



# St Joseph's Catholic School

*As a dynamic P to 6 Catholic school, St Joseph's strives for excellence within a Christ-centred community and contemporary environment.*

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## Complaints Policy

### Related Policies

CEO Complaints Policy

CEO Complaints - Intake and Management Policy

### Purpose

This policy describes the process for effectively managing complaints whilst protecting the right of all parties involved and seeking a solution to the problem in the best interests of all affected.

### Policy

Schools are required to develop and implement clear, fair and effective policy on the management of complaints.

A commitment to respond positively to critical feedback ensures that people have the opportunity to contribute to the continued improvement of the schools in the system. It is expected that all staff will demonstrate a commitment to ensuring that a culture of consultation and open dialogue is nurtured at every level, giving every member of the school community the opportunity to express dissatisfaction as well as satisfaction.

Complaints need to be addressed responsively, openly and in a timely manner to increase levels of satisfaction and to maintain harmonious relations in the wider community. Staff should be encouraged to develop an open expectation of a cooperative and genuine effort to resolve any valid complaint.

### Definitions

**Complaint:** An expression of dissatisfaction with the service provided, a decision made or the performance of staff.

**Complainant:** A student, parent or community member making a complaint.

### Procedures

Complaints which may involve reportable allegations (Child Protection complaints) must be resolved in accordance with Child Protection - ACT/NSW Policies.

Many complaints or issues can be resolved informally at school level with no need to follow a prescribed process. However, appropriate practice and procedure in dealing with complaints will be clearly communicated to the school community through parent handbooks and the newsletter.

- The first point of contact for a complaint would normally be a teacher, the Assistant Principal or the Principal.
- If a formal complaint is directed against a teacher, parents are encouraged to first bring the complaint to the teacher concerned as open discussion often removes the need for a formal complaint.
- If a resolution cannot be reached through an interview then the complaint should be put in writing. The issue will then be investigated by a member of the school Leadership Team.
- Where no satisfactory outcome is achieved the matter may be taken for further deliberation to the CEO depending on the nature of the complaint.
- Records must be kept outlining the documentation of the process, procedures followed and resolution.

While parent complaints are to be dealt with at school level initially, in situations where no resolution is achieved, or where the concern is in regard to systemic policy or practice, a complaint can be made in writing to the Director of the Catholic Education Office.

Normally, all complaints should be handled by personnel with no links to the issue of concern using a fair, unbiased manner to facilitate transparency and objective assessment of the situation under consideration.

The person about whom a complaint is made must be given opportunity to respond to the complaint.

Staff dealing with a complaint must protect the confidentiality and privacy of those involved by ensuring relevant information is accessible only to those with a genuine need to know.

Complainants should be confident that there will be no discriminatory action taken against them as a result of a complaint being lodged.

Complaints should be monitored to track the nature, frequency and resolution details for future reference. Written complaints are to be acknowledged promptly in writing.

## References

Nil

## Forms

Nil

**Approved by:** Leadership Team

**Implementation Date:** 2010

**Revision Date:** 2015