



Rationale

Our values of integrity, kindness, courage, respect and humility help to shape the way that we live and work at Carey. Chords of hope, compassion, family and learning continue to resonate across our College (Vision 2020) as together we seek to build a community where students, families and staff can flourish.

The relationships we have with parents, caregivers and students are important to us, and we value the educational partnership we share. We are a Christian organisation and our intention is always to treat others in a way that honours God and follows the teachings of Jesus, however, we recognise that in the complexity of human interactions concerns, complaints and grievances will naturally occur. We also recognise the importance of working together to resolve any issues that arise in a manner that is positive and solution-focussed. To this end, we see concerns, complaints and grievances as an opportunity for learning and growth that will help us to strengthen relationships, and bring about change where it is needed.

Members of the Carey Community can be confident that staff will listen and respond to their needs and concerns. We would love to have a conversation about an issue rather than have community members feeling dissatisfied and unheard, and we welcome the opportunity to work together to find a resolution.

Scope

This policy applies to all Carey Baptist College Campuses, all students, families and members of the community, and sets out the process to have enquiries, concerns and complaints addressed by the staff and leadership of Carey Baptist College.

Policy Statement

Objectives

The objectives of the policy are:

- To provide for a fair, transparent and responsive management of complaints about the functions, practices and services of Carey Baptist College;
- To have complaints handled promptly and as close to the source as is possible;
- To ensure that there is an effective monitoring of complaints;
- To identify and implement service and system improvement opportunities that arise from the process.

Resolution of complaints will be addressed at multiple levels. Serious complaints of various kinds may also be lodged outside the College with agencies such as the Equal Opportunity Commission, the Western Australian Police Service and the Crime and Corruption Commission.

The following principles apply to the management of all complaints:

- Complainants are able to make enquiries, raise concerns or lodge complaints about the provision of education or the conduct of Carey Baptist College staff and have these dealt with efficiently, fairly and promptly.
- Complaints relating to child protection, discrimination, harassment or bullying may be referred to Codes of Conduct, Behaviour Management or Child Protection policies and procedures.

- Complaints may be raised by students with or without the support or knowledge of their parents in the first instance.
- In all matters, the educational well being and safety of students is the first priority.
- The process is accessible to all aggrieved parties and is underpinned by a commitment to cooperate on the part of Carey Baptist College staff.
- Procedural fairness is afforded to all parties.
- Confidentiality is maintained, to the extent that it is consistent with legislative requirements and the other principles outlined in this section.
- The subject of the complaint is informed of the substance of the complaint.
- Warranted investigation will be pursued with or without the active involvement of the complainant.
- Complaints are monitored and their management evaluated so as to reduce the occurrence of systemic and recurring problems.
- All persons in The College community including students, parents, administrators, teachers and support staff, have a right to be treated with respect and courtesy.
- Vexatious, trivial or previously finalised issues are not pursued.
- Information about the process for making enquiries, raising concerns or complaints is to be available to parents, students and members of the local community.
- Complaints from former students and/or their parents or guardians are accepted and dealt with despite enrolment of the student having ceased.

The Role of the Director General

The Director General of the Department of Education is responsible for ensuring that the school observes the registration standards, including the standard about its complaints handling system. Any student, parent or community member is entitled to contact the Director General with concerns about how the school has dealt with a complaint. Information is available on the Department of Education website. While the Director General may consider whether the school has breached the registration standards, she does not have power to intervene in a complaint or override the school's decision.

Definitions:

A **concern** is the expression of a worry, something that has made a person troubled or anxious about an issue and is expressed at a 'first level' ie to a class teacher in person, by telephone or email directly to the relevant staff member. Depending on the nature of the concern, it can often be resolved at this 'first level' in a more informal manner.

