



Created by: CD

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Reviewed by: CD

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## Communication Procedures

### RATIONALE

Communication is a key element in any relationship. The School's communication processes, both formal and informal help to facilitate the children's education and wellbeing and the smooth running of the school.

### PURPOSE

To describe the various ways communication will happen between various members of our School Community

### POLICY

Within Rainbow Ridge School there are many processes of communication, such as:

1. Class meetings.
  2. Parent teacher meetings. Please make an appointment through the office.
  3. Emails from Class Teachers, diary dates and notes home.
  4. Written communication between Parents and the Class Teacher/College of Teachers/Principal/Board of Directors.
  5. Electronic Communications including website, Facebook and direct emailing and texting.
  6. Phone to Front Office
- Rainbow Ridge School aims to create an effective and supportive network of communication and for parents and staff to understand the communication systems within the school and feel able to use them. It is so much better within a community to discuss an issue rather than to let it build into a bigger problem. Where appropriate the School uses Restorative Justice practices to resolve issues when conflict arises.
  - Positive feedback is also very important. When things are going well, it is good to let the relevant people know. Positive feedback is wonderful for teachers and the School and helps to build good relations, while supporting the children socially and educationally.
  - When a parent wants to communicate with a teacher, please be aware that the beginning of the school day is not the time to do this. Written communication is always preferable or a meeting at a prearranged time. This gives the parent and the teacher a time and place to communicate effectively. Make an appointment to speak with the teacher through the Front Office

1. **Class meetings** - These are held each year in Term 1, or when required. These meetings help to keep parents informed of class activities, child development in relation to the curriculum, Main Lesson themes and upcoming camps and excursions. These meetings are an opportunity to discuss the class as whole, rather than individual children.
2. **Parent Teacher interviews** - If at any time parents feel it is important to meet with their child's teacher, a meeting time can be arranged through the school office. The meeting could be to express a concern; to inform the teacher of changing family matters which may affect the child's education or welfare; to view their child's work and discuss their child's progress. Teachers may also request meeting with parents. When a child is newly enrolled the teacher will want to check in with parents to see how their child is integrating into their new school. Teachers may also need to speak with parents regarding their child's behaviour and in relation to the Social Behaviour Policy.
3. **Class Teacher emails** – Class Teachers contact parents through email with ongoing educational and organisational information.
4. **School Diary Dates** - Weekly diary dates help to keep parents up to date with the school calendar and any notices in relation to events. Parents receive the diary dates by email and hard copy sent home with their child. Please take the time to read these and to make enquiries for more information if you need it.
5. **Electronic Communications** - The School operates a website which has a lot of information. This is updated on a regular basis and includes
  - a. Term dates as well as dates of other School events
  - b. The Parent Handbook
  - c. School Annual Reports, with information about School performance for the previous year
  - d. Various school policies, procedures and forms
  - e. Links to Anthroposophical and other Steiner/Waldorf information
6. **Change of address and contact details** – It is important for our communications that we have current information. Please let the school office know at the earliest possible convenience if you change your address or contact details including emergency contact details.
7. **Camps and Excursions** - Primary classes attend a camp at least once each year and various excursions throughout the year. The camps and excursions are to support the curriculum and learning programs. As such, children are expected to attend except in the case of illness or exceptional circumstances. Your child's class teacher will keep you informed of upcoming camps and excursions through emails notes home and class meetings. It is imperative that parents respond promptly to permission notes regarding camps and excursions. Sometimes teachers may ask for parent assistance with camps and excursions, when offers of help are much appreciated.
8. **School office** - The office is attended five days a week during term time, Monday – Friday 8.30am – 4.00pm. The telephone is attended from 8.30 to 1.00pm and then from 1.30pm to 4.00pm.
  - a. Please contact the office staff by phone with any enquiries, notifications and/or questions you may have.

- b. Please supply dated notes for any alterations to your child's travel arrangements from school. Alternatively, for one-off changes to travel arrangements, please leave a message with the office by telephone **before 2pm** on the day of the change.
- c. You may also like to call in to the office in person to deliver messages or make enquiries.
- d. Office staff can also accept fee payments by cheque.
- e. You will find a variety of information in the office ranging from articles on Steiner education and child development, to the latest diary dates. You will also find the school calendar and craft items for sale in the office.
- f. The office is your first port of call when arriving at school. Parents are asked to call into the office rather than going directly to classrooms, especially if school is in progress. If you are bringing your child to school after 9.10am please let the office staff know your child is at school. If you are picking your child up before 2.50pm pm please let the teacher know and collect your child from the office.

## Contacting teachers

School hours are between 8.50 am and 3.20 pm. Teachers are available to talk with parents by individual arrangement. It is essential that appointments be arranged, preferably through the office. Please feel free to put your questions or concerns in writing. This helps to prevent misunderstandings and to keep issues clear. When attending the school to meet with teachers please proceed to the office first.

Teachers may also sometimes contact parents regarding their child or when arranging class activities.

