

## Complaints Handling Procedure

Kennedy Baptist College welcomes feedback from all members of the College community and takes all complaints or concerns that may be raised seriously. This Complaints Handling Procedure is designed to assist you to understand how to make a complaint.

We acknowledge that students and parents / guardians may sometimes have a complaint about a decision, behaviour, act, or omission that they feel is unacceptable. Whilst most issues can be resolved through direct discussion, there may be instances in which this is not possible.

### What is a Complaint?

A complaint is an expression of dissatisfaction made to Kennedy Baptist College, related to our services or operations, or the complaints handling process itself, where a response or resolution is explicitly or implicitly expected.

Complaints about, or allegations of, child abuse, grooming or other harm, whether involving former or current staff or students, another person on College grounds or during school related activities are managed separately from other complaints and covered further in this document.

### Informal Resolution

Most issues of concern in the College can be handled quickly and in an informal manner. Where appropriate, we ask that you raise your concern directly with the staff member most closely concerned with the issue.

The staff member may be able to resolve the issue quickly. You may contact the staff member in person, by telephone or by email. Please ask if you require some assistance in expressing your concern.

Even if issues are resolved informally, staff are required to log the details of the concern and resolution in SEQTA. This enables organisational review and analysis to identify any required improvements, to take appropriate remedial action, and continuously improve our systems and processes.

### How do I make a Formal Complaint?

If you have been unable to resolve your concern informally, or simply wish to make a formal complaint you can do so by any of the following means:

1. Contacting the College and asking to speak to the relevant staff member in accordance with the Complaints Flowchart below.
2. Accessing the online Complaints Forms available on the College website using the *Lodging Your Complaint* function.
3. Sending an email to the Principal at [mashby@kennedy.wa.edu.au](mailto:mashby@kennedy.wa.edu.au)

4. Writing a letter to the College addressed to:

The Principal

Kennedy Baptist College

PO Box 26

Bull Creek WA 6149

If the complaint is about a sensitive matter regarding the Principal, the complaint can be made in writing, addressed to:

The Board Chair

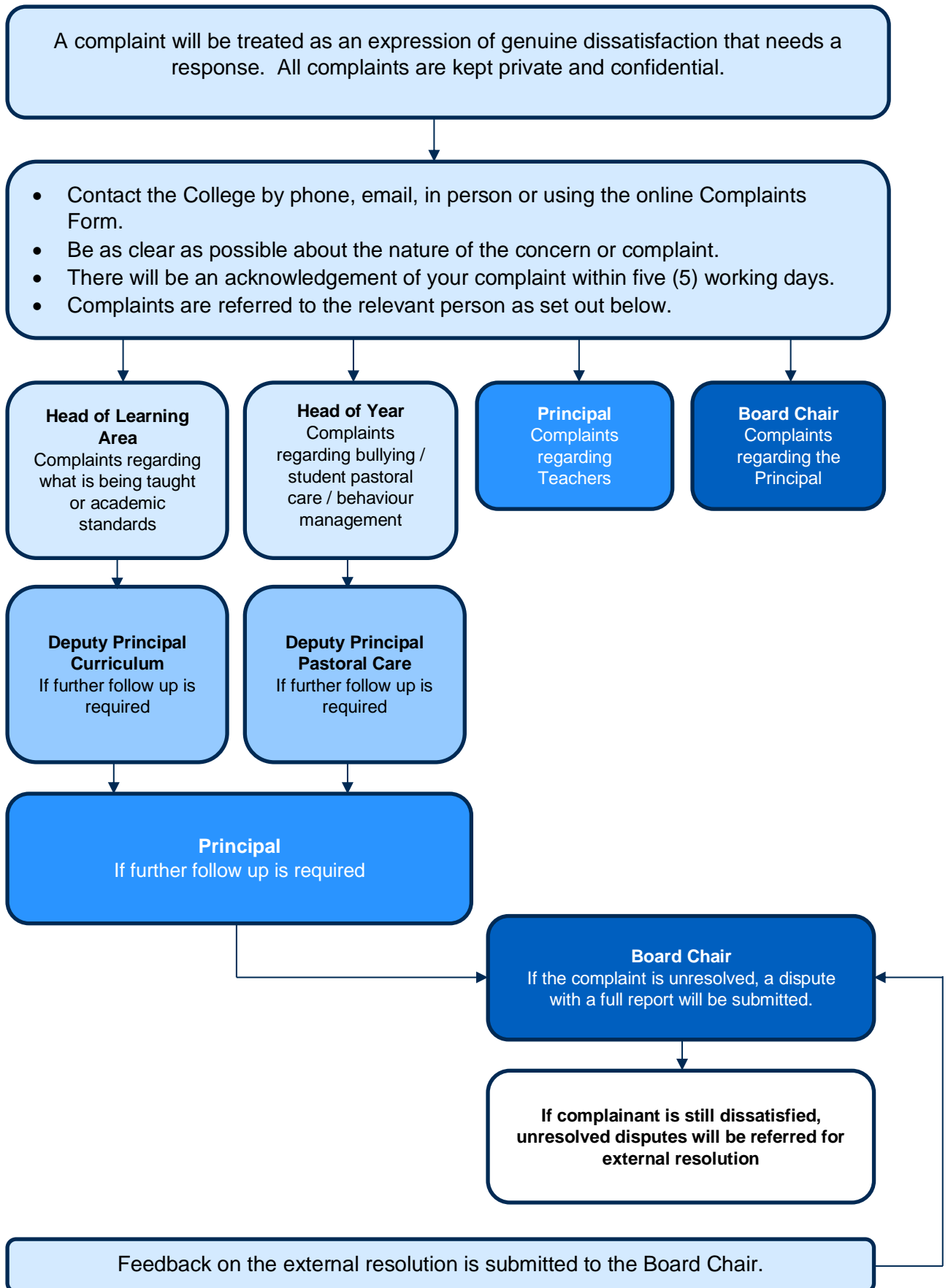
Kennedy Baptist College

PO Box 26

Bull Creek WA 6149

All formal complaints addressed to the Principal will be logged through our online complaints management system and managed in accordance with the following process and procedure.

