



COMMUNICATION, CONCERNS AND FORMAL GRIEVANCE POLICY

RATIONALE.

A safe and supportive environment is supported when all members of a community promote open communication, tolerance, positive relationships and embrace responsive, just and transparent processes. When clear preventative policies and practices are applied consistently and issues that can give rise to complaints are identified early, matters can be resolved before they escalate to the point where relationships are damaged. To promote positive and effective relationships, all members of the community are encouraged to recognise the distinction between personal and professional conflict, so that appropriate relationships can be maintained, even where there might be professional disagreement.

Suggestions, Complaints and Grievances can be opportunities for growth and improvement. A community that is open to hearing complaints and suggestions is characterised by signs of impartiality and confidentiality, respect for the dignity of those involved, and is proactive in ensuring there is no fear of victimisation. The processes in the Formal Grievances Procedure are to ensure procedural fairness, a fair hearing, and a reasonable decision.

The Formal Grievances Procedure helps build a safe and supportive environment as it;

- encourages early intervention in issues before they damage sound relationships
- ensures that behaviour destructive to positive relationships (such as bullying, harassment and discrimination) are identified as being unacceptable and are appropriately managed
- ensures that complaints are dealt with consistently
- enables a community to identify patterns of unacceptable conduct and enables preventative strategies to be developed and implemented
- encourages individuals, with support, to resolve issues directly without third party intervention, and reduces the likelihood that external agencies will need to be involved

Ballarat Steiner School and Kindergarten values diversity within the community, and it is our intention to work together to achieve harmony and consensus. We believe that a strong grievance procedure is one of many mechanisms for achieving harmony and consensus amongst a diverse group of people.

It is not always possible to achieve perfect agreement amongst people of different views. Acceptance, however, of those differences, and demonstration of a willingness to work collaboratively, are important characteristics of a member of a Steiner community. The communication guidelines and grievance procedure adopted by the school and kindergarten are based on natural justice, which allows all parties to be heard and to hear claims being made.

AIMS

- To assist staff to confidently address the concerns of students, parents, community members and staff of the school and kindergarten
- To ensure a balance between the rights of all parties involved
- To ensure that students, parents, community members and staff will have a clear process to follow and that concerns, and grievances are dealt with promptly and fairly

SCOPE

This policy applies to:

1. The Ballarat Steiner School and Kindergarten Incorporated Association Members
2. All staff of the school and kindergarten and playgroup
3. All students of the school and kindergarten
4. All contractors, temporary, casual and volunteer staff
5. Community members of the school and kindergarten

WHAT IS A CONCERN OR COMPLAINT?

A concern or complaint is an expression of dissatisfaction about an aspect of your child's school or kindergarten journey or a community member's experience of the school and kindergarten.

A concern or complaint may be about, but is not limited to:

- a particular incident
- student, teacher or staff behaviour
- a policy, procedure or decision that the complainant believes is unfair, unreasonable or inappropriate.

GUIDING PRINCIPLES

- * All grievances should be dealt with promptly, with a positive approach, to reduce any possible disruption and conflict
- * Any person bringing a concern or complaint can be assured that there will be no blame attached to bringing such issues, as the school and kindergarten aims to maintain a respectful and understanding outlook of each person's point of view and regards concerns or complaints as an opportunity to improve the school and kindergartens policies and procedures.
- * A grievance is usually best resolved in an informal manner, with active and timely discussion between all parties, in a spirit of good will and with a positive intention to resolve the issue
- * Parent/s should not have their children present when they are discussing concerns with the class teacher, unless it is deemed necessary by the teacher to have the student present.
- * Grievance investigations and decision making are to follow the principles of natural justice and procedural fairness
- * Parties to the grievance and individuals involved in the grievance resolution process are required to respect the confidentiality of the process
- * A grievance cannot be lodged about an act or omission that has already been determined and finalised in another grievance procedure

COMMUNICATION GUIDELINES

- All Communication should be timely, clear, caring, respectful, professional
- Teachers and Staff should be addressed by their first name
- Meetings should be open, honest and professional
- Show respect and understanding of all points of view and value difference rather than judge and blame
- Recognise that all parties have rights and responsibilities which must be balanced.
- The form of meetings needs to be clear at their outset
- All communication needs to be non-threatening and non-abusive.
- Teachers are to communicate any problems or issues with students to other members of the college and / or the Head of School
- Teachers should communicate with specialist teachers any relevant information regarding particular students or the class
- Decision making processes are to be open, honest and clear
- Parents need to have a clear understanding of the policy and the processes undertaken, and to respect College and Committee decisions.

