



COMPLAINTS HANDLING PROCEDURE

PURPOSE

This procedure sets out the processes used to manage and respond to complaints in line with the Salesian College Sunbury Complaints Handling Policy to:

- promote the health, safety and wellbeing of students
- ensure consistent and fair complaints management
- improve the outcomes of complaints with a focus on collaboration and resolution
- meet its legal and regulatory obligations

PROCEDURES

Salesian College Sunbury (the College) is committed to receiving, managing, and responding to complaints in a manner that achieves the best possible outcome for our students and fosters good relationships with parents/ guardians/ carers and the school community.

How to make a complaint with the College

A complaint is a formal expression of dissatisfaction with an action taken, decision made, service provided or handling of an issue by the College. The nature of complaints covered by this procedure is outlined in the Complaints Handling Policy "Scope". The policy also indicates which complaints are not covered by the policy and how these may be addressed.

Complaints can be raised by students, parents/guardians/carers or members of our school community. A complaint can be about an action taken, decision made, or services provided by the school, or the way in which the College has handled an issue. It could also be about the behaviour of school staff, volunteers, or contractors.

In the day to day running of the school, students, parents/guardians/carers may also have queries, concerns or areas for which clarification is sought. These matters do not constitute complaints, and the College encourages its employees to work collaboratively with students, parents/guardians/carers and members of the school community to resolve these matters informally with the wellbeing of the student at the centre of the matter. If resolution of the matter is not possible in this manner, then it may escalate to a complaint under the Complaint Handling Policy and this procedure.

Who to contact?

Where appropriate and in the first instance, any concerns or queries are to be raised with a student's Subject or Oratory teacher or other relevant member of the College staff, including the Year Level Leaders, Director of Students or Assistant Principal (Campus Leader).

If a concern is unable to be resolved informally, a complaint may then be raised with the Principal, the Principal's delegate or a member of the Executive Leadership Team (ELT). Where a complaint is received, the College will ensure that the staff member managing the complaint is someone other than the subject of the complaint.

Complaints can be submitted either via the online Complaints Form, email, telephone or in-person meeting. Appropriate contact details are:

- **Phone:** 9744-0000
- **Email:** info@scr.vic.edu.au or principal@scr.vic.edu.au
- **Online:** [Raise a Concern](#)

In the case of a complaint involving the College Principal, the College Board Chair should be informed. Contact details are listed below, see Complaints Escalation.

Parents/guardians/carers must not approach any other student in the care of the College to discuss an issue or to chastise them. Direct contact with other parents to resolve the matter is also discouraged if the complaint relates to issues or incidents that have arisen at the College.

What information to provide and matters to consider

In making a complaint, the College requests and expects that the complainant will:

- raise the concern or complaint as soon as possible after the issue has arisen
- be clear about the topic or issue to be discussed
- provide all the facts relating to the issues raised
- check and observe the Complaints Handling Policy and Procedure
- communicate and respond in ways that are constructive, fair and respectful
- provide complete and factual information about the complaint
- observe confidentiality and a respect for sensitive issues
- act in good faith to achieve an outcome acceptable to all parties
- think about what a fair outcome would be for everyone
- have realistic and reasonable expectations about possible outcomes/remedies.

ROLE OF THE COLLEGE

Receipt of complaint

The College will record the details of all complaints, including the name and contact details of the persons making the complaint.

The College will acknowledge receipt of the complaint in writing within two school days. Where possible, the College will provide indicative timelines relevant to the nature of the complaint and advise the complainant how the complaint will be addressed.

The College will refer the complaint to the most appropriate person to manage the complaint. If the complainant has not raised the issue with the relevant teacher, the Principal may ask them to first discuss their complaint with the teacher, when it is appropriate to do so, before it progresses through this complaints procedure.

To have matters managed fairly, the College will ensure that the staff member addressing the complaint is someone other than the subject of the complaint.

Complainants should be aware that employees, volunteers and contractors will be informed of formal complaints that are made about them in order to enable them to respond to the concern raised.