## Complaints Flowchart



## ***Internal Complaints Handling Procedure***

### **Step 1**

Contact the College and ask to speak to the relevant staff member.

- If the complaint is regarding teaching / academic standards, you will be referred to the Head of Learning Area.
- If the complaint is regarding student safety and wellbeing or behaviour management, you will be referred to the Head of Year.
- If the complaint is regarding a particular Teacher, you will be referred to the Principal.
- If the complaint is regarding the Principal, you will be referred to the Board Chair.

### **Step 2**

You can expect to receive a response within five (5) working days, explaining how the matter will proceed. The relevant staff member will investigate the issue raised, following principles of procedural fairness, and make a determination. The complainant will be informed of the outcome of the complaint, including action taken or proposed.

### **Step 3**

If you are not satisfied with the process or the outcome, you can request your complaint be referred to the Deputy Principal Pastoral Care or the Deputy Principal Curriculum. The Deputy Principal will refer the matter to the Principal if further follow-up is required.

### **Step 4**

Internal reviews – if the Deputy Principal refers the matter to the Principal, the dispute will be reviewed internally by the Principal, who may seek additional information or submissions from the relevant parties. The Principal or their delegate seeks to resolve all disputes within 14 working days from the date that the review process is initiated. The matter will be closed if the response of the Principal, or their delegate, is accepted.

### **Step 5**

All complaints received by or referred to the Principal will be entered into our Complaints Register and, where appropriate, remedial action taken to address underlying processes which the complaints investigation revealed may require improvement.

### **Step 6**

If you are not satisfied with the outcome, you have the right to request a review of the process by submitting a dispute with the Principal. The Principal will refer the dispute to the Board Chair. It is our policy, where possible to resolve disputes within 14 working days.

The Board Chair will call for a full report from the Principal and will examine matters thoroughly before responding. The decision of the Board will be conveyed to the parties directly. This completes the internal complaints handling process.

### **Step 7**

If the matter remains unresolved, complainants are welcome to pursue external resolution options.

## International Students

In accordance with the *International Students Complaints and Appeals Policy*, if a student is not satisfied with the outcome of the College's internal complaints handling process, they may lodge an external appeal through the Overseas Students Ombudsman (OSO) which investigates complaints about problems that overseas students or intending overseas students may have with private education and training in Australia.

## Confidentiality and Privacy

The complaints handling process is confidential, and any concerns, complaints or disputes is a matter between the parties concerned and those directly involved in the complaints handling process.

Confidentiality applies to both information relating to the person making the complaint, and if relevant, the subject of the complaint. The College is committed to maintaining the confidentiality of information throughout the complaints process.

Personally identifiable information about a complainant will only be made available for the purpose of addressing the complaint and (unless the complainant consents) will be actively protected from disclosure.

## Child Protection Complaints or Allegations

Complaints about, or allegations of, child abuse, grooming or other harm, whether involving former or current staff or students, another person on College grounds, or during College-related activities are managed by the College in a separate manner from other complaints. This is due to relevant legislative and additional confidentiality and privacy requirements relating to these matters.

If your complaint is a child protection related complaint, please make your complaint to:

The Principal, on 08 9314 7722 or at [mashby@kennedy.wa.edu.au](mailto:mashby@kennedy.wa.edu.au)

If the complaint is about a sensitive matter regarding the Principal, the complaint can be made in writing, addressed to:

The Board Chair  
Kennedy Baptist College  
PO Box 26,  
Bull Creek WA 6149

## What is a Child Protection Complaint or Allegation?

A child protection complaint is a concern or complaint about, or allegations of, child abuse, grooming or other harm, whether involving former or current staff or students, another person on College grounds or during school related activities.

## Terminology used

**Child abuse** includes physical abuse, emotional or psychological abuse, family and domestic violence, neglect, and sexual abuse.

**Harm** can take many forms such as intentional and unintentional physical and emotional harm, accidental injury, exposure to physical hazards, bullying and cyberbullying, child

abuse and neglect, exposure to violence and grooming.

### ***Managing Child Protection Complaints or Allegations***

The College will immediately respond to child protection incidents, complaints or allegations of grooming, child abuse and breaches of the codes of conduct in the best interests of students and in accordance with College policies and procedures.

Parents and guardians can access copies of the Staff and Student Codes of Conduct via the College website.

Incidents will be reported promptly to the appropriate authorities by following College policies and procedures.

Depending on the nature of the student safety incident, the Principal will, if required by law, report the incident to the Department of Communities, Child Protection and Family Support (CPFS), the Police and / or other appropriate authorities.

The Principal will nominate appropriate staff to assist in coordinating responses to child protection incidents.

The Principal will also ensure that support is provided to any student, staff member and family members impacted by the incident. We ensure that they are informed about advocacy and support services which may be available to assist them.

### **Roles and Responsibilities**

#### **Director General**

The Director General of the Department of Education is responsible for ensuring that the College observes the School Registration Standards. Any student, parent or community member is entitled to contact the Director General with concerns about how the College has dealt with a complaint.

Information is available on the Department of Education website. While the Director General may consider whether the College has breached the School Registration Standards, they do not have power to intervene in a complaint or override the College's decision.