

# Complaints Policy and Procedure

The Brisbane Catholic Education Procedure for Student, Parent and Guardian Complaints Management outlines the procedures to make a complaint and how to manage complaints

It is important that all complaints:

- Are handled in a positive and transparent way.
- Are recorded at every level, properly documented and reported to the Principal or delegated person as soon as practicable.
- Are resolved with mutual respect and clear communication.
- Where possible, are resolved at the first point of contact.

## **Procedure for people making a complaint**

During the course of a child's school years, a parent/carer, student or other persons may have cause to make a complaint about school decisions, processes, management, conduct of staff and/or students, or have other general concerns.

### **Scenario 1 – Managing a complaint about a teacher or a student**

Step 1: Discuss the complaint with the class teacher (Resolve at the first level)

If a complaint is with the child's teacher or relates to an issue concerning the child's experience at school, make an appointment with that teacher as soon as possible through the school administration. Discuss the complaint with the teacher and give the teacher an opportunity to suggest a solution. The teacher will make a record of the complaint and report the meeting and any outcomes to the school Principal. Together, parents/carers and teachers should be able to resolve the problem at this level.

Step 2: Discuss the complaint with the Principal (Seek support to resolve a complaint)

If the matter cannot be resolved, the complainant talks with a senior school employee e.g. Deputy Principal, Assistant Principal or other nominated school employee and work together to resolve complaint

If the matter cannot be resolved, complainant talks with Principal and work together to resolve complaint

### **Scenario 2 – Managing a complaint about a school process or policy**

Step 1:

Complainant talks with Deputy Principal, Assistant Principal or other nominated school employee and work together to resolve complaint

If the matter cannot be resolved, complainant talks with Principal and work together to resolve complaint

### **Scenario 3 – Managing a complaint about a Principal**

Prior to escalating, every effort should be made by a school to resolve at the lowest level, this could include a discussion with the Senior Leader Learning and Identity.

If the matter cannot be resolved, the complainant submits a written complaint to BCE School Operations, GPO Box 1201, Brisbane QLD 4001

School Operations forwards written complaint to the Senior Leader Learning and Identity (cc'ed to the Director School Service Centre) for action

#### Roles and Responsibilities

Role	Responsibilities
Student, parent and guardian (complainant)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>work with the school to resolve the complaint.</li> <li>provide the school with a clear description of the problem and desired outcome.</li> <li>provide all relevant information and documentation to the school when the complaint is made.</li> <li>understand that resolving complaints may take some time.</li> <li>inform the school of changes affecting the complaint.</li> <li>cooperate in a respectful way with the school and understand that unreasonable conduct may lead to the complaint not being processed.</li> <li>if dissatisfied with the school's complaints processes, submit a written request for a review to the Principal.</li> <li>if complaining about the Principal, submit a written complaint to BCE School Operations, GPO Box 1201, Brisbane QLD 4001.</li> </ul>
School Principal	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>implement and maintain written processes about receiving, assessing, investigating and otherwise dealing with complaints made by students, parents or guardians.</li> <li>ensure information on how to make a complaint is accessible to students, parents and guardians.</li> <li>maintain a register of complaints.</li> <li>initiate a response and resolve complaints promptly and communicate outcome to the complainant.</li> <li>when a complainant requests a review of a decision by a school employee, review to assess the merits of original complaint, processes used to resolve the complaint and outcome decided.</li> <li>when a complainant requests in writing a review of a decision by the Principal, forward the written request to the Senior Leader Learning and Identity.</li> <li>for complaints about the Principal, request that the complainant submit the complaint in writing to BCE School Operations, GPO Box 1201, Brisbane QLD 4001.</li> <li>liaise with the Senior Leader Learning and Identity on complex complaints.</li> <li>ensure written complaints are acknowledged in writing as soon as possible.</li> <li>ensure the school manages complaints in accordance with the school's complaints procedure, BCE's Student, Parent and Guardian Complaints Management policy and this procedure.</li> </ul>
School employee	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>manage complaints in accordance with the school's complaints procedure, BCE's Student, Parent and Guardian Complaints Management policy and this procedure.</li> </ul>
Senior Leader Learning and Identity	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>ensure all actions in complaints management are compliant with BCE's Student, Parent and Guardian Complaints Management policy and this procedure.</li> </ul>

#### Please note, when following the complaint process

a) At every level of the complaint process, a record will be made of the complaint.

b) To achieve an effective resolution for all parties, when making a complaint, parents/guardians should ensure they:

- provide complete and factual information in a timely manner, **preferably in writing**
- deliver a complaint in a calm and reasoned manner

- avoid making frivolous or vexatious complaints
- avoid using deliberately false, incomplete or misleading information
- Include full contact details of the complainant.

c) In most instances, in the case of a complaint about a staff member, the staff member will be told of the complaint and offered the right of reply.

d) All parties have the right to have a support person throughout the process.

Links:

<https://kweb.bne.catholic.edu.au/policiesandforms/ResourceStore/Student,%20Parent%20and%20Guardian%20Complaints%20Management%20factsheet.pdf>