These guidelines are to facilitate the smooth functioning of the school and kindergarten, and to assist parents, students and staff. The guidelines complement the regular, informal communication that already takes place between members of the community.

Direct complaints to DET about the Kindergarten

Complaints provided directly to the DET provide immunity to the notifier. The notifier cannot be disclosed unless the notifier provides their written consent to the DET, or a court grants leave for this to occur (*Children's Services Act 1996*, section 54).

The DET will investigate any complaints it receives, in which it is alleged that the health, safety or wellbeing of any child within the children's service may have been compromised, or there may have been a contravention of the *Children's Services Act 1996* or the Children's Services Regulations 2009. For further information, refer to the DET Practice Note, *Dealing with complaints*.

Relevant legislation includes but is not limited to:

- *Associations Incorporation Act 1981*
- *Children, Youth and Families Act 2005*
- *Child Wellbeing and Safety Act 2005*
- *Children's Services Act 1996*
- *Children's Services Regulations 2009 (CSR)*
- *Health Records Act 2001*
- *Information Privacy Act 2000*
- *Privacy Act 1988 (Cwlth)*
- *Charter of Human Rights and Responsibilities Act 2006 (Vic.)*.

Definitions

Complaint: An expression of displeasure, such as poor service, and includes any verbal or written complaint directly related to the children's service (includes general and notifiable). This excludes complaints relating to staff industrial or employment matters, occupational health and safety matters (unless related to the safety of the children) and issues related to the legal business entity, such as the incorporated association or cooperative.

Dispute resolution procedure: The method used to resolve complaints, disputes or matters of concern through an agreed resolution process.

General complaint: A general complaint may address any aspect of Ballarat Steiner Kindergarten, for example a lost clothing item; Ballarat Steiner Kindergarten's fees. Centres do not have to inform the DET, but the complaint must be dealt with as soon as practicable to avoid escalation of the issue or increased risk.

Grievance: A grievance is a formal statement of complaint generally against an authority figure such as a legal business entity, such as an incorporated association, body corporate, or church. Ballarat Steiner Kindergarten's constitution/model rules will outline the procedures for dealing with grievances.

Industrial grievance: This refers to a complaint by an employee about action which the employer has taken or is contemplating taking in relation to the employee (refer to relevant awards/agreements and staff policies to confirm the process for dealing with these grievances).

Licensee: A legal entity which holds a licence to operate a children's centre under the *Children's Services Act 1996*.

Mediator: One that mediates, especially one that reconciles differences between disputants.

Mediation: An attempt to bring about a peaceful settlement or compromise between disputants through the objective intervention of a neutral party.

Nominee and primary nominee: A nominee is a person who has been assessed as 'fit and proper' and nominated by the licensee to manage or control the children's centre in the absence of the licensee. There can be many nominees but only one primary nominee.

Notifiable complaint: A notifiable complaint is a complaint that alleges a breach of the Act or Regulations, or alleges that the health, safety or wellbeing of a child at Ballarat Steiner Kindergarten may have been compromised. Any complaint of this nature must be reported by the proprietor to the secretary of DET within 48 hours after the complaint has been made. CSR r 105

Proprietor: This includes the owner of Ballarat Steiner Kindergarten and any person who manages or controls the children's service. The term proprietor includes the licensee, the primary nominee and the nominee(s) of a licensed centre. (Refer to the children's service's Licence, displayed in the main entrance of Ballarat Steiner Kindergarten).

