

Catholic Ladies' College



Complaints Resolution Policy (Parents and Students)

Stage	Date	Ratified
Initiated	July 2017	July 2017
Review 1	September 2018	September 2018
Review 2		
Review 3		
Review 4		

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Under the Stewardship of
Mary Aikenhead Ministries



MARY
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MINISTRIES

LOVE HOPE COMPASSION JUSTICE



Catholic Ladies' College Ltd Complaints Resolution Policy (Parents and/or students)

Catholic Ladies' College is a Mary Aikenhead Ministry school in the tradition of the Sisters of Charity. We seek to develop in each member of our community a contemporary understanding and application of the charism of Mary Aikenhead, the spirituality of the Sisters of Charity, the mission and vision of Mary Aikenhead Ministries and their values of justice, love, compassion and hope.

In responding to this call Catholic Ladies' College is a Christ centred community established to educate, in partnership with parents, women of faith, integrity, individuality and compassion, confident of their own worth as women and wholly involved in the transformation of society.

Purpose

The purpose of this policy is to ensure that the College meets its obligation to respond to parent and student complaints in a fair, effective and efficient manner and to inform parents and students about dispute resolution procedures. Procedures for raising and resolving bullying concerns are outlined in CLC's Positive Relationships Policy: Bullying Prevention and Intervention.

Guiding Principles

College staff work in partnership with parents in the education of their daughters. Effective communication plays a vital role in this partnership, as does a shared commitment to addressing any issues of concern in ways that are constructive, open and respectful.

All members of the College community are expected to treat each other with dignity and respect. We acknowledge that there may be instances when a parent and/or student may feel aggrieved about a decision, behaviour, act or omission. The College will treat all concerns and complaints seriously, professionally, competently and in a timely manner, applying principles of procedural fairness and confidentiality.

- be investigated in a fair and impartial manner
- be treated with respect and sensitivity
- be investigated in a timely manner
- meet privacy and other legal obligations
- be documented appropriately

All parties will be:

- heard and treated fairly
- receive written acknowledgement of their complaint
- provided with an outline of the complaint handling procedures
- given a timeline for investigating and responding to the complaint
- provided with appropriate communication regarding the outcome of the complaint

Confidentiality

To maintain confidentiality in so far as that is reasonable, all participants in the process are to only share information about the complaint to those who need to know in order to:

- refer the complaint (Principal, Deputy Principal or school leader)
- investigate the complaint
- provide advice and support in the area
- review and/or decide on actions and outcomes as appropriate.

A complaint/concern raised by a parent and/or student will be treated with respect and sensitivity. It may not be possible that all communications will necessarily be kept confidential in order to facilitate the resolution of the dispute. If this is the case, parties will be informed.



Procedures

Raising the Concern/Complaint

The parent and/or student making the complaint is expected to:

- raise the concern or complaint as soon as possible after the issue has arisen
- communicate and respond in ways that are constructive, timely, fair and respectful
- provide complete and factual information
- observe confidentiality and sensitivity
- act in good faith
- have realistic and reasonable expectations about achievable outcomes/remedies.

Staff contact

Due to teachers' classroom and supervision duties, your first contact is best made by email, with an appointment request for either a phone conference or face-to-face meeting. You are asked to outline concerns or issues (eg academic performance, student/peer incidents) so that the staff member can constructively prepare for the meeting/phone conference. An updated list of the names, roles/titles and email addresses of teaching staff is accessible to parents from the College Portal. Please refer to the table below for your first point of contact.

Concern/complaint in relation to...	Initial contact	Secondary contact
A specific subject, Assessment Task or class work	Subject teacher concerned	Key Learning Area Team Leader
A teacher	Teacher concerned	Deputy Principal Learning & Teaching
Student's work progress over a number of subjects, her lack of focus or motivation, peer relationships	Homeroom Teacher	Year Level Team Leader or College Counsellor or Deputy Principal Student Wellbeing
VCE/VCAL rules	VCE Leader	Deputy Principal Learning & Teaching
Fees and charges	Business Manager	principal@clc.vic.edu.au
Train or bus travel incidents	College Registrar	Deputy Principal Student Wellbeing
First Aid requirements	First Aid Manager	Year Level Team Leader or Deputy Principal Student Wellbeing

Parent complaint/concern in relation to another student/s

If a parent concern/complaint relates to their daughter's treatment by another student/s whilst at school, the parent is expected to:

- refer their complaint directly to the College, via their daughter's Homeroom Teacher or Year Level Team Leader.
- **not** approach the other student/s whilst she/they are in the care of the College to discuss the issue.

Furthermore, parents are advised not to make direct contact with the student's parents to resolve the matter.



Anonymous Complaints

A parent or student who is making a complaint will be encouraged to give their names with the assurance that their complaint will be addressed professionally, competently and in accordance with the principles of procedural fairness and confidentiality. If the parent or student decides to remain anonymous, it is at the Principal's or their delegate's discretion as to what action, if any will be taken.

Method of communication

A parent or student with a complaint/concern may make a complaint via:

- a phone call
- an email
- a letter
- attendance at a meeting
- complaint form (Addendum A)

The complaint will be acknowledged and a copy of the school's complaint's handling policy and procedures will be provided (Addendum B)

Information and Formal Resolution Process

If initial communication between the parties does not resolve the complaint (an 'informal' resolution process), then the complainant should:

- contact a member of the Leadership Team to make an appointment for either a phone conference or face-to-face meeting
- outline the nature of the complaint, either verbally or in writing, and the steps taken to resolve it.

In moving to a more formal process, the Principal or other senior member of staff will:

- organise a meeting/phone conference
- fully document the complaint, any actions taken to resolve it and outcomes of those actions
- further and fully investigate the matter
- ensure that no one is victimised as a result of a complaint being made
- if necessary, enable a complainant to be accompanied by another person of his/her choice as a support person
- organise a process of mediation of a complaint cannot be satisfactorily resolved by the College.

Recording of complaints

All formal complaints will be recorded. The College record management system will contain full details of the complaint, investigation and resolution of the complaint.

A record of the complaint will contain the following information:

- The contact details of the complainant
- The date of the complaint
- The method of communicating the complaint to the school
- The nature of the complaint and the requested resolution
- The member of staff handling the issue
- Any actions and time taken
- Notes from meetings and copies of communications
- A statement of the outcome, including the closure date and the date advising the complainant of the outcome



Appeals

If a parent or student may appeal a decision or lack of action by the College and refer the matter to Catholic Education Melbourne or Mary Aikenhead Education Limited.

The Principal will examine all documentation related to the complaint and may seek further information. Advice may be sought from the College Board of Directors. The outcome of an appeal may be to endorse the original investigation or to initiate a new investigation.

If the Principal is involved in the grievance, then the appeal should be addressed to:

The Coordinating Person Pastoral Care Unit Catholic Education Melbourne
PO Box 3
EAST MELBOURNE
VIC 3002
Ph: 9267 0228

Implementation

Teachers and Support Staff
School Leaders
Leadership Team

Intended Audience

Parents and students

Related Documents

- CLC Privacy Policy
- CLC Student Positive Relationships Policy: Bullying Prevention and Intervention

Developed by

College Leadership Team



Addendum B

Acknowledgment Letter to Complainant

Dear [NAME]

I refer to information provided by you/your daughter, [child's name], to [name], [position], regarding the attached complaint.

The matter has been referred to me and I propose dealing with it by (state the process). Please let me know if you have any comments or requests about the process of resolving the complaint.

You will be contacted at various stages of the process regarding progress of the complaint. If you require any information, please contact me on (telephone number).

Yours sincerely

Name

Date