

Complaints Management Procedure (Prep – Year 12)

(To be read in conjunction with the Complaints Management in Anglican Education Policy)

1. Purpose and Objectives

These procedures support the Complaints Management in Anglican Education Policy (the Policy) and provide direction to relevant persons regarding their role and responsibilities when actioning the Policy.

These procedures are articulated with respect to parents and carers, family members, alumni and students, as members of the community. There is a separate procedures document for staff complaints.

Although based on the Complaints Management in Anglican Education Procedures, these procedures are specific to Canterbury College as a separately incorporated, non-diocesan owned school.

2. Guidelines/Procedure/Process

2.1 Four Stage Complaints Management Process

Unless additional action is described in section 2.2, all complaints in relation to an action, behaviour, omission or decision by a School staff member, or volunteer will be managed in accordance with the following four stage complaints management process.

Refer to section 2.2.2 for information about complaints in relation to visitors to the College.

2.1.1 Stage 1 - Discuss the matter with the relevant staff member or volunteer

Wherever possible, the complainant is encouraged, in the first instance, to discuss their complaint with the staff member or volunteer whose action, behaviour, omission or decision is in question. When resolving complaints at this stage:

1. The complainant is asked to speak with the staff member or volunteer and request a time to discuss their concern regarding the staff member or volunteer's action, behaviour, omission or decision;
2. The complainant and the staff member or volunteer may speak with the Principal, or another member of the Executive Leadership Team (ELT), about obtaining support during the complaints management process, as outlined herein;
3. The staff member or volunteer must speak with the Principal, or another member of the Executive Leadership Team (ELT), should any of the specific case management requirements apply, as per section 2.2 of the Procedures;
4. If the Principal, or another member of the Executive Leadership Team (ELT) is not involved in the discussion, the staff member or volunteer is to:

- a. Inform the complainant about these Procedures and the Complaints Management Policy, and
 - b. Offer to inform the Principal, or another member of the Executive Leadership Team (ELT), of the complaint raised, and the outcome of the discussion;
5. If the Principal, or another member of the Executive Leadership Team (ELT) is made aware of the complaint, they will:
 - a. Ensure the complaint is documented; including the names of all parties involved, the nature of the concerns, the date and time of any discussion, the agreed outcomes and any required actions;
 - b. Consider if any other policies, procedures or protocols are to be applied, particularly those referenced in the Complaints Management Policy regarding student protection and the conduct of staff and volunteers;
 - c. Consider if it is appropriate to ensure the document outlining the management of the complaint is filed in the staff member or volunteer's personnel file and any agreed actions are completed;
 - d. Consider whether the staff member or volunteer requires any additional training or support in relation to their role, or whether any other action is required; and
 - e. Identify any issues or strategies to be incorporated in the College's quality improvement planning.

When the complainant determines that it is not appropriate to discuss the complaint with the staff member or volunteer, or in doing so they do not believe their complaint has been addressed to their satisfaction, they are asked to proceed to Stage 2 of the complaints management process.

2.1.2 Stage 2 – Make a complaint to the relevant member of the Executive Leadership Team (ELT)

When escalating a complaint to this stage, the complainant may raise their complaint with a member of the Executive Leadership Team (ELT), either in writing or verbally. When resolving a complaint at this stage:

1. The complainant is asked to inform the Executive Leadership Team (ELT) member, of their complaint: including the names of all parties involved, the nature of the concerns, any specific dates and times when incidents occurred, the complainant's feedback about their discussion with the staff member or volunteer, and the reason why the complaint remains unresolved;
2. The ELT member will:
 - a. Consider if any of the specific complaints management requirements (as per section 2.2 of the Procedures); or other policies, procedures or protocols (particularly those referenced in the Complaints Management Policy regarding student protection and the conduct of staff and volunteers); are to be applied;
 - b. Speak with the staff member or volunteer and obtain further information about their actions in relation to the complaint;