In the case of withdrawing your child's enrolment for any reason, or considering withdrawal, please contact your child's class teacher in the first instance. A conversation with your child's teacher to inform the teacher of the reason for and time of departure is an important first step in withdrawing your child. This helps to facilitate a smooth process for your child and the class, as well as the family and the teacher. You will be asked to attend an exit interview with the Principal. In some cases, the interview may be conducted over the phone.

### Attendance

Regular attendance is vital to the continuity of your child's education. Except in the case of emergency, it is expected that children's appointments be made out-of-school hours.

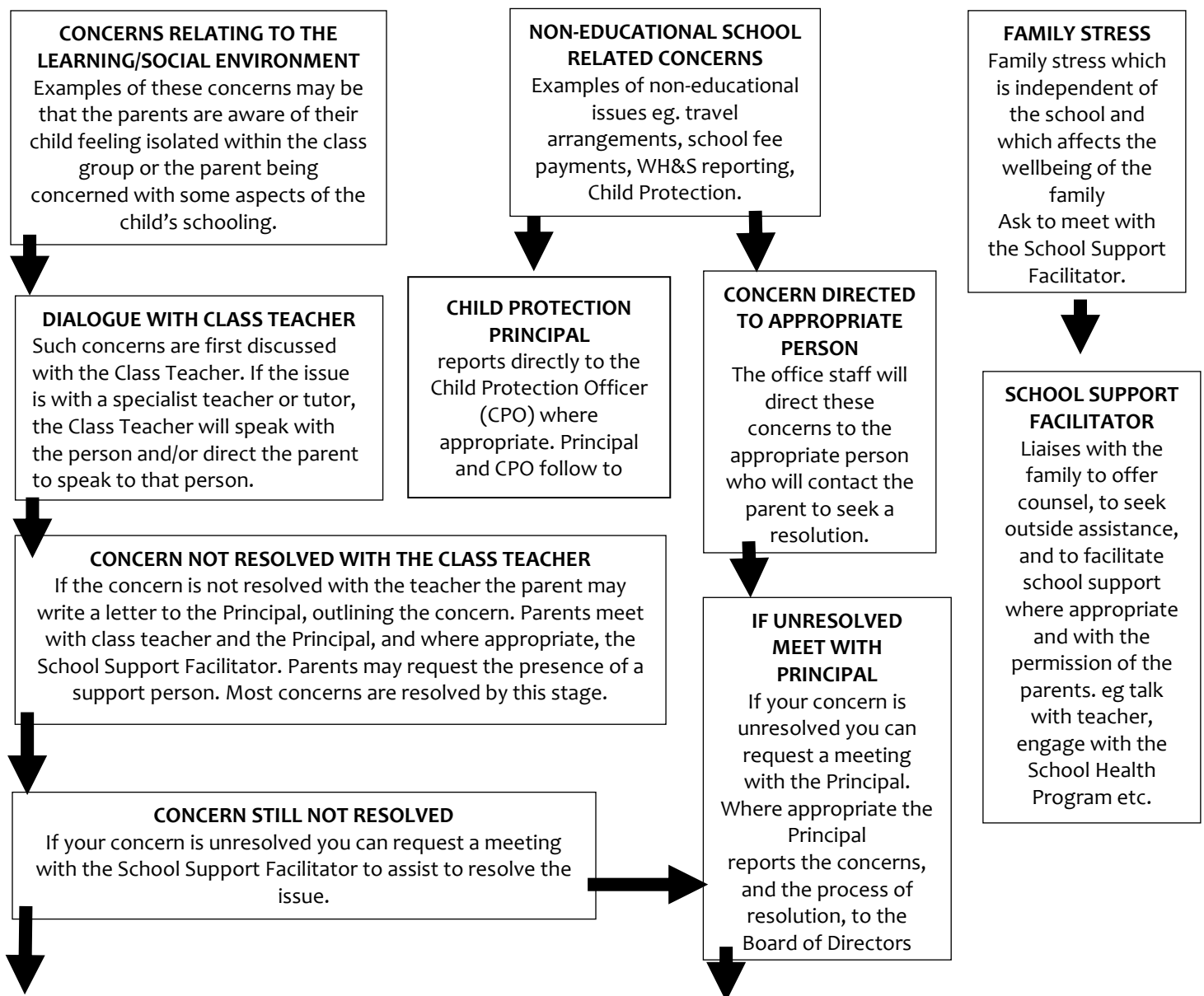
Should illness or emergency prevent your child from attending school, please inform the class teacher or the office staff on the day of absence. Be prepared to leave a message on the school's answering machine. All messages are regularly checked and will be responded to promptly. Please state the reason for your child's absence – illness, emergency, travel, family or cultural obligations or any other reasons. The school has a legal obligation to record absences and their reasons. In the case of an absence for pre-arranged family or cultural reasons, please notify the school in writing, stating the reason and the dates of absence. You will need to complete a 'Leave of Absence' form for your child/ren. Please give plenty of notice where possible and talk to your child's class teacher regarding the schoolwork your child/ren will be missing.

