

<b>Complaints Handling Policy</b>	Version No:	2
	Review Frequency:	Annually
	Last Review:	Sep-19
	Reviewed by:	Principal
	Approved:	Sep-20
	Approved by:	Board
	Next Review date:	Sep-20

<b>PURPOSE:</b>	The purpose of this policy is to ensure that student, parent and employee complaints are dealt with in a responsive, efficient, effective and fair way
<b>SCOPE:</b>	Students, parents and employees, including full-time, part-time, permanent, fixed-term and casual employees, as well as contractors, volunteers and people undertaking work experience or vocational placements
<b>REFERENCES:</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Education (Accreditation of Non-State Schools) Regulations 2017</li> <li>• <a href="#">Australian Education Regulations 2013</a></li> <li>• <a href="#">Fair Work Act 2009</a></li> <li>• <a href="#">Work Health and Safety Act 2011 (Qld)</a></li> <li>• <a href="#">Privacy Act 1988 (Cth)</a></li> <li>• <a href="#">Anti-Discrimination Act 1991 (Qld)</a></li> <li>• <a href="#">Australian Human Rights Commission Act 1986 (Cth)</a></li> <li>• <a href="#">Sex Discrimination Act 1984 (Cth)</a></li> <li>• <a href="#">Age Discrimination Act 2004 (Cth)</a></li> <li>• <a href="#">Disability Discrimination Act 1992 (Cth)</a></li> <li>• <a href="#">Racial Discrimination Act 1975 (Cth)</a></li> </ul>
<b>IMPORTANT RELATED DOCUMENTS:</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <a href="#">Caloundra Christian College Enterprise Agreement</a></li> <li>• CCC Complaints Handling Procedure</li> <li>• <a href="#">CCC Work Health and Safety Policy</a></li> <li>• <a href="#">CCC Staff Sexual Harassment Policy</a></li> <li>• <a href="#">CCC Student Sexual Harassment Policy</a></li> <li>• <a href="#">CCC Disability Policy</a></li> <li>• <a href="#">CCC Work Health &amp; Safety Policy</a></li> <li>• <a href="#">CCC Privacy Policy</a></li> </ul>

## 1. POLICY STATEMENT

- Caloundra Christian College is committed to ensuring that student, parent and employee complaints are dealt with in a responsive, efficient, effective and fair way.
- Caloundra Christian College views complaints as part of an important feedback and accountability process.
- Caloundra Christian College acknowledges the right of students, parents, and employees to complain when dissatisfied with an action, inaction, or decision of the College. The College encourages constructive feedback.
- Caloundra Christian College recognises that time spent on handling complaints can be an investment in better service to students, parents and employees.

## **2. TYPES OF COMPLAINTS THAT MAY BE RESOLVED UNDER THIS POLICY**

Caloundra Christian College encourages students, parents and employees to promptly lodge concerns regarding sexual harassment, discrimination, workplace bullying and privacy breaches as well as more general complaints that include areas such as:

- the College, its employees or students have done something wrong;
- the College, its employees or students have failed to do something that they should have done;
- the College, its employees or students have acted unfairly or impolitely;
- issues of student or employee behaviour that are contrary to their relevant code of conduct;
- learning programs, assessment and reporting of student learning;
- communication with students or parents or between employees;
- school fees and payments; or
- general administrative issues.

Student complaints may be brought by students or by parents on behalf of their children, as appropriate in the circumstances.

For a complaint to be included in the College Complaints Handling Register it must:

- be in writing;
- not be a query; and
- clearly state that it is a 'Complaint'.

## **3. ISSUES OUTSIDE OF THIS POLICY**

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

- child protection concerns or risks of harm to children should be dealt with in accordance with the law and the College's Child Protection Policy;
- student bullying complaints should be dealt with under the Student Bullying Policy;
- student discipline matters, including matters involving suspension or expulsion, should be dealt with under the Discipline Policy;
- employee complaints related to their employment should be directed to their supervisor;
- student or employee violence or criminal matters should be directed to the Principal who will involve the Police as appropriate; or
- formal legal proceedings.

