



CVAS
Clarence Valley
ANGLICAN SCHOOL

School Community Complaints Policy

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Policy Last Review October 2021	Review Date and Frequency Every two years	Responsible for Review Principal
Recommended By School Executive	Approved By School Council	Approval Date 26 October 2021

INTRODUCTION

Clarence Valley Anglican School (“the School”) recognises that it is in the best interest of the School to have a trusting and cooperative relationship with its community. Complaints are an important way for the School community to provide information and feedback to the School. The School considers that every complaint provides a valuable opportunity for reflection and learning.

The School recognises a member of the School community’s right to make a complaint and its responsibility to provide a framework within which efforts can be made to resolve complaints.

The School believes that complaints are best handled at the School level in an environment where members of the community are able to raise relevant concerns.

An effective complaint-handling system has a clear process for resolving complaints, treats people fairly, is timely and provides those involved in a complaint with a fair opportunity to respond to issues and to present their views.

PURPOSE

To ensure that:

- (a) the School meets its obligation to respond to community complaints in a fair, effective and efficient manner
- (b) the community is informed of how they can make a complaint

This Policy covers all members of the School Community.

This Policy does not apply to criminal matters which will be referred directly to the police.

DEFINITIONS

Key terms are defined as follows:

A **‘complaint’** is an expression of dissatisfaction with an action taken, decision made or service provided, or the failure to provide a service, take action or make a decision.

- (a) A complaint is considered to be **‘resolved’** when the complainant and the School agree on an appropriate response or remedy
- (b) A complaint is considered to be **‘finalised’** when the School Council has made a final determination on the matter after exhausting the processes set out in this policy if the complainant and the School cannot resolve the matter
- (c) A complaint is considered to be **‘unresolved’** when agreement cannot be reached on a course of action and/or a remedy, or if the remedy cannot be implemented.

GUIDING PRINCIPLES

The complaint-handling process must reflect the following guiding principles:

Transparency	Information about how and where to make a complaint, as well as how a complaint will be handled, will be posted on the School Website. The actions taken to respond to a complaint should be well documented and
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	include the reasons underpinning any decisions made.
Accessibility	Information about how to make a complaint and the School's procedures when responding to a complaint should be easily accessible.
Responsiveness	Receipt of complaints should be acknowledged and addressed in a timely manner.
Objectivity	Each complaint must be treated in an equitable, objective and unbiased manner.
Protection of Privacy	Each complaint will be treated discreetly.
Student-Focused	In resolving complaints the wellbeing of students is a priority.
Accountability	The School is required to have a fair, effective and efficient complaint-handling process. The School is accountable, both internally and externally, for its decision making and complaint-handling performance. The School needs to be able to provide explanations and reasons for its decisions.
Continual Improvement	Complaint data and feedback will be used to identify recurrent themes and to implement improvement measures where a need is identified.

ANONYMOUS COMPLAINTS

The School requires all complaints to be considered and it recognises that it might not be able to fully consider a complaint if the School cannot effectively liaise with the complainant. Furthermore, anonymous complaints raise natural justice issues for respondents who have a right to know the particulars of the allegations made against them.

ROLE OF THE SCHOOL

1. Schools handle complaints on a range of matters. Complaints are best addressed in an environment where individuals feel able to speak up about issues of concern. This is reflected in open, two-way communication with the School; clear roles and responsibilities for all members of the School community; realistic expectations about what can be achieved by the school; and an effective, published complaint-handling procedure.
2. The School will treat concerns seriously and reflect on the issues raised through complaints to change its practice and improve the learning opportunities for its students.
3. The School's initial response to an incident is critical. Those involved in the matter should be assured that the complaint will be explored and, where possible, a full explanation will be provided once the facts are known.

SCHOOL RESPONSIBILITIES

It is the responsibility of the School to respond to address written and verbal complaints raised by individuals from the School community.

RESOLVING COMPLAINTS

The School recognises that where a complaint is found to be legitimate, it aims to resolve the complaint in a fair and just manner.

UNREASONABLE COMPLAINANT CONDUCT

All complaints should be considered in accordance with the School's complaint-handling procedures including when individual behaviour is thought to be unreasonable.

RELATED DOCUMENTS

- *Anti-Bullying and Harassment Policy*
- *Behaviour Support Policy*
- *Enrolment Policy*
- *Gender Diverse, Transgender and Intersex Students Policy*
- *Procedural Fairness Policy*
- *School Community Code of Conduct Policy*
- *School Community Communication Policy*
- *School Community Complaints Procedure*
- *Student Code of Conduct Policy*