

ST EUPHEMIA COLLEGE



PREP – YEAR 12

COMPLAINTS HANDLING

POLICY

2019

1. Policy Statement

This Policy provides instructions for handling complaints at St Euphemia College. While most complaints should be resolved informally with the relevant employee, there are provisions for the use of formal procedures depending on the nature and seriousness of the complaint.

2. Applicability

This Policy applies to all staff, students, parents, caregivers and the wider community of St Euphemia College.

3. Context/Rationale

A complaint can be defined as a student's, staff member's, parent's, caregiver's or community member's expression of dissatisfaction with any aspect of the services and activities of St Euphemia College relating to academic and non-academic matters.

A complainant is any person who lodges a complaint.

A respondent is a person who is called upon to issue a response to a complaint made by another person.

If a stakeholder has a complaint or an allegation of staff misconduct or reportable conduct, they are to report the complaint/allegation to the Principal in writing, who will schedule a time to meet with the stakeholder.

Victimisation and repercussions of ill treatment as a result of making a complaint will not be tolerated.

It is expected that written complaints be acknowledged within 7 days. The proposed timeframe required to resolve the complaint should be indicated to the complainant as early as possible in the process and may vary according to the nature, complexity or timing of the complaint.

Parents or caregivers are not to approach the children of other families with a School related complaint.

Some complaints, because of the severity of their nature, should be referred immediately to the Principal/Deputy Principal High School (DPHS) or Deputy Principal Primary School (DPPS) – eg. complaints about behaviour which places others at risk of serious harm.

4. Monitoring, Evaluation and Reporting Requirements

This Policy and its accompanying Procedures provide information for handling complaints including how to make a complaint and how to deal with a complaint.

In the case of all complaints assessed as less serious by the Principal, DPHS or DPPS, a resolution with the relevant parties should be attempted in the first instance.

A professional response to suggestions, complaints and allegations promotes fairness, leads to improvements and creates confidence in the outcome. It requires staff to use professional judgment and a balanced consideration of the rights and needs of the parties.

These procedures emphasise the necessity to deal with complaints in terms of the potential seriousness of the complaint rather than on the basis of the category of person who made the

complaint. This means that the aggrieved staff, student, parent, caregiver or community member will be treated on equal terms.

The key elements in the complaints handling procedure are:

- impartiality
- confidentiality
- no victimisation
- no vexatious or malicious complaints
- timeliness.

To protect confidentiality and privacy, staff involved in handling complaints resolution must ensure that information is restricted only to those directly involved in handling the complaint.

This Policy is based on procedural fairness which is considered to be a basic right for everyone when dealing with welfare matters. Procedural fairness, also known as natural justice, applies in situations where a decision is to be taken which could have a detrimental effect on the rights, interests or legitimate expectations of an individual. Any person who might suffer detriment as a result of a decision (be they the complainant or the respondent) should be afforded procedural fairness. Two rules are to be considered: the 'Hearing Rule' and the Right to an 'Unbiased Decision'. Refer to Appendix 1 in the Complaints Handling Procedures for details of Procedural Fairness.

Staff need to be familiar with these procedures so they are applied consistently.

5. Policy Review

This Policy and its accompanying Procedures will be reviewed as necessary.