A **complaint** is an "expression of dissatisfaction made to an organisation, related to its products, or the complaints handling process itself, where a response or resolution is explicitly or implicitly expected" (as defined by the *Australian Complaint Handling Standard ISO AS 10002-2006*). Within a school this would usually equate to an expression, in writing, of protest, objection, dissatisfaction with a real or perceived problem, accusation, or criticism and is usually dealt with in a formal manner. Irrespective of whether the complaint was first expressed as a concern, it would be expected to be in the form of a written communication, a letter or email, addressed directly to the relevant staff member, their line manager, the Principal or the Chair of the school's governing body.

A complaint may be made if a complainant thinks that the College or an individual staff member has, for example:

- done something wrong;
- failed to do something they should have done; or
- acted unfairly or impolitely.

A complaint may be made about the school as a whole, about a specific department in the school, about a particular school activity, about an individual member of staff or about one or more students.

Concerns and complaints treated as constructive suggestions can facilitate rectification and improvement and may prevent cause for further complaint.

Appendices

Appendices relating to this policy:

Appendix 1: Staff Responsibilities

Appendix 2: Public Procedures

Appendix 3: Harrisdale Primary Procedures

Appendix 4: Harrisdale Secondary Procedures

Appendix 5: Forrestdale Procedures

Appendix 6: Parent Guidelines

Contact

For queries relating to this policy, please contact
Policy Development Officer 08 9394 9111