The committee is responsible for:

- Being familiar with the Children's Services Regulations 2009, the *Children's Services Act 1996*, centre policies and the constitution, complaints/grievance procedures and relevant awards
- Identifying, preventing and addressing potential concerns before they become formal complaints/grievances
- Ensuring that the name and telephone number of the committee member to whom complaints and grievances may be addressed are displayed prominently at the main entrance (CSR r40[h])
- Ensuring that the address and telephone number of the Regional Office of the DET are displayed prominently at the main entrance (CSR r40[i])
- Advising parents/guardians and any other new members of Ballarat Steiner Kindergarten of the complaints and grievances policy and procedures upon enrolment
- Ensuring that this policy is available for inspection at Ballarat Steiner Kindergarten at all times (CSR r41[h])
- Notifying parents/guardians within twenty-eight days of making any changes to this policy or contact persons (CSR r42)
- Being aware of, and committed to, the principles of communicating and sharing information with their employees, members and volunteers
- Responding to all complaints and grievances in the most appropriate manner at the earliest opportunity (CSR r105[1])
- Notifying the DET by telephone, within forty-eight hours, followed by written notification as soon as practicable, after a complaint is made if the complaint alleges the health, safety or wellbeing of any child being cared for or educated by Ballarat Steiner Kindergarten may have been compromised or there has been a contravention of the CSA or CSR (CSR r105[2])
- Treating all employees, members and volunteers equitably and fairly
- Recording minor complaints in a record book, which will provide valuable information to the committee for meeting the needs of families and children the community (a record book must be kept in a secure file that staff and committee members will have access to)

- Complying with Ballarat Steiner School and Kindergarten's privacy policy and maintaining confidentiality at all times (CSR r105[b]).
- Establishing a complaints and grievances subcommittee to be elected at the first meeting of the committee. If a subcommittee is not elected, authority is delegated to the Head of School.

The College are responsible for:

- Implementing the procedures for managing a complaint
- Implementing the procedures for managing a grievance
- Referring to relevant awards and staff related policies for procedures to follow in relation to industrial grievances.

The staff are responsible for:

- Responding to and resolving issues as they arise where possible/practicable (CSR r105[1])
- Maintaining professionalism and integrity at all times
- Raising any complaints directly with the party involved as a first step towards resolution (the parties are encouraged to discuss the matter professionally and openly work together to achieve a desired outcome)
- Notifying the licensee representative if they feel the complaint to be a reportable complaint (CSR r105[2])
- Dealing with situations in which an issue is unable to be resolved by:
- Referring the issues to the Head of School as soon as practicable
- Providing the complainant with the contact number of the Head of School if they wish to speak with someone immediately
- Informing the College of Teachers as soon as practicable if a complaint has been referred to them
- Working with the committee as required and providing information requested by the committee; for example, written reports related to the complaint/grievance
- Complying with Ballarat Steiner Kindergarten's Privacy policy and maintaining confidentiality at all times (CSR r105[b])
- Working cooperatively with the committee and the DET in any investigations related to complaints or grievances about the Ballarat Steiner Kindergarten, programs or staff
- Recording minor complaints in the record book provided by the committee of management.

The parents/guardians are responsible for:

- Communicating (preferably in writing) any concerns relating to the management or operation of Ballarat Steiner Kindergarten as soon as practicable
- Raising a complaint, directly with the person involved, in an attempt to resolve the concerns without recourse to the complaints and grievance procedures
- Raising any unresolved issues or concerns with Ballarat Steiner Kindergarten's management, via a staff member or the College of Teachers or the Head of School.
- Maintaining complete confidentiality at all times
- Cooperating with requests to meet with the Head of School and/or provide relevant information when requested in relation to complaints and grievances

Process for concerns or complaints arising between parents and the school and kindergarten:

Who to approach and steps to take for students, parents and community members are as follows:

