

Catholic Ladies' College



Complaints Handling Procedure and Guide

clc.vic.edu.au

19 Diamond St, Eltham
Victoria 3095, Australia
03 9439 4077

ABN 44 058 164 891

Under the Stewardship of
Mary Aikenhead Ministries



MARY
AIKENHEAD
MINISTRIES

LOVE HOPE COMPASSION JUSTICE



Complaints Handling Procedure and Guide

Catholic Ladies' College welcomes feedback from all members of the college community and takes all complaints or concerns that may be raised seriously. This Complaints Handling Procedure is designed to assist you to understand our complaints handling process and should be read in conjunction with the Complaints Handling Policy.

Our Complaints Handling Program features access to online logging to facilitate the accurate recording of the complaint. Our commitment to continuous improvement relies on the timely assessment and review of any complaints and feedback received from our community.

Principles

All members of the College community are expected to treat each other with dignity and respect. In receiving and responding to complaints, our resolution process will be grounded in sound and fair procedures for information sharing, conciliation, confidentiality, investigation and decision making.

Procedures for Complaints about Issues at Catholic Ladies' College

The College has developed and maintains a fair, effective and efficient complaints-handling procedure so that complaints about events or decisions can be addressed. The following steps can guide the procedure in making a complaint about issues arising.

Informal Complaints

The vast majority of matters causing concern can be handled quickly and efficiently by addressing the issue with the appropriate staff member

Due to teachers' classroom and supervision duties, a complainant's first contact is best made by email, with an appointment request for either a phone conference or face-to-face meeting. The table below indicates the relevant staff member as the first point of contact:

Area of concern	Staff point of contact
Student Wellbeing matter	1. Homeroom Teacher 2. Year Level Team Leader 3. Deputy Principal Student Wellbeing (and/or Counsellor if required)
Student Learning matter	1. Subject Teacher 2. Key Learning Area Team Leader 3. Director Learning and Teaching or Director Curriculum & Assessment
VCE/VET and VCAL	VCE Coordinator VET /VCAL Coordinator
Learning Diversity matter	1. Learning Diversity Leader 2. Director Learning and Teaching
Financial / Fees	Business Manager
Staff member	Principal
Other concern	Please ask Reception to direct you to the appropriate staff member

Formal Complaints

Clarify the issue

- Be clear about the topic or issue to be discussed.
- Be mindful of the need to ascertain all the facts relating to the circumstances of the topic or issue.
- Think about what would be an acceptable outcome.
- Check and observe the College's Complaints Handling Policy.



Making the complaint

- If you wish to make a formal complaint please refer to the External Complaints Form located on our website.
- Ensure the relevant person/s is given a reasonable amount of time to take the steps required to resolve or address the concerns.

Contact the Principal or Deputy Principal

- If the issue remains unresolved after discussion with the relevant person/s at the College, request an appointment, through the College reception, to discuss the concern with the Principal or Deputy Principal.
- The Principal may be represented by another senior staff member. If the relevant staff member is going to be present at the meeting, the meeting time is more likely to occur outside classroom hours.

Expectations of and Information for Parents/Guardians/Carers

In making a complaint, Catholic Ladies' College requests and expects that the complainant will:

- raise the concern or complaint as soon as possible after the issue has arisen
- communicate and respond in ways that are constructive, fair and respectful
- provide complete and factual information about the concern or complaint
- observe confidentiality and a respect for sensitive issues
- act in good faith to achieve an outcome acceptable to all parties
- have realistic and reasonable expectations about possible outcomes/remedies.

If your concern/complaint relates to your child's treatment by another student or students while at Catholic Ladies' College, we expect that you will refer your complaint directly to the College, via your child's class teacher, deputy principal or principal. Under no circumstances should you approach another student in the care of the College to discuss the issue or chastise them. Direct contact with parents to resolve the matter is also discouraged if the complaint pertains to issues or incidents that have arisen at the school.