## FLOWCHARTS DESCRIBING PROCESS OF COMMUNICATION AND RESOLUTION OF CONCERNS

To maintain harmony within our school community we endeavor to find resolutions for all concerns. Effective communication – speaking and listening – supports and is essential to resolve conflicts. Parents, students and school employees can resolve concerns by following the steps in the relevant charts, below.

### Parents and Guardians

The flow chart below is designed for **parents / guardians** to provide an overview of the procedures addressing any concerns / issues.



**IF UNRESOLVED - APPOINTMENT OF MEDIATOR**

The Principal can seek the assistance of a mediator, agreed to by all parties.



**MEDIATOR'S REPORT**

The mediator writes a report of the outcome of the mediation to the Principal. A copy of the report is made available to the parents.

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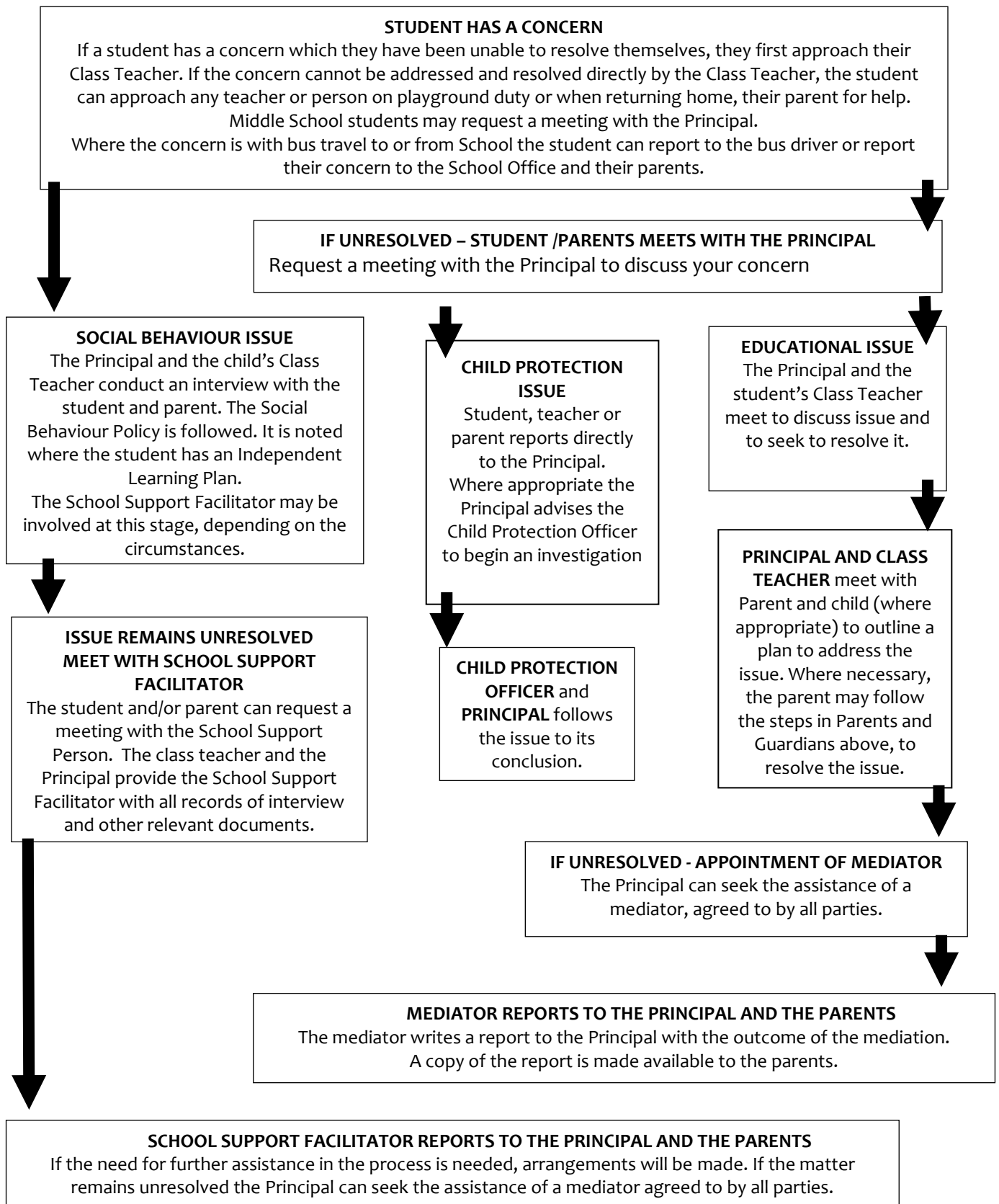


**MEDIATOR'S REPORT**

The mediator writes a report of the outcome of the mediation to the Principal. A copy of the report is made available to the parents and the Board of Directors.

# Students

The flowchart below is designed for **students** to provide a way of working through issues.



# Staff/Employees

The flowchart below is designed for **employees** to provide a way of working through issues with other staff members.

