



MacKillop College Complaints Policy

1. Introduction

MacKillop College is committed to building a culture that features positive and respectful relationships. As a Catholic College, in the Josephite tradition, these relationships are grounded in the values of the Gospel, in particular justice, compassion and reconciliation. Respect for the innate dignity of each person shapes all our relationships.

We hold the care, safety and wellbeing of students as a central and fundamental responsibility of our College. Our commitment is drawn from, and inherent in, the teaching and mission of Jesus Christ, with love, justice and the sanctity of each human person at the heart of the Gospel (CECV Commitment Statement to Child Safety).

At times students and parents/guardians, or members of the community, feel aggrieved about an issue regarding the College. In such cases their complaint will be addressed and all reasonable steps taken to achieve a satisfactory resolution.

Most complaints or grievances are best dealt with informally and directly between the persons concerned, however, this may not always be possible.

2. Complaints Resolution: Guiding Principles

The following principles inform the College response to complaints:

- the College will work with the complainant with respect, courtesy and openness and with a genuine desire to achieve fair and reasonable decisions
- the complaint will be resolved as quickly as possible
- confidentiality, impartiality and the principles of natural justice form the basis of our complaints resolution process
- the person(s) who is the subject of the complaint will be provided with detailed information about the substance of the complaint and will have the opportunity to respond
- personal information disclosed will be treated as confidential
- the resolution process is grounded in sound and fair procedures for information sharing, conciliation, investigation and decision making
- if a satisfactory outcome cannot be achieved, the College will provide the complainant with options for having the decision reviewed or mediated via an external authority
- the communal needs of the College community will in most instances exceed the needs of any individual

In light of these principles, our procedure aims to ensure that:

- the complainant register their complaint or grievance with respect for all parties concerned
- complaints or grievances will be listened to and taken seriously

- we respond to complaints or grievances within a reasonable time and in a courteous and efficient way
- we take appropriate action with the full knowledge of all parties concerned

Confidentiality is a major issue in the handling of complaints or grievances. Confidentiality shall be maintained at all stages of the complaint or grievance with communication limited to those people who need to be informed in order to resolve the complaint or grievance.

The College is available to assist parents/guardians through discussion in developing a clearer understanding of any College expectations.

3. Expectations of people making a complaint

In making a complaint, the College 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 as a complainant you are a parent/guardian, and your concern/complaint relates to your child's treatment by another student or students while at the College, the College expects that you will refer your complaint directly to the college, via your child's homeroom teacher. Under no circumstances should another student, involved in the matter, be approached to discuss the issue or chastise him or her. Direct contact with other parents/guardians is also discouraged if the complaint pertains to issues or incidents related to the College.

4. Procedures

4.1 Key Referral People

Complainants are encouraged to make contact with members of staff who are most closely connected with the complaint/concern and that initial contact be made with the relevant College personnel in the order listed in the MacKillop College Complaints or Grievance Procedure.

Parents/Guardians are required to express their complaints or grievances in a calm and respectful manner towards all staff who may be involved. On presenting the complaint or grievance, the family must be able to be identified. Any anonymous complaint or grievance cannot be satisfactorily substantiated and/or investigated.

4.2 Child Protection related complaints

Where a complaint relates to an allegation of physical, emotional or sexual abuse the College's Child Protection and Safety Policy is enacted.

4.3 Serious or Repeated Complaints, or Allegations of Misconduct

When complaints are sufficiently serious or repeated, the Principal will take action to report the matter to the appropriate authorities, ensure a comprehensive investigation, and work with all parties to facilitate a resolution.

4.4 Avenues of Appeal

If a complaint remains unresolved, or if the complainant is dissatisfied with the outcomes, the complainant has the right to seek other avenues of appeal through authorities such as Catholic Education Melbourne or the Association of Canonical Administrators.

Rory Kennedy

Principal

Date 2019