

## CHILD COMPLAINTS PROCESS

### POLICY SUMMARY

A child friendly complaints process is a set of procedures that are in place to address concerns or complaints raised by children or their parents/guardians about any aspect of the School's operations, policies, or personnel. The process typically includes the following steps:

- **Informal Complaints:** The first step is to try and resolve the issue informally. The child or parent/guardian should approach the teacher or member of staff involved to discuss the matter and try to find a solution.
- **Formal Complaints:** If the issue is not resolved informally, the next step is to make a formal complaint. The child or parent/guardian should approach the Head of School or the Principal or delegate in the School with details of the complaint. The complaint should be made in writing and should include any relevant evidence or documentation.
- **Investigation:** The School will then investigate the complaint thoroughly. This may involve interviewing the child, staff members or any other witnesses, gathering relevant documents or evidence and reviewing any relevant policies or procedures.
- **Response:** Once the investigation is complete, the School will provide a written response to the complainant, outlining the findings of the investigation and any action that will be taken as a result.
- **Appeals:** If the complainant is not satisfied with the response, they can appeal to the School's governing body. The governing body will review the complaint and the School's response and provide a final decision.
- It's important that the child complaints process is communicated effectively to all students and their parents/guardians to ensure that they are aware of their rights and responsibilities in raising any concerns or complaints. The process should be transparent, fair and accessible to all parties involved.

### PROCEDURE

This document provides guidelines to help students understand their rights if they have an issue that they wish to raise with the School.

Types of complaints/issues might include – being picked on by a teacher, discrimination from a member of the School community, issues that are affecting student learning or concern that they have been hurt/ injured in some way.

#### Process

1. If a child has a complaint, they are encouraged to use the pastoral care system to help them resolve it.
  - In Junior School, this would include speaking to their class teacher, or a teacher that they trust.
  - In the Senior School, this would be their PCG teacher, or a teacher that they trust.
  - Across the School there are complaint boxes where students can post their concerns anonymously.

After the initial complaint, the teacher/ adult who has been informed would work with the child to help resolve it. This would include discussion about what had happened, looking at evidence (if there is some) including further investigation and then speaking with the other party involved to determine both sides of the story. Where required, this teacher may refer the issue to a senior member of staff.

Each situation will be different, but some further steps could include a meeting between both parties to achieve a shared understanding of how they are feeling and then what they will do to move forwards. Parents would be informed so that as a community we can work together to help resolve the issue. Depending on the situation, outside agencies might be involved.

2. If the child is uncomfortable speaking with a teacher, they are also taught the 'hand of 5' approach, whereby they list 5 people they are comfortable speaking with. This might include, parents, family members and friends. They would be able to discuss the concern with them to help achieve a resolution.

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3. As part of the Pastoral Care program, the School has student leaders (Junior School Captains, Senior School Captains, Peer Support Leaders and Student Councillors). The School Captains run activities across the age levels and are recognisable through their roles in Assemblies, Inter-House Competitions, Chapels Services and Pastoral Care time. This is to help give the younger students role models that they can seek for guidance i.e. if there is a playground dispute. The Captains are also available in the library, on specific days of the week, for students to speak with as part of our “Connect with Your Captains” focus. The Student Councillors also act as the voice for the students and are encouraged to listen and discuss student complaints / suggestions with fellow members of the Student Council complaints/ suggestions for the improvement in the School.

On campus, students can access student friendly complains boxes which are located outside: Senior School Student Services, Junior School Reception, School Counsellor’s Office and the Chapel. This is beneficial as some students feel uncomfortable having to initially tell someone about a problem.

4. The School keeps a register of the complaints received in one of the four student ‘complaints boxes’. This is stored in a secure shared drive, with both anonymous and identified complaints recorded, even if they are of a minor nature. If a trend is identified that needs action, or an individual isolated event needs action, then this occurs through the Principal and the Executive Team.



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### POLICY VERSION CONTROL

| Version | Date       | Summary of Changes   |
|---------|------------|--|
| 1       | Jun - 2020 | Policy reviewed  |
| 2       | Jan - 2023 | Policy reviewed<br>New format to include 'policy version control' table<br>Review date amended |