



Acknowledge Complaint:

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.

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

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 suggested 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.

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 information about the outcome.



Implement Actions

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 the same information as the principal.

Record Outcome

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

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.