1. For all matters concerning your child's education, your first point of contact is your child's class teacher. We ask that except for brief communications you do not seek to speak with teachers before school or kindergarten. At this time, they are focussed on greeting the children, dealing with their needs and establishing the mood for the day. Should you wish to request an interview with the teacher, please give advance notice about what it is you wish to discuss, so the teacher can be best prepared to assist. You can make an appointment via the office or directly with the teacher by phone or email. Please remember College meets each Thursday after school.
 2. We ask that you bring your concerns to the teacher promptly, as soon as possible after the issue occurs
 3. Please provide factual information about the concern or complaint, maintaining the privacy and confidentiality of all parties.
 4. The teacher must make every endeavour to meet with the parents, student or community member within five working days.
 5. If, for any reason, you feel you cannot approach your child's teacher or you are unsatisfied with a previous communication, you may make an appointment to speak with the Head of School together with another Management Group representative. These meetings will be minuted.
 6. If a further meeting is required, you may write or email your concerns directly to the College of Teachers. The College has a commitment to respond either verbally or in writing to **every** communication. A college representative is available by appointment to speak with you regarding any educational issue, including curriculum and policies. These meetings will be minuted by a support college member and all parents are welcome to bring along a support person.
 7. The College will endeavour to resolve the complaint within 14 days. If the circumstances warrant a longer timeframe for management of the complaint, the complainant will be notified of the reasons for the delay in addressing the matter and the likely time frame required to conclude the matter.
 8. If the situation continues to be unresolved, you may write a letter to the Committee of Management implementing a formal complaint. Please refer to our formal grievance procedure below.
- For concerns, questions, or suggestions about school and kindergarten administration or finance, please see or write to the Business Manager.

If the issue remains unresolved with the Business Manager, please write to the Committee. All communication with the committee will be responded to via writing at the earliest convenience.

- The VRQA (Victorian Registrations and Qualifications Authority) will also respond to formal complaints regarding independent schools, ensuring all concerns or complaints have initially gone through the schools and kindergartens communication and grievance procedures.
- At any stage following receipt of a complaint, either party is entitled to refer the complaint to another authority for resolution. E.g. VRQA, Victoria Police, Victorian Equal Opportunity and Human Right Commission. This will not necessarily prevent the school and kindergarten from pursuing an investigation.
- After due diligence, the Head of School has the right to reject a complaint, that in their opinion, is vexatious, trivial or without substance, or does not warrant further action taking into account the provisions of this policy.

Process for concerns or complaints arising between staff members:

1. The first step should always be to go directly to the person, i.e. to communicate the issue directly to the person/s concerned in a space and at a time which allows for respectful exploration of the concern. If talking with a third party, the intent must be to seek the right path – otherwise it is “gossip” and not to be listened to.
2. If a staff member is dissatisfied with a previous communication, the next step in the process is to clearly outline the concern in writing to the Head of School requesting that a facilitated meeting be established.
3. If the problem or concern is with the Head of School, or if the complainant is dissatisfied with the outcome or process, then a letter should be written to the Committee of Management via the Chairperson. The staff members in conflict, The Head of School and a Management Group member, or a Committee of Management member, will be present at this meeting. The purpose of the meeting will be to ensure:
 - That the concerns raised are accurately conveyed
 - That each person present understands the concerns.
 - That the teacher or staff member has an opportunity to respond directly to the concerns and that the nature of the response has been heard and understood by the other person/s involved
 - That a clearly articulated action plan for taking any future steps to resolve the conflict, if necessary.

If an issue is not resolved at this stage, please refer to the formal grievance procedure.

Process for concerns or complaints arising for students:

- Students who have a concern or complaint of any kind, must speak to their class teacher. Teachers will find a time to meet with the student, as soon as possible after they know of the concern, hopefully on the same day. The meeting could be at morning tea, lunch time or after school.
- Students are encouraged and welcome to bring a classmate along for support. If the student does not feel comfortable speaking with their class teacher, they may speak with another class teacher. If the student still does not feel that their concern has been heard or addressed, they may make a time to speak with the Head of School. Parents will be notified and involved as the need requires.
- Students who have a disagreement with another student are encouraged to take initial steps to address the concern themselves, if they feel safe and able to do so. If this is not possible or the concern persists, the student can speak with their class teacher, who supports the students to come to an understanding and solution with a restorative approach. If and when needed, the teacher may initiate a restorative circle, to further work through the issue with a restorative approach. (See behaviour policy for further details).

RESOLUTION PROTOCOL

- All discussions should conclude with an agreement as to the outcome, which might include specific actions and a timeframe (no longer than two weeks, before a review meeting to check if a satisfactory outcome has been achieved.
- After the agreed time, the aggrieved parties, will meet again with the teacher and the Head of School to review outcomes and progress. This process could be repeated after a longer period of time, perhaps a month, before a further review, or all parties agree that the issue is resolved.
- All meetings involving complaints will be fully documented, as will details of verbal conversations with records kept in the School office. If a verbal complaint is complex or very serious, the complainant may be required to restate the complaint in writing or sign a written summary.

