



Information on the Interview Process for Parent/Guardian of child witnesses

Your child has been asked to participate in an interview with investigators employed by the Department of Education's Standards and Integrity Directorate. One of the major functions of the Standards and Integrity Directorate is to conduct investigations into allegations of staff misconduct, and to assist this function, your child has been asked to take part in an interview.

During the course of enquiries into a disciplinary matter, your child has been identified as a person who may be able to provide information, advice or assistance in regards to the issues being investigated. All complaints of staff misconduct are investigated fully so that the Department can determine what action (if any) is required.

Below are a number of frequently asked questions about the interview process.

Frequently asked questions

Why do you need my child's help?

When complaints are received by the Department of Education about staff members, we investigate the matter fully to decide what action (if any) we as a Department need to take. Your child has been selected because we believe they may have some information that can help us find out what happened.

Can I be present during the interview?

Yes, you can be present during your child's interview.

Do I have to allow you to interview my child?

The only way we can investigate a complaint and ensure that everyone is treated fairly is to gather information from people who may be able to provide that information. Although your child's participation is not compulsory, your cooperation and assistance will help us to make sure that this happens, and everyone is treated fairly.

Why is the interview being recorded?

We record the interview for two reasons. Firstly, if we didn't record the interview we would need to make detailed notes of the conversation we have with your child which is time consuming, and will dramatically increase the time required to conduct the interview with your child. Secondly, the recorder provides an **accurate, impartial and independent** record of what was said by everyone involved should that be questioned or queried at a later stage.

What will happen with the interview?

Generally, the investigator will make a written summary of the interview and will include that in any investigation report submitted to the Department. If a disciplinary finding has been established or is proposed against the person, we need to tell that person what has been said about them to give them an opportunity to explain their actions, and a copy of the interview summary forming part of the investigation report will be provided to them. This is called 'Procedural Fairness'.

Can we tell other people what has been said?

We ask that you treat this matter as confidential. If you do tell others, this might make the investigation more difficult for us, may compromise the disciplinary process, and/or others we may need to interview could be influenced by what your child has said.

What happens to the recording of this interview?

The recording of the interview will be stored securely within the Standards and Integrity Directorate. Investigators involved with this case will listen to the recording in order to compile a written summary of the interview. In some circumstances, where there are criminal allegations against a staff member, the recording will be given to the police. If a disciplinary finding has been made against the person, and they formally request an electronic copy of the interview, it will be provided to them.

Will my child have to go to Court or give evidence?

Not usually. In most cases the complaint can be dealt with without any court or tribunal action. Very occasionally, witnesses may be required to give evidence in a court or a tribunal such as the Industrial Relations Commission, but this is very rare. There is a reluctance to call children to give evidence.

Will I find out about the outcome?

The investigation and discipline process is confidential, so generally you do not find out exact details. However; if your child is the person who complained, you will be advised in writing of the outcome of the investigation at the conclusion of the process.

What if I'm not happy about how the interview was conducted?

You can contact the Director at the Standards and Integrity Directorate on 9264 4740, who will be happy to listen to and deal with your concerns. The Director can also be contacted by email at Mike.Cullen@education.wa.edu.au

Thank you for your cooperation and assistance in this matter.