

Raising Concerns and Issues with the School

PUBLIC POLICY



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1 INTRODUCTION

The School welcomes comments from parents and students as we aim to fulfill our Mission Statement.

The School wants to know when parents have concerns or issues with the School and will seek to respond quickly and appropriately to the issues raised.

The School has had a good history of listening to parents and students and as result reviewing and improving its operations. We seek to continue this interaction with our parents, students and members of the public.

Most issues or concerns that are raised with the school can be resolved in an informal way and we will seek to continue to resolve as many matters as possible this way.

There will be times that parents or students will want to make a formal complaint and the School provides a formal process for such an outcome.

This short document is aimed at summarising the two approaches to complaint resolution – Informal/Formal Complaints resolution.

2 GUIDELINES

- a. Most complaints will be able to be satisfactorily remedied informally through communication with the staff member directly involved or by the involvement of College senior staff. Where possible we encourage staff and parents and students to solve the issues in an informal way.
- b. The key guidelines for the handling of complaints are:
 - The School is open to the concerns of parents and students
 - Complaints are heard and received in a positive manner by the School
 - Parents and students can expect to be taken seriously and can approach staff about their concerns
 - Information about how the school will handle complaints is clear and readily available
 - Concerns about the school are dealt with speedily and those who have raised them are kept informed about progress
 - It is not acceptable for students to receive adverse treatment because they or their parents have raised a complaint
 - Confidentiality is respected and maintained so far as is possible
 - Resolution of the matter is sought
- c. TCC views complaints and disputes as part of an important feedback and accountability process. TCC acknowledges the right of students, parents to complain when dissatisfied with an action, inaction or decision of the school and the school encourages such feedback.



3 INFORMAL COMPLAINT PROCESS

3.1 INTRODUCTION

Toowoomba Christian College (TCC) acknowledges that there will be times when the school inadvertently offends students or parents. There will be times that its policies and procedures will need to be reviewed. It wishes to have these issues brought to its attention so that they can be dealt with. The School and Staff will do its part to seek forgiveness and restoration of relationship and trust with parents and students.

The school wishes to model a Christian example of dealing with issues – with grace, truth, taking responsibility for actions and seeking restoration.

The school sees the raising of issues by parents as a positive. It gives the School a chance to reflect on how it is going, if it is delivering its programs well, does some policy or procedure need to be reviewed.

If we have not done something as well as we could have we want to know about it and fix it up. If we have made a mistake we want to fix that up and move on together with the parents.

It is our hope that as a school we model Christian forgiveness, humility, restoration of relationships and a commitment to improvement.

A number of more minor or simple matters can be resolved without recourse to the formal complaint handling process but rather, quickly and simply, by discussion between the appropriate people.

TCC encourages those wishing to complain to find the appropriate person to tell about their complaint.

3.2 PROCESS

- a. Contact the appropriate staff member.
- b. Let them know you would like to discuss an issue.
- c. Let them know what the issue is.
- d. Arrange a mutually convenient time to discuss the issue.

3.3 PROCEDURAL FAIRNESS

The principles of procedural fairness for parents/student/staff and will be followed in all aspects of informal complaint handling. See the school's Procedural Fairness Policy.

3.4 ANTICIPATED OUTCOME

- a. The concern or issue will be heard and received in a positive manner by the School.
- b. The concern or issue will be dealt with speedily.
- c. Confidentiality will be respected.
- d. An outcome agreeable to all parties will be found.
- e. The partnership between the Complainant and the School will be strengthened.



4 FORMAL COMPLAINT PROCESS

4.1 SCOPE

- a. The school's formal complaint process exists to provide a clear procedure for parents, students and members of the public should they wish to make a formal complaint about any matter (other than Industrial or a Child Protection matter).
- b. The formal complaint must be in writing to the Principal on the forms supplied by the School.
- c. The process of this grievance procedure is confidential and any complaints or appeals are a matter between the parties concerned, the Principal and those directly involved in the complaints handling process.

4.2 ISSUES OUTSIDE OF THIS POLICY

The following matters are outside of the scope of this policy and should be managed as follows:

- a. Child protection concerns or risks of harm to children should be dealt with in accordance with the law and the school's Child Protection Policy.
- b. Student bullying complaints should be dealt with under the Student Bullying Policy or Behaviour Management Policy.
- c. Student discipline matters, including matters involving suspension or expulsion, should be dealt with under the Primary School Classroom Management and Discipline Policy and High School Discipline Policy.
- d. Student or employee violence or criminal matters should be directed to the Principal who will involve the Police as appropriate
- e. Employee issues with other employees should be handled by line managers.
- f. Issues to do with student suspension or expulsion. These issues should be handled according to the Suspension & Exclusion Policy.

4.3 FORMAL COMPLAINT POLICY & PROCEDURES

People who would like to make a formal complaint about an aspect need to follow the Schools Formal Complaint Policy & Procedures. A copy of this policy is available on request.