Formal Grievance through the Committee

This grievance procedure is to be followed only in situations when the above prescribed steps have been followed and one or both of the participants are still unhappy with the outcomes, on the grounds that they were:

- Unfair or unreasonable or
- That they believe that due process as described above was not followed.

Formal Grievance Procedure

- To begin a formal Grievance Procedure a written request must be filed with the Committee stating the belief of unfair or unreasonable treatment and the grounds for the belief that due process has not been followed.
- The Committee Chairperson will acknowledge the receipt of the letter within a week.

- The Committee Chairperson will assess the nature of the complaint and assign a relevant representative to follow up the matter. The Head of School will, in most instances, act as the representative/s. If this is deemed inappropriate another representative/s will be appointed.
- The school and kindergarten representative will contact the complainant to discuss their written statement and to inform them of the next steps.
- The school and kindergarten representative will then promptly initiate appropriate actions to resolve the grievance. Appropriate actions include but are not limited to:
 - (i) Making enquiries about the circumstances of the grievance;
 - (ii) Ensuring that all the previous steps of the communication policy have been followed;
 - (iii) Reviewing *reasons* for the contentious decision or the cause of grievance.
 - (iv) Reviewing the *process* of arriving at the contentious decision or the cause of grievance.
 - (v) Forming a panel and/or appointing an independent consultant to carry out an investigation
 - (vi) Engaging in negotiations between all the people involved.
 - (vii) Engaging external mediators to work towards conciliation
- The School and kindergarten Representative will then be responsible for:
 - (i) Tabling a report to the Chair of the Committee. If it is the chairperson acting as the representative, the report shall be presented to the full Committee. This report will include clear recommendations for the resolution of the matter,
 - (ii) Providing a complete and written reply to the complainant informing them of the outcome.
- All parties to the grievance are to sign and date a written agreement to the resolutions to the grievance.

Other Relevant Issues in the Grievance Process:

- The grievance will be dealt with in a fair, impartial and unbiased manner and principles of natural justice will be applied. In practice this includes making a person involved in a grievance aware of the grievance at an appropriate stage, given the specific circumstances of the case and offering them an opportunity to respond.

- A staff member involved in a grievance may wish to exercise their right to consult with, or be supported by, a union representative, an ISV support person, a SEA support person or another staff member
- A parent involved in a grievance may wish to exercise their right at any point in the grievance procedure to be supported by a parent member of the committee or a support person of their choice.
- A student involved in a grievance may wish to exercise their right at any point in the grievance procedure to be supported by a parent/s or peer as a support person.
- The Committee will ensure that the person bringing the formal grievance suffers no reprisal from bringing the issue to the committee's attention or from responding to an issue raised by another relevant party.
- Either party at any stage in the process may request mediation.
- The existence of a grievance and the content of the grievance are strictly confidential except for committee members or staff members who may have a formal role in the investigation or resolution of a grievance, or in any subsequent disciplinary process. Any person with direct or indirect knowledge of the matter is not to discuss the matter with any other person, unless given formal authority to do so. The grievance register will be held in a secure locked location and it will be presented to the Committee at meetings. The register will record:
 1. The date of lodgement of grievance
 2. The name of the person lodging the grievance
 3. The name of the person who will take action in response to the grievance
 4. The date of the finalisation of the grievance process
 5. The signature of the originator and the person who will action the grievance process
 6. The nature and persons involved in the grievance.

Respectful communication, with the child's needs always at the centre, is required between teachers and parents at all levels of these processes.

MEDIATION.

Mediation is a positive problem-solving process that can prevent conflicts and misunderstanding from becoming protracted and destructive disputes. It helps disputing parties to assess their options realistically and reach mutually acceptable solutions. Mediation should be a voluntary process with parties agreeing to mediation and taking responsibility for making decisions through the process. The mediation process encourages future co-operation. It is a structured, goal-directed process that follows clear steps, and resolves disputes confidentially. An independent third party, the mediator, helps the parties to talk with one another, and to listen to one another's grievances. Through this exchange of information parties gain insight into how the other is feeling about the situation, and they achieve understanding and respect. The mediator focuses discussion between the parties on problem-solving rather than blame and punishment.