Response to complaints

The staff member to whom the complaint is referred will contact the complainant to let them know they have been allocated to their complaint and the next steps in the process. The staff member may communicate with the complainant to discuss the issues they have raised and to gain some further information. They may also speak to other staff or students who may be able to provide relevant information.

If a complainant has a known vulnerability that has been communicated to the College, staff will seek to accommodate any cultural, financial, physical, mental or related vulnerabilities by putting relevant support in place.

The College will endeavour to complete any necessary information gathering and hold an initial meeting where appropriate within 10 working days of the complaint being raised. A meeting will be arranged to discuss the issues raised by the complainant and explore options for resolution.

If the matter remains unresolved following this meeting and further time is required to resolve the matter, the College will consult with the complainant and discuss any interim solutions to the concerns that can be put in place.

If the complainant and the College cannot achieve a mutually agreed outcome, the Principal or their delegate will write to the complainant providing a summary of the action taken by the College in response to their complaint and the College's position in response to the issues raised. This should occur within 20 working days from when the complaint was first received, however, depending on the complexity of the complaint, more time may be needed to gather enough information to fully understand the circumstances of the complaint. The College will provide updates throughout the process as appropriate.

If the scope of the complaint is beyond the capacity or jurisdiction of the College/Principal, the matter may be referred to the Board Chair and the complainant will be informed of the referral and reasons for this decision. This may be required for complaints against the Principal or where matters are unresolved by the College.

College recordkeeping and privacy statement

The College will handle personal, sensitive and health information in accordance with the College's Privacy Policy, the College's requirements for recordkeeping, retention and disposal, and the College's requirements under the Child Information Sharing Scheme and the Family Violence Information Sharing Scheme.

Privacy laws may prohibit information being provided to the complainant about any specific action taken in relation to individuals about whom a complaint has been raised.

The College will ensure that it will create, maintain, and dispose of records relevant to child safety and wellbeing in accordance with the College's policies and procedures for recordkeeping.

Outcomes of complaints

Potential outcomes of complaints can include:

- an apology - either verbal or written
- mediation - with an internal or external mediator
- an official warning
- disciplinary action
- a behavioural contract (in the case of a student)
- pastoral or spiritual care
- an understanding that the behaviour will not be repeated; and/or
- a change in policy or procedure

Complainants will be provided with the reasons for the outcome/decision.

Complaint escalation

A complainant may escalate their complaint to the College Board Chair via the following details:

Salesian College Board Chair
1 Macedon St
SUNBURY VIC 3429

Email: board@scr.vic.edu.au

When the Board Chair will become involved

The Board Chair is responsible for responding to complaints when:

- a complainant is not satisfied that a matter has been addressed in accordance with the College's complaints handling policies and processes
- a complainant is not satisfied that an acceptable resolution has been reached
- the subject of the complaint relates to policy outside the responsibility or management of the College

- the Principal requests assistance to resolve a complaint
- the subject of the complaint is the Principal of the College

The Board Chair will generally not become involved when:

- issues have not been raised with the College
- the College is continuing to address the issues in the complaint
- issues raised are the responsibility of the College (e.g. school uniform, yard assistance, parking)
- issues raised should be able to be resolved at the College level

Role of the Board Chair

The Board Chair will:

- acknowledge receipt of a complaint within two working days
- contact the complainant to ensure they are aware of the complaint handling procedures, to confirm and clarify their issues and provides an indicative time for resolution
- raise the issue with the College, if the complainant has not done so to assist with initiating discussions with the College, if appropriate
- work with the College and the complainant to achieve a mutually agreed resolution
- If a mutually agreed resolution cannot be achieved, the regional general manager will review the issues raised by the complainant and communicate the outcome of this review to the complainant.

In undertaking the above procedure, the Board Chair will:

- ensure that any student affected by the complaint remains engaged in education
- support families and school staff in the complaint process by providing appropriate or additional supports; and
- document the actions taken to achieve the outcome.

