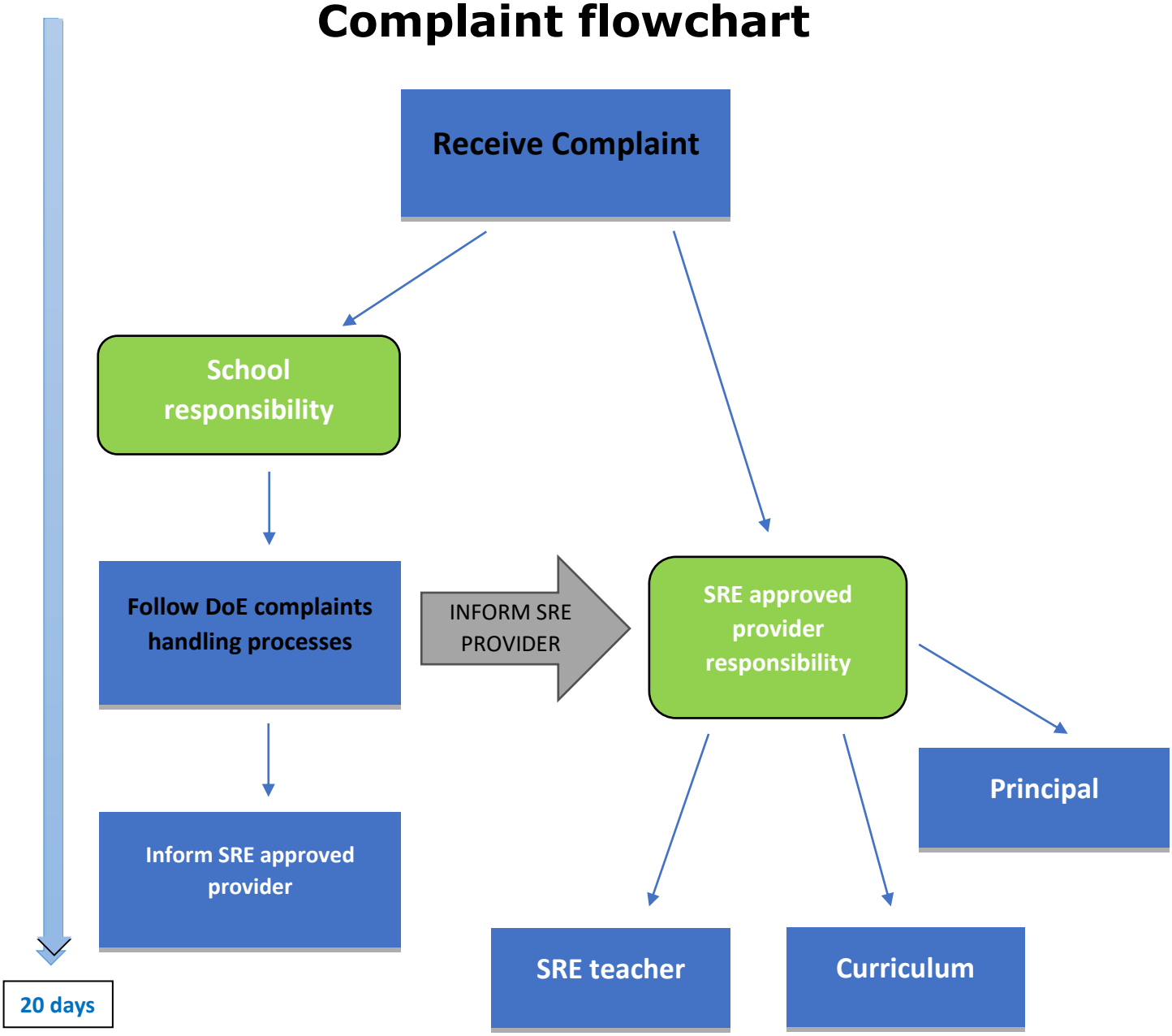
- Their contacts with the principal
- How they managed the complaint
- The outcome of the complaint, including how and whether any concerns were substantiated and actions taken in response
- The steps taken to follow up the outcome actions

7.Ongoing responsibilities

An approved provider has ongoing responsibilities to:

- Respond to and manage a complaint from a principal so that the complaints process is accessible to all providers' representatives
- Take reasonable steps to prevent people making complaints being treated unfairly because a complaint has been made by them or on their behalf
- Keep confidentiality about complaints at all times, including after a satisfactory resolution. This requires everyone, including the complainant, to ensure that information is restricted to those who genuinely need to know. People should only be told as much as they need to know and no more.
- Support those involved. To the extent possible the approved provider should monitor the well-being of all parties involved in or impacted by the complaint and arrange support where available.

Complaint flowchart



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Appendix

School Community and Consumer Complaint Procedure

https://education.nsw.gov.au/policy-library/associated-documents/School-complaint-procedure_AC.pdf

Approved Provider Complaint form

Rec 023