



COMPLAINTS HANDLING POLICY

1. Purpose

The purpose of this policy is to ensure that student, parent and employee complaints and disputes are dealt with in a responsive, efficient, effective and fair way.

2. Scope

Students, parents and employees, including full-time, part-time, permanent, fixed-term and casual employees, as well as contractors, volunteers and people undertaking work experience or vocational placements.

This policy is to be read in conjunction with the College's policies relating to sexual harassment, workplace bullying, workplace health and safety, resolving employee concerns, anti-discrimination and privacy.

3. Policy Statement

Calvary Christian College (the College) is committed to ensuring that complaints are dealt with in a responsive, efficient, and effective and fair way and views complaints as part of an important feedback and accountability process.

4. Complaints that may be Resolved under this Policy

The College encourages students, parents and employees to lodge promptly any complaints regarding:

- the College, its employees or students having done something wrong
- the College, its employees or students having failed to do something they should have done
- the College, its employees or students having acted unfairly or impolitely
- issues of student or employee behaviour that are contrary to their relevant code of conduct. Student behavioural expectations are outlined in the Responsible Behaviour Plan.
- Student complaints may be brought by students or by parents on behalf of their children, as appropriate in the circumstances.

5. Issues Outside this Policy

The following matters are outside the scope of this policy and should be managed as follows:

- concerns where resolution has not been attempted at the local level (i.e. with the persons immediately involved)
- child protection concerns or risks of harm to children should be dealt with in accordance with the law and the College's Child Protection Policy
- student bullying complaints should be dealt with under the Student Anti Bullying Policy and Responsible Behaviour Plan



- student discipline matters, including matters involving suspension or expulsion, should be dealt with under the Responsible Behaviour Plan.
- employee complaints related to their employment should be directed to their supervisor.
- student or employee violence or criminal matters should be directed to the Principal who will involve the Police as appropriate.
- formal legal proceedings

6. Clarification of Definitions – complaint or concern?

6.1 **Concern** refers to an issue which is raised informally in order to highlight, improve or change a situation. A concern is raised through a conversation in person, a phone call or an email. A concern may not require a meeting in person. A concern is generally resolved at this first level of contact. A concern can escalate into a complaint.

6.2 **Complaint** is a formal expression of grievance. A complaint is raised through a letter or email directed to the Governance Officer. A complaint is usually followed up by a meeting in person.

7. Complaints Handling Principles

The College is committed to managing complaints according to the following principles:

- complaints will be taken seriously
- mediation, negotiation and informal resolution are, where appropriate, optional alternatives
- procedural fairness will be ensured wherever practicable, confidentiality and privacy will be maintained as much as possible
- all parties to the complaints will be appropriately supported
- the College will give reasonable progress updates
- complainants, respondents and people associated with them will not be victimised as a result of lodging the complaints and they will not suffer any other reprisals
- the College will keep records of complaints

8. College Responsibilities

The College has the following role and responsibilities:

- develop, implement, promote and act in accordance with the College's Complaints Handling Policy and associated policies and procedures
- appropriately communicate the College's Complaints Handling Policy and procedures to students, parents and employees
- ensure that the Complaints Handling procedures are readily accessible by staff, students and parents
- upon receipt of a complaint, manage the complaint in accordance with the Complaints Handling procedures



- ensure that appropriate support is provided to all parties to a complaint
- take appropriate action to prevent victimisation or action in reprisal against the complainant, respondent or any person associated with them
- appropriately implement remedies
- appropriately train relevant employees
- keep records
- conduct a review/audit of the Complaints Register from time to time
- monitor and report to the College Council on complaints that have significant impact to business
- report to the College's insurer when that is relevant
- refer to the College Council immediately any claim for legal redress.

9. All Parties to a Dispute

The complainant and respondent both have the following role and responsibilities:

- apply and comply with the College's Complaints Handling Policy and applicable associated policies
- lodge the complaint as soon as possible after the issue arises
- expect that the complaint will be dealt with fairly and objectively;
- provide complete and factual information in a timely manner
- not provide deliberately false or misleading information
- not make frivolous or vexatious complaints
- act in good faith, and in a calm and courteous manner
- act in a non-threatening manner
- to be appropriately supported
- recognise that all parties have rights and responsibilities which must be balanced
- maintain and respect the privacy and confidentiality of all parties
- not victimise or act in reprisal against any party to the dispute or any person associated with them.

10. Employees Receiving Complaints

Employees receiving complaints have the following role and responsibilities:

- act in accordance with the College's Complaints Handling Policy



- inform the party lodging the complaint of how complaints can be lodged, when they should be lodged and what information is required
- provide the complainant with information about any support or assistance available to assist them in lodging their complaint
- provide the complainant with a copy of the College's Complaints Handling Policy and applicable associated policies
- maintain confidentiality
- keep appropriate records
- not victimise or act in reprisal against the complainant, respondent or any person associated with them.

11. Process for lodging a Complaint

A complaint can be submitted to the Governance Manager via email or 07 3287 6222

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