If the complaint is unable to be resolved to the satisfaction of the complainant, but the matter is however finalised, the complainant has the right to seek alternative independent or other advice or contact other entities such as the Victorian Equal Opportunity and Human Rights Commission, or the Victorian Civil and Administrative Tribunal. Complaints related to the minimum standards for school registration can be referred to the Victorian Registration and Qualifications Authority (VRQA).

Students raising complaints and concerns

The College encourages students to raise any concerns they may have with a trusted adult staff member at the College. Complaints made by students will be taken seriously.

A trusted adult at the College may include the Oratory or Subject teacher, Year Level Leaders, Wellness staff (incl. College Nurse) and Learning Diversity staff.

The staff member will explain to the student what steps they will take to try to resolve the issue and what the College can do to support the student.

Students can also ask their parent/guardian/carer or another trusted adult outside the school to talk to the College about the issue. Other ways students can raise a concern or complaint with the College include:

- talking to a member of the Student Representative Council (SRC) about the student's concern and any suggestions for resolving it
- writing a note using the online safety concern portal located on Schoolbox

The College will ensure students know/are informed of who to approach and relevant processes to raise complaints through classroom posters, Schoolbox News, information provided at assemblies, Oratory wellbeing curriculum, etc.

Students may also be assisted/accompanied by a support person when raising a complaint. The support person can be a family member, a friend or a professional with knowledge of the student. The support

person can also assist with ensuring the cultural safety of students and families in the complaints process. Further information about support persons can be found below. Additional resources to support students to raise issues or concerns are available at:

- [Report Racism Hotline](#) (call 1800 722 476) - this hotline enables students to report concerns relating to racism or religious discrimination
- [Reach Out](#)
- [Headspace](#)
- [Kids Helpline](#) (call 1800 55 1800)
- [Victorian Aboriginal Education Association](#) (VAEAI)

SUPPORT FOR COMPLAINANTS

Support persons

Parents/guardians/carers discussing complaints with the Principal may be accompanied by a support person. The support person can be a family member, a friend or a professional with knowledge of the student. Any person acting in a professional capacity on behalf of the parents/guardians/carers must provide their occupational details and full name prior to the meeting being held. It is at the Principal's discretion if an external professional is a participating member of any school meeting.

The support person may encourage and facilitate sharing of parent/guardian/carer knowledge, perception, and issues. The support person should support a positive working relationship between all parties. The support person does not speak on behalf of parents/guardians/carers when discussing complaints with the Principal.

Multicultural Services and Interpreters

Translation and interpreting services can be provided to assist all complainants. Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander support services are also available to families/carers to raise complaints to the College if required. Please contact the College for assistance to access to these services.

WITHDRAWAL OF A COMPLAINT

A complaint can be withdrawn at any stage during the complaint handling process. A complaint should be withdrawn in writing by the complainant and addressed to the Principal or Board Chair (whichever is relevant).

DEFINITIONS

See Glossary of Terms for a full set of definitions.

Complaint

A formal expression of dissatisfaction with an action taken, decision made, service provided or handling of an issue.

Complainant

The person or persons who have raised a complaint with the school.

RELATED POLICIES AND DOCUMENTS

Student Bullying & Harassment Policy
Child Safety and Wellbeing Policy
Code of Conduct - Parent / Guardian / Carer
Code of Conduct - Students
Privacy Policy
Complaints Handling Policy
PROTECT - Identifying and Responding to Abuse - Reporting Obligations Policy
Reportable Conduct Policy
Student Exclusion Policy
Whistleblower Policy
Glossary of Terms

POLICY INFORMATION

Responsible director	Principal
Policy owner	College Board
Approving authority	College Board
Assigned board committee	Governance
Committee Approval date	15/05/2026
Board Approval date	25/05/2026
Next Board Review date	25/05/2028
Publication	Schoolbox; Website

POLICY DATABASE INFORMATION	
Assigned framework	MS4-Student_Care; CA8-Complaints Handling
Superseded versions	2016 v1.0