Related Policies and Documents

Handbooks

Codes of Conduct

Privacy

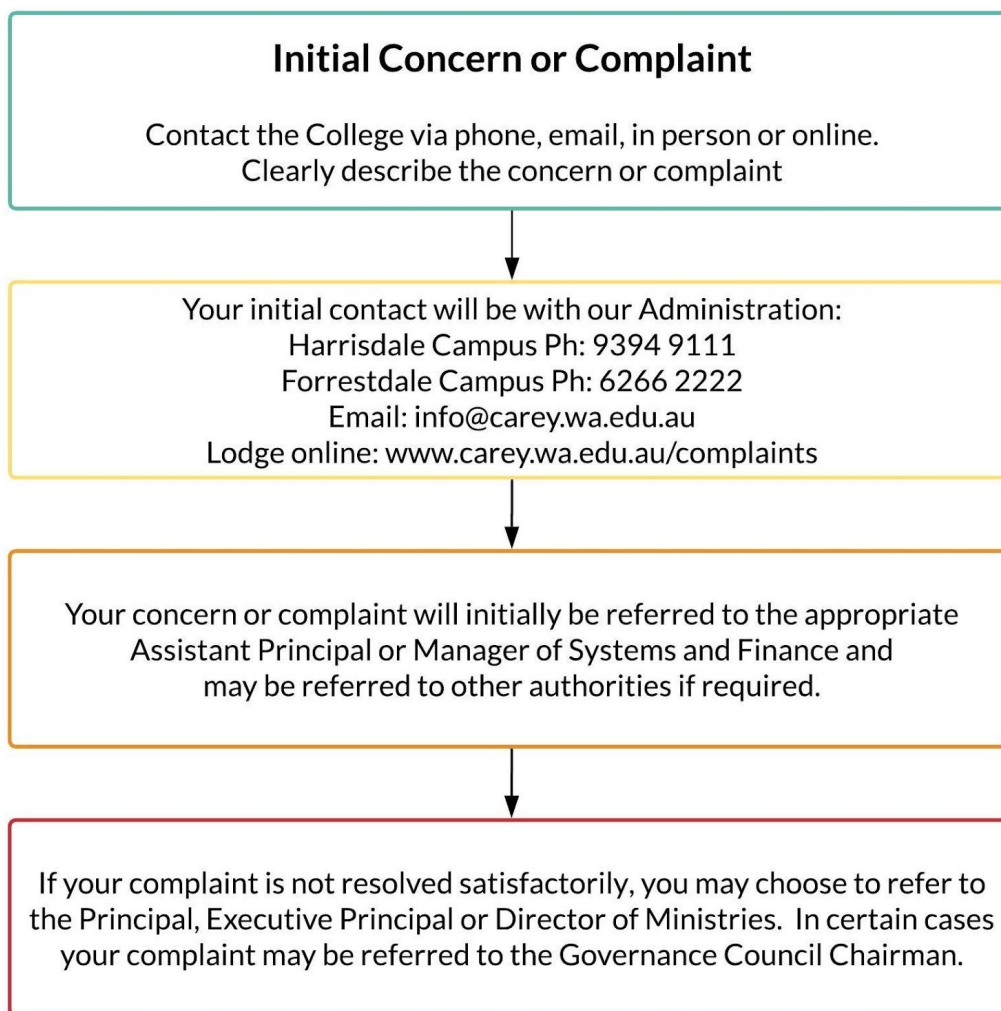
Staff Complaints Resolution

References

Complispace 2018

AISWA Complaints and Disputes 2016

Version Management					
Version	Date Published	Changes made	Approved by	Next Review	Author of version
2	2016				
3	May 2019	Name change, from Complaints and Disputes Updated to new guidelines Reformatted to College Wide Format Staff Complaints moved to separate policy			MCINAN
4	June 2020	Added information about the role of the Director General		2021	MCINAN



Confidentiality: Confidentiality is maintained, to the extent that it is consistent with legislative requirements and other principles outlined in our policies.

Timeframes: While complaints will be acknowledged as soon as possible, the time taken to resolve a complaint will vary depending on the situation and personnel involved.

Inclusion: In some cases you may be involved in the handling of this complaint, in other cases you will just provide the College with the information and we will handle it according to our policies and procedures. If you would like to be informed of the outcome of a complaint, please inform the College as part of this process and provide contact details.

External Mediation, Conciliation or Arbitration

Unresolved complaints can be referred by mutual agreement to an independent third party for final resolution.

Tips for Resolving Conflict

- **Keep the matter confidential.**
It may be helpful to get wise counsel from another person who can provide support yet speak honestly into the situation. Talking with others may reinforce our position or make us feel vindicated, however it will not necessarily bring resolution to the matter.
- **Talk to the person concerned – not to others.**
Seek to resolve the matter with the person(s) with whom the conflict occurred, or those that are in the best position to resolve the matter. Sometimes, the best action to resolve a conflict with another person is to start a conversation with them that is clear, and presented calmly in a non-accusatory manner.
- **Be prepared to forgive; be prepared to ask for forgiveness.**
Sometimes this is the hardest thing to do, but the most rewarding in bringing about a resolution. If one person realises that another is prepared to be vulnerable, they may respond in a similar manner.
- **What is real and what is perception?**
Be careful not to infer views, attitudes or actions which have not occurred or were not intended. Check with the other person regarding what was seen or heard to establish if that is what was intended. Establish what is real from what is perception or guesswork before taking any action.
- **Seek good and impartial help.**
Be prepared to receive tough advice. Seek help to resolve the issue rather than to be proven right.
- **Stay calm and don't over-react.**
Sometimes, a matter that could have been easily resolved is made worse by over-reacting. Focus on the problem – not on the emotions.
- **Acknowledge differences of opinion.**
Not every issue is either right or wrong. Be prepared to acknowledge different opinions, beliefs or values. It is possible to disagree and yet respect the opinion of others.
- **Look for solutions – not barriers.**
Ask yourself whether you are just trying to prove a point, or whether you are serious about resolving the conflict. Is there some common ground to focus on? Is there a possible compromise that may help to solve the problem?
- **Are there other factors at play?**
Is there something else happening? Is this conflict an indicator of another issue? Are there other matters which may be contributing to the conflict e.g. behaviour of your children, financial concerns, tension in the home, differences in ethos? The College is here to help. Our aim is to work together with you to address concerns and resolve conflicts in solution-focused ways that bring reconciliation and restoration.