- c. Advise all parties involved about support available to them during the complaints management process, as outlined herein;
- d. Delegate the investigation of the circumstances of the complaint to a senior leader in the organisation (e.g., Director-level position, Assistant Head of School, Head of Faculty);
- e. Organise meeting/s with the complainant, or their advocate, and the staff member or volunteer, as soon as practicable; to gather further information about the ongoing complaint and develop a plan to satisfactorily resolve the complaint;
- f. Explain to the complainant, or their advocate, and the staff member or volunteer that they may have a support person present during any meeting;
- g. Avoid using email as the primary means of communication, although follow up emails after meetings which clarify what was discussed, are a useful strategy;
- h. Ensure meetings and phone calls are documented, including the agreed outcomes and required actions;
- i. Consider whether the staff member or volunteer requires additional training or support in relation to their role, or whether any other action is required;
- j. Ensure the complainant understands how the complaint will be investigated any further (if required) and how the decision about the 'on-balance' assessment of the complaint will be assessed;
- k. Ensure the records related to the complaint, e.g., meetings, reports, letters etc. are filed on the staff member or volunteer's personnel file and any agreed actions are completed; and
- l. Incorporate relevant learnings into the College's quality improvement planning.

If the complaint is satisfactorily resolved at this stage, the ELT member will respond in writing to the complainant with the agreed outcomes and resolutions. It is not appropriate to divulge the nature of disciplinary action taken or not taken by the College against the staff member or volunteer in question.

When the complainant determines that it is not appropriate to discuss the complaint with a member of the ELT, or in doing so they do not believe their complaint has been addressed to their satisfaction, they are asked to contact the Principal.

2.1.3 Stage 3 – Escalate the complaint to the Principal

Escalation to the Principal may be appropriate if (a) the complaint has not been satisfactorily resolved at Stage 2 or (b) the complaint is about a member of the Executive Leadership Team.

When escalating a complaint to this stage, the complainant may raise their complaint with the Principal, in writing or in a meeting. When resolving a complaint at this stage:

1. The complainant is asked to inform the Principal of their ongoing complaint, including their feedback on previous meetings with the College and the reason why the complaint remains unresolved;
2. The Principal will:
 - a. Consider if any of the specific complaints management requirements or other policies, procedures or protocols (particularly those referenced in the Complaints Management Policy regarding student protection and the conduct of staff and volunteers); are to be applied;
 - b. Advise the ELT member and staff member or volunteer, that the complaint has now been escalated and obtain further information about the matter and the College's responses to the complaint, including copies of relevant documents or complaints management plans;
 - c. Advise all parties involved about support available to them during the complaints management process, as outlined herein;
 - d. Organise meeting/s with the complainant, or their advocate, the Principal and other relevant staff members and volunteers, as soon as practicable; to gather further information about the ongoing complaint and, if required, develop a complaints management plan to resolve the issues;
 - e. Explain to the complainant and the staff member or volunteer that they may have a support person present during any meeting;
 - f. Ensure meetings are documented, including the agreed outcomes and required actions;
 - g. Consider whether the staff member or volunteer requires additional training or support in relation to their role, or whether any other action is required;
 - h. Ensure the complainant understands how the complaint will be investigated any further (if required) and the how the decision about the 'on-balance' assessment of the complaint will be assessed;
 - i. Ensure the records relating to the complaint, e.g., meetings, reports, letters etc. are filed on the staff member or volunteer's personnel file and any agreed actions are completed; and
 - j. Incorporate relevant learnings into the College's quality improvement planning.

If the complaint is satisfactorily resolved at this stage, the Principal will respond in writing to the complainant with the agreed outcomes and resolutions. It is not appropriate to divulge the nature of disciplinary action taken or not taken by the College against the staff member or volunteer in question.

2.1.4 Stage 4 – Escalate the complaint to the Board

When escalating a complaint to this stage, the complainant may raise their complaint with the Chair of the Board, in writing. A complaint would be lodged with the Board if either (a) the complainant believes there was not adequate consideration of the complaint by the Principal or (b) if the complaint is about the Principal.

An escalation to the Board is the highest level of appeal available to a complainant. As Canterbury College is a non-diocesan owned or controlled school, there is no further right of appeal to the Anglican Schools Commission or the Archbishop's office.