Parents/guardians/carers making complaints are to be respectful, confidential and courteous. Parents/guardians/carers who are unreasonable, threatening or discourteous can expect their discussions with the principal to be terminated until such time as an alternative discussion time is arranged by the College.

Process for Dealing with Complaints

The College will record the details of all complaints including the name and contact details of the persons making the complaint. The school will then refer the complaint to the most appropriate person to undertake an inquiry. There will be many occasions that this will be someone other than the Principal. The staff member conducting the inquiry may conduct a preliminary inquiry or communicate with the parent to discuss the matter further.

If the scope of the inquiry is beyond the capacity or jurisdiction of the College, the matter will be referred to the MACS Regional General Manager and the parent/guardian/carer will be informed of the referral.

Parents/guardians/carers discussing complaints with the Principal may be accompanied by a support person. The support person can be a family member, a friend or a professional with knowledge of the student. Any person acting in a professional capacity on behalf of the parents/guardians/carers must provide their occupational details and full name prior to the meeting being held. It is at the Principal's discretion if an external professional is a participating member of any school meeting. The support person may encourage and facilitate sharing of parent/guardian/carer knowledge, perception and issues. The support person should support a positive working relationship between all parties. The support person does not speak on behalf of parents/guardians/carers when discussing complaints with the Principal.

Any inquiry conducted by the College will be done so in a timely, efficient and confidential manner, ensuring the fair principles on natural justice are applied for all. Parents/guardians/carers will be provided with an anticipated timeframe for a resolution. The staff member conducting the inquiry will record the details of the inquiry.

Privacy laws may prohibit information being provided to the complainant of any specific action that has been taken in relation to individuals about whom the complaint has been raised.

Outcomes of Complaints

Outcomes of complaints and grievances can include the following:

- an apology – either verbal or written
- mediation – with an internal or external mediator
- an official warning



- disciplinary action
- a behavioural contract (in the case of a student)
- pastoral or spiritual care
- an understanding that the behaviour will not be repeated
- a change in policy or procedure.

Complaint Escalation

If the matter cannot be resolved at the school level, or if the complaint is about the Principal of the College, complainants may contact the relevant MACS Regional Office. Alternatively, parents/guardians/carers may lodge a complaint online at www.macs.vic.edu.au/Contact-Us/Complaints.aspx or via Mary Aikenhead Education Limited.

When a complaint is serious or the complaint is not resolved after the involvement of the MACS Regional General Manager, it may be referred to the MACS Executive Director for review.

If the complaint is unable to be resolved to the satisfaction of the complainant, but the matter is however finalised, the complainant has the right to seek alternative independent or other advice, or contact other entities such as the Victorian Equal Opportunity and Human Rights Commission, or the Victorian Civil and Administrative Tribunal. Complaints related to the minimum standards for school registration can be referred to the Victorian Registration and Qualifications Authority (VRQA).

Withdrawal of a Complaint

A complaint can be withdrawn at any stage during the complaint management procedures. A complaint should be retracted in writing by the complainant and addressed to the Principal or the relevant MACS Regional Manager.

Related resources

- Complaints Handling Policy
- International complaints handling standard (ISO 10002:2014 Quality management – Customer satisfaction) and Australian/New Zealand complaints handling standard (AS/NZA 1002:2014 Guidelines for complaint management in organisations)

MACS Regional Office Contact Details

Eastern Regional Office

39 Hewish Road
CROYDON VIC 3136
Ph: 03 9427 6400
Email: ero@macs.vic.edu.au

Northern Regional Office

25 Norwood Crescent
MOONEE PONDS VIC 3039
Ph: 03 8387 3200
Email: nro@macs.vic.edu.au

Southern Regional Office

602 South Road
MOORABBIN EAST VIC 3189
Ph: 03 8301 7400
Email: sro@macs.vic.edu.au

Western Regional Office

47 Synnot Street
WERRIBEE VIC 3030
Ph: 03 8412 2400
Email: wro@macs.vic.edu.au