



St Joseph's Primary School Kangaroo Point

GRIEVANCE & COMPLAINTS POLICY

Approved: May 2018

Purpose

The purpose of this procedure is to outline the school's processes for managing complaints. Students, parents and guardians must understand their responsibilities before making a complaint. Complaints are an important source of information for the organisation for identifying issues, risks and improving processes and systems.

Rationale

This policy will ensure complaints are managed consistently and in accordance with the Australian Standard on complaints management (AS/NZS ISO 10002:2014 – Guidelines for complaints in organisations) and relevant legislation.

Policy Statement

St Joseph's is committed to effective complaints management by managing complaints in an accountable, transparent, timely and fair manner, while protecting the health and safety of employees through proactive management of unreasonable stakeholder conduct.

Principles

In managing complaints, Brisbane Catholic Education employees must comply with the following principles:

- people focus: building trusting relationships by respecting individuals and the community. People have a right to voice complaints
- local resolution: resolving complaints as close as possible to the point of receipt
- responsiveness: resolving complaints in a fair and timely manner
- objectivity and fairness: applying procedural fairness without judgement
- no detriment: customers are not adversely affected when complaints are made
- learn, improve, grow: improving service by learning from complaints
- confidentiality: complaint information is confidential and is managed in accordance with Australian privacy principles within the Privacy Act 1988 (Cth).

Complaints within the scope of this policy

Complaints within scope are those who express dissatisfaction about a service or an action of St Joseph's School or employee, and the stakeholder is directly affected by a St Joseph's service, decision or action.

Complaints outside the scope of this policy

The following complaints are outside the scope of this policy and are responded to through other mechanisms:

- BCE staff complaints: BCE Staff Complaints Management procedure
- complaints relating to student protection processes: Complaints Procedure for Non-compliance with Brisbane Catholic Education's Student Protection Processes
- Complaints relating to conduct of religious clergy and other religious persons: Archdiocese of Brisbane Professional Standards
- Animal use complaints: QSAEC Animal Use Complaint Report
- Reporting an incident: Incident Reporting and Investigation procedure.

References

- Education (Accreditation of Non-State Schools) Act 2017 (Qld)
- Education (Accreditation of Non-State Schools) Regulation 2017 (Qld)
- Privacy Act 1988 (Cth)
- AS/NZS ISO 10002:2014 – Guidelines for complaints in organisations
- Privacy policy
- Code of Conduct
- BCE Staff Complaints Management procedure
- Complaints Procedure for Non-compliance with Brisbane Catholic Education's Student Protection Processes
- Incident Reporting and Investigation procedure

Stakeholder Responsibilities

- Provide a clear description of the problem and the desired outcome.
- Provide all relevant information and documentation when the complaint is made.
- Understand that resolving complaints may take some time.
- Inform the school of changes affecting the complaint.
- Cooperate in a respectful way and understand that unreasonable conduct may lead to the complaint not being processed.

Voicing A Concern

We want to hear your concerns and we want to work together to improve our school.

You can raise an issue with any member of staff. But remember the old saying, "*There are two sides to every story*". We find that most issues can be easily solved through a discussion with class teachers first. They have an understanding of your child/children first hand and often are able to allay your concern easily.

Staff members are encouraged to deal positively and sincerely with your concerns.

They will listen. They will ask questions to make sure they understand. They may take notes to help in following up your concern.

Who To Go To?

1st point of call. Staff member directly involved in the issue.

It is always advisable to make an appointment with this person at a mutually agreed time. Arriving at the classroom door as school is about to begin is inappropriate and disruptive.

If follow up is needed, please make an appointment with a member of the Administration team via the school office.

If further follow up is needed please make contact with Brisbane Catholic Education's Senior Leader Learning and Identity via 3033 7000. The **Senior Leader Learning and Identity** will always refer you back to the school's Administration Team, if contact has not already been made.

Process

1. The classroom teacher works with the stakeholder to resolve the matter.
2. Unresolved complaints may be escalated to senior school staff.
3. The Principal is the final point of escalation for all school-related complaints.

If dissatisfied with the final decision, a stakeholder may submit in writing a request for a review to the Principal. Complaints about the Principal must be made in writing and submitted to a member of the Administration Team.

Complaints about a Principal are forwarded to the Senior Leader Learning and Identity for review.

What Can You Expect?

There are usually four phases in handling a concern. In most cases these can all be worked through quickly in one process.

1. State your concern calmly, clearly and courteously. Being aggressive will not help resolve the issue.
2. We will listen to your concern and make sure we understand it.
3. The teacher/administrator will summarise the main points. We will try to explain any school policy or procedure on the issue.
4. We will work out what action needs to occur with you, and we will deal with the concern or refer it to another person.

Timeframes

The time required to resolve a complaint depends on the complexity and nature of the complaint, as well as staff availability.

As a guide:

- simple complaints may take up to 20 working days
- complaints requiring some assessment may take up to 45 working days
- complex complaints may take up to 90 working days or longer.

Receipt of complaint must be acknowledged as soon as possible, or within five (5) working days.

The school will endeavour to resolve the issue as promptly as circumstances allow.

These timeframes apply during school terms. Additional time may be required if a complaint is submitted toward the end of a school term, or outside of school terms.