When resolving a complaint at this stage:

1. The complainant is asked to inform the Chair of the Board of their ongoing complaint, including their feedback on previous meetings with the Principal and the reason why the complaint remains unresolved;
2. The Chair of the Board will:
 - a. Consider if any of the specific complaints management requirements (as per section 2.2 of the Procedures); or other policies, procedures or protocols (particularly those referenced in the Complaints Management Policy regarding student protection and the conduct of staff and volunteers); are to be applied;
 - b. Advise the Principal that the complaint has now been escalated and obtain further information about the matter and the College's responses to the complaint, including copies of relevant investigation summaries, reports, interviews or complaints management plans;
 - c. Advise all parties involved about support available to them during the complaints management process, as outlined herein;
 - d. Organise meeting/s with the complainant, or their advocate, the Principal (if appropriate) and other relevant staff members and volunteers, as soon as practicable; to gather further information about the ongoing complaint and, if required, develop a complaints management plan to resolve the issues. This meeting may occur remotely, e.g., videoconference or phone call.
 - e. Explain to the complainant and the staff member or volunteer that they may have a support person present during any meeting;
 - f. Ensure meetings are documented, including the agreed outcomes and required actions;
 - g. Consider whether the staff member or volunteer requires additional training or support in relation to their role, or whether any other action is required;
 - h. Ensure the complainant understands how the complaint will be investigated any further (if required) and the how the decision about the 'on-balance' assessment of the complaint will be assessed;

- i. Make a final determination regarding the veracity of the complaint on the basis of available evidence provided by the Principal and respond in writing to the complainant;
- j. Ensure the records relating to the complaint, e.g., meetings, reports, letters etc. are filed on the staff member or volunteer's personnel file and any agreed actions are completed; and
- k. Ensure relevant learnings are incorporated into the College's quality improvement planning.

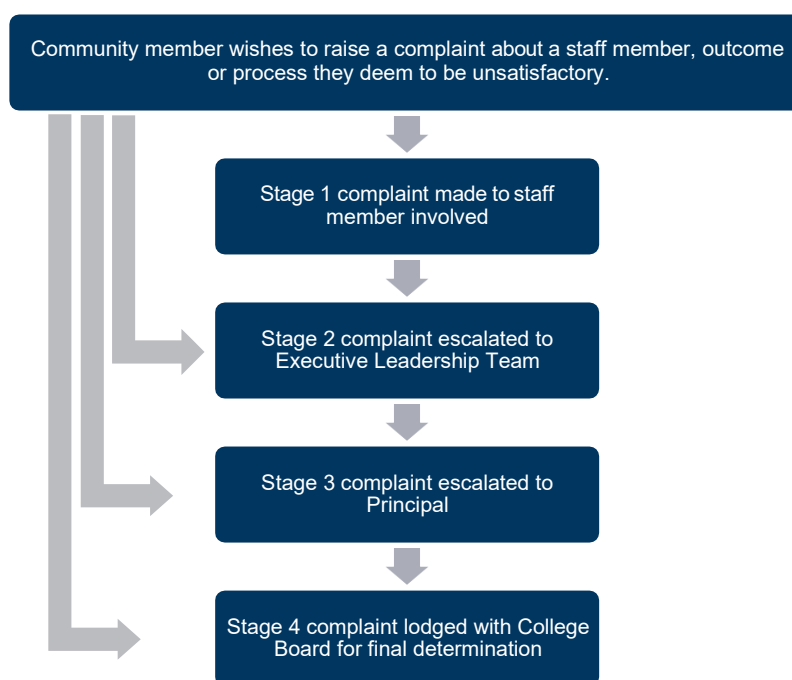


Figure 1: Complaints Management Process Diagram

2.2 Specific Complaints Management Requirements

2.2.1 Complaints in relation to non-compliance with Student Protection in Anglican Schools Policies and Procedures

The Student Protection in Anglican Schools Policy outlines the commitment to ensure the safety and wellbeing of students attending Anglican Schools and the College's obligation to respond appropriately to all suspected student protection concerns. This includes the College's obligations regarding child protection, concerns of sexual abuse or likely sexual abuse and the management of alleged inappropriate behaviour by a staff member or volunteer. The Student Protection Procedures outline the roles, responsibilities, processes and forms that are used when actioning the Policy and provide information on relevant definitions and key terms.