## **4. DISPUTE RESOLUTION PRINCIPLES**

Caloundra Christian College is committed to managing complaints according to the following principles:

- complaints will be resolved with as little formality and disruption as possible;
- complaints will be taken seriously and sensitively;
- anonymous complaints will be treated on their merits like any other complaint where possible;
- complaints will be dealt with fairly and objectively and in a timely manner;

- Caloundra Christian College will determine the appropriate person to deal with the complaint in the first instance;
- mediation, negotiation and informal resolution are optional alternatives to investigation;
- procedural fairness will be ensured wherever practicable, including the right of interested parties to the complaint to be heard;
- natural justice principles will be observed wherever practicable;
- confidentiality and privacy will be maintained in accordance with the College's Privacy Policy;
- all parties to the dispute will be appropriately supported;
- all parties are entitled to reasonable progress updates;
- appropriate remedies will be offered and implemented;
- a review mechanism will be offered if warranted;
- complainants, respondents and people associated with them will not be victimised as a result of lodging the complaint nor will they suffer any other reprisals;
- the College will keep confidential records of complaints; and
- the College's insurer will be informed if a complaint could be connected to an insured risk.

## **5. RESPONSIBILITIES**

### **College**

The College has the following role and responsibilities:

- develop, implement, promote and act in accordance with the College's Complaints Handling Policy and procedures;
- appropriately communicate the College's Complaints Handling Policy and procedures to students, parents and employees;
- ensure the Complaints Handling Policy and procedures are readily accessible by staff, students and parents;
- upon receipt of a complaint, manage the complaint in accordance with the complaints handling model prescribed in the procedures;
- ensure that appropriate support is provided to all parties to a complaint;
- take appropriate action to prevent the victimisation or action in reprisal against the complainant, respondent or any person associated with them;
- appropriately implement remedies;
- appropriately train relevant employees;
- keep appropriate records;
- conduct a review/audit of the Complaints Register from time to time;
- monitor and report on complaints to the governing board;
- report to the College's insurer when that is relevant; and
- refer to the College's governing board immediately any claim for legal redress.

### **All Parties to a Dispute**

The complainant and respondent both have the following role and responsibilities:

- apply and comply with the College's Complaints Handling Policy and procedures;
- lodge complaints promptly as soon as possible after the issue occurs;
- expect that the dispute will be dealt with fairly and objectively; in a timely manner; with procedural fairness wherever practicable; that natural justice principles will be observed wherever practicable; that confidentiality and privacy will be maintained as much as possible;
- provide complete and factual information in a timely manner;
- not provide deliberately false or misleading information;
- not make frivolous or vexatious complaints;
- act in good faith, and in a calm and courteous manner;
- show respect and understanding of each other's point of view and value difference, rather than judge and blame;
- act in a non-threatening manner;
- to be appropriately supported;
- acknowledge that a common goal is to achieve an outcome acceptable to all parties;
- recognise that all parties have rights and responsibilities which must be balanced;
- maintain and respect the privacy and confidentiality of all parties; and
- not victimise or act in reprisal against any party to the dispute or any person associated with them.

### **Employees Receiving Complaints**

Employees receiving complaints have the following role and responsibilities:

- act in accordance with the College's Complaints Handling Policy and procedures;
- inform the party lodging the dispute of how complaints can be lodged, when they should be lodged and what information is required;
- provide the complainant with information about any support or assistance available to assist them in lodging their complaint;
- provide the complainant with a copy of the College's Complaints Handling Policy and procedures;
- maintain confidentiality;
- keep appropriate records;
- to forward complaints to more senior employees, including the Principal, as appropriate;
- to be appropriately supported; and
- not victimise or act in reprisal against the complainant, respondent or any person associated with them.

## **6. IMPLEMENTATION**

Caloundra Christian College is committed to raising awareness of the process for resolving complaints at the College, including by the development and implementation of this policy and related procedures, and via the clear support and promotion of the policy and procedures.

Caloundra Christian College is also committed to appropriately training relevant employees (especially senior staff) on how to resolve complaints in line with this policy and the related procedures.

Caloundra Christian College will keep appropriate records of complaints, will monitor complaints and their resolution and will report on a high-level basis to the College Board on complaints handling at the College.

Caloundra Christian College will act to encourage students, parents and employees to contribute to a healthy college culture where complaints are resolved with as little formality and disruption as possible.

**END OF POLICY**

## **POLICY CHANGES**

<b>DATE:</b>	<b>POLICY CHANGES:</b>
08/06/2017	New Document
03/04/2019	Alignment with ISQ Policy changes and legislation update
10/09/2019	New format update & Hyperlinks added.
03/06/2020	Defined "Complaint" more ie it has to be written, not a query and clearly stated that it's a complaint. Added this at the end of section 2.