For people to be satisfied with the way a dispute or problem has been resolved, they need to feel that:

- The process was fair, i.e. their issues were heard and understood
- The agreement or decision reached was reasonable and fair
- The relationship between parties has been helped by the process
- They can manage their relationship in the future

Mediation can achieve these results.

A mediator uses the following skills:

- A non-judgemental tone of voice and impartial body language
- Questions that will lead the discussion forward
- Active listening
- Acknowledgement of feelings
- Positive reframing of information

Pre-Mediation

The process of pre-mediation involves:

- The mediator meeting with each party individually and listening to their perspective on the situation.
- Discussing and finalising the agenda for the mediation; what are their primary concerns and what requests do they wish to make of the other party? How best might they phrase these concerns and requests to ensure the best possible outcome?
- Anticipating what the other party might raise and how the individual will respond.
- Discussing the ground rules for successful mediation.
- Seeking commitment to the mediation process.
- If parties are in agreement, then mediation proceeds. Only two people are generally involved in mediation.
- Therefore, with three parties, either two or three mediations will be required.
- Note that pre---mediation may identify other organisational needs and appropriate interventions will be discussed following pre-mediation.

Mediation

- Brief meetings are held with each party immediately prior to joint meeting to confirm the party's readiness to proceed and that agenda is still appropriate.
- A comfortable and private space and sufficient uninterrupted time must be provided
- Mediator introduces the process to the parties.
- Ground rules developed and/or reinforced.
- Both sides are enabled to tell their story in turn and without interruption
- Each party presents a statement or request from their agenda in turn and clarifies as necessary.
- Parties develop options to address/resolve the point being discussed (only move on to next point when some agreement or understanding is demonstrated).
- A written document is developed stating the outcome of mediation, agreement reached between the parties and recommendations for further action.
- A review period is agreed.

The external body the school and kindergarten may use for mediation is the Christian Community Church, in Hawthorn, Melbourne.

WHO DO I TALK TO IF I HAVE A CONCERN?

Class teachers should be your first port of call for all of your communication, excluding those that are fee based. All teachers are happy to talk to parents after school or you can make an appointment through the office or via email.

Louise Cheslett – School Administrator - Business Manager

Any non-educational concerns or enquiries should be discussed with Louise. She will advise you on the next appropriate path.
business@ballaratsteinerschool.com.au

Management Group

Svantje Mertens
Louise Cheslett
John Goble – College Chair
Eric Hopf – Head of School

Eric Hopf – Head of School

If your concerns are not met by discussing the matter with your class or kindergarten teacher, you can make an appointment to meet with Eric. These meetings will be minuted. Appointments can be made through the office.
Email: head@ballaratsteinerschool.com.au

Committee

All fiscal or organisational concerns can be directed via a letter or email to the Committee.
Educational concerns can also be addressed via the committee if there has first been an attempt to have matters heard through the Head of School. Committee meet once a month with dates announced in the newsletter. There are parent representatives on the Committee, members of the College, the Business Manager and invited members for expertise.
Email: committee@ballaratsteinerschool.com.au

College of Teachers.

All class teachers and early childhood teachers form the College of Teachers, which represents the Principalship role within the school. Concerns of any nature, excluding fiscal, can be brought to the College via a letter or email. College meet every Thursday during school term and decisions are made collectively via consensus.
Email: college@ballaratsteinerschool.com.au

HOW DOES THE SCHOOL AND KINDERGARTEN COMMUNICATE?