- a. As per the Complaints Management Policy, if the complaint relates to the non-compliance of the Student Protection in Anglican Schools Policy and Procedures, and relates to possible sexual abuse or likely

sexual abuse of a student, a complaint is to be made by writing to the Chair of the College Board.

- b.** As per the Complaints Management Policy, if the complaint relates to the non-compliance of the Student Protection in Anglican Schools Policy and Procedures, and does not relate to possible sexual abuse or likely sexual abuse of a student a complaint is also to be made by writing to the Chair of the College Board.

When resolving a complaint relevant to section 2.2.1, the following process will be undertaken:

- 1.** The complainant is asked to inform the Board Chair of their complaint; including the names of all parties involved, the nature of the complaint, any specific dates and times when incidents occurred, and their feedback on contact with the College;
- 2.** The Board Chair will:
 - a.** Advise the Principal that a complaint has been made; and obtain further information about the matter and the College's responses to the complaint, including copies of relevant documents;
 - b.** Where necessary, ensure that the College takes any action required to comply with the legal and policy requirements detailed in Student Protection in Anglican Schools Policy and Procedures;
 - c.** Advise all parties involved about support available to them during the complaints management process, as outlined herein;
 - d.** Organise meeting/s with the complainant and the Principal and other relevant staff members and volunteers, as soon as practicable; to gather further information about the matter and, if required, develop a plan to resolve the issues. This meeting may occur remotely, e.g., over the telephone;
 - e.** Explain to the complainant, the Principal and other relevant staff members and volunteers, that they may have a support person present during any meeting;
 - f.** Ensure meetings are documented, including the agreed outcomes and required actions;
 - g.** Consider whether the staff member or volunteer requires additional training or support in relation to their role, or whether any other action is required;
 - h.** Ensure the complainant understands how the complaint will be investigated any further (if required) and the how the decision about the 'on-balance' assessment of the complaint will be assessed;
 - i.** Ensure the record of the complaint, e.g., meetings, reports, letters etc. are filed on the staff member or volunteer's personnel file and any agreed actions are completed; and
 - j.** Incorporate relevant learnings into the College's quality improvement planning.

2.2.2 Complaints in relation to visitors to the College

When a complaint is about a visitor to the College, the complainant is asked to inform the Principal, or another member of the Executive Leadership Team, of their concerns including, where known, the name of the visitor, the organisation that the visitor works for, the names of any children involved, if relevant, and any dates and times of particular incidents related to their complaint.

The Principal or Executive Leadership Team member will consider if any other policies, procedures or protocols are to be applied, particularly those referenced in the Complaints Management Policy regarding student protection.

The Principal or Executive Leadership Team member will document the concerns and, unless the matter involves a criminal investigation, will forward the complaint to the organisation that employs the visitor who has been named in the complaint. If the matter does relate to a criminal investigation, direction will be sought from the Police.

The Principal Executive Leadership Team member will also consider the nature of the complaint and determine whether this may impact any future visits to the College by the person named in the complaint.

If the matter is being managed by another member of the Executive Leadership Team, this member will brief the Principal as soon as practicable.

2.3 Providing Support

Appropriate support should be offered to all parties involved in a complaint management process. Staff and volunteers may be referred to the Employee Assistance Service or like supports.

Children and parents may be referred to local counselling and support services including the College Counsellor or Chaplain or other supports offered by the College.

2.4 Privacy and Confidentiality

All information disclosed or recorded as part of a complaints management process must be managed in accordance with privacy legislation and principles. Prior to the sharing of information, consent must be obtained from the relevant parties involved in the complaints management process, unless otherwise allowed by law.

2.5 Managing Complaints Records

When recording information in relation to a complaints management process, ensure all records are factual and clearly indicate the names of all parties to the complaint, the details of the concerns or complaint, the processes used to resolve the complaint, required actions and responsible officers.

Storing and accessing complaints records

The Principal, or other member of the College's Executive Leadership Team, must ensure all information and documents in relation to the complaint are stored on the relevant staff member or volunteer's personnel file.

3. Appendices

N/A

4. Review

This procedure and its associated policy, quick reference guides and protocols will be reviewed in accordance with the College's policy review processes. Canterbury College, however, reserves the right to review this procedure at any time.

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