- **Class and Early Childhood Meetings** - Class Meetings, for all levels, are held in the third week of every term. They are to let the parents know what they can expect for their child for that term and how parents can support their child during their educational journey. They are also a forum to share ideas about behaviours, expectations and needs of the children, and to discover more about the educational philosophy and teaching methods of the school. The children's work will also be available for the parents to observe and discuss with the teacher. These meetings are not suitable for children to attend. They help build community within the parent body of each class.
- **Parent Teacher Interviews.** Parent Teacher interviews are held at the beginning of term one – so we can hear about your concerns, hopes and aspirations for your child during the forthcoming year. They are held again at the beginning of term three to discuss the child's progress in light of the report each parent receives at the end of terms two.
- **Children's reports.** Reports are posted in the first week of the holidays at the end of term two and the end of term four.
- **Golden Moss Newsletter** comes out every fortnight on Thursday via email. Hard copies are found in the kitchen, and it is on the school and kindergarten's website under 'news'.
- **Parent Handbook** The parent handbook outlines what is expected of children and parents during their journey through the school and kindergarten, and is required reading for all families.
- **Staff Handbook** The staff handbook outlines what is expected of staff during their journey through the school and kindergarten and is required reading for all staff
- **Community Surveys** Each year the school and kindergarten gives staff, parents, students and community members to voluntarily fill in our annual survey. Surveys may be anonymous if preferred and the information is utilised in our constant and never-ending improvement process

WHAT CAN YOU DO FOR THE SCHOOL & KINDERGARTEN?

- **Parents and Friends.** Through this group, parents have the opportunity to participate in the community and assist in the voluntary aspect of our school and kindergarten. The school and kindergarten rely on the parents and friends' group to discuss and implement fundraising ideas, to promote the school and kindergarten and school and kindergarten events and generally be the parent face and voice within the early childhood and school and kindergarten community and the wider community. All families are welcome and encouraged to attend meetings when they can.
- **Autumn Fair and Open Day Group.** The school and kindergarten's annual autumn fair is an opportunity to showcase our community and school and kindergarten to the wider Ballarat Community. Many of our current parents were first introduced to the school and kindergarten by attending this public event. After twenty years we are renowned for our organic curries, crafts, music, children's activities and entertainment. The school tours are a wonderful way for friends and perspective parents to see the school and kindergarten and its community in action, view student's work and speak to teachers. Join us in making this event special.
- **Class Carer.** The class carer provides support to the teacher and parents, creating an open and communicative environment between school and the home. The role is as a coordinator to develop the sense of community within each class.
- **Craft Group.** The craft group creates handcrafted items to sell to raise money for the school and kindergarten. As well as fundraising, the vision for the group is to provide a practical and social outlet for parents and to inspire them with beautiful projects and ideas that they can take into their own homes. No experience is necessary, and all materials are provided. Children are welcome to come along. The group meets in the school's craft room, and thus we ask all who attend to be mindful of the energy that they bring into the room, and to leave the room in the way they find it.
- **Promotions Group.** The promotions group strategically orchestrates activities for promotion of the school and kindergarten. These include advertising campaigns, stalls at markets and festivals, displays in public spaces such as libraries, public talks regarding Steiner Education and parenting talks for the parent body.
- **Grounds Group.** Coordinates the working bees and the gardening jobs for the parent participation scheme. Four working bees are held each year. Children love to attend working bees. Kindergarten and prep also stage working bees during term times.
- **Committee.** Ballarat Steiner School and Kindergarten is governed by the Committee, comprising of the Head of School, two college members, invited members, the business manager and two elected parent members of the association. The committee is appointed at the Annual General Meeting which is held on the last Wednesday each May.

Evaluation

In order to assess whether the policy has achieved the values and purposes, the committee will be responsible for:

- Monitoring complaints/grievances, including minor complaints, as recorded in the Minor Complaints Record Book and assessing whether satisfactory resolutions have been achieved
- Taking into consideration feedback on the policy from staff, parents/guardians and committee members.
- Reviewing the effectiveness of the procedures outlined in this policy to ensure that all complaints have been dealt with in a fair and timely manner.

2019

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Business Manager: Louise Cheslett business@ballaratsteinerschool.com.au

College Members: Ambika Bone, Donna Pond, Svantje Mertens, Lisa Hylan, Joseph Kecskemeti, Jane Evans and John Goble.
college@ballaratsteinerschool.com.au

Kindergarten Educational Leader; Jane Evans

Committee Chair: Ines Kallweit committee@ballaratsteinerschool.com.au

Reviewed by the College of Teachers

Ratified by the Committee

Next Review Date: September 2019