

COMPLAINTS HANDLING POLICY

Purpose:	The purpose of this policy is to ensure that student, parent and employee complaints and disputes are dealt with in a responsive, efficient, effective, and fair way.	
Scope:	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.	
Status:	Current	Supersedes: Grievance Policy
Authorised by:	Board Chairperson	Date of Authorisation: 30th Aug 2022
References:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Education (Accreditation of Non-State Schools) Regulations 2017</i> • <i>Australian Education Regulations 2013</i> • <i>Fair Work Act 2009</i> • <i>Work Health and Safety Act 2011 (Qld)</i> • <i>Privacy Act 1988 (Cth)</i> • <i>Anti-Discrimination Act 1991 (Qld)</i> • <i>Australian Human Rights Commission Act 1986 (Cth)</i> • <i>Sex Discrimination Act 1984 (Cth)</i> • <i>Age Discrimination Act 2004 (Cth)</i> • <i>Disability Discrimination Act 1992 (Cth)</i> • <i>Racial Discrimination Act 1975 (Cth)</i> <p>Related Documents</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Faith Christian School General Complaints Handling Procedure • Faith Christian School Work Health and Safety Policy • Faith Christian School Anti-Discrimination Policy • Faith Christian School Sexual Harassment Policy • Faith Christian School Disability Policy • Faith Christian School Workplace Bullying Policy • Faith Christian School Privacy Policy 	
Review Date:	Annually - last reviewed 27/3/24	Next Review Date: August 2024
Policy Owner:	School Board Chairperson	

“A hot-tempered man stirs up strife, but he who is slow to anger quiets contention.”
 Proverbs 15:8

POLICY STATEMENT

Faith Christian School is committed to ensuring that student, parent, and employee complaints are dealt with in a responsive, efficient, and effective and fair way.

Faith Christian School views complaints as part of an important feedback and accountability process.

Faith Christian School acknowledges the right of students, parents, and employees to complain when dissatisfied with an action, inaction or decision of the school and the school encourages constructive criticism and complaints.

Faith Christian School recognises that time spent on handling complaints can be an investment in better service to students, parents, and employees.

Faith Christian School values every member of the School community and believes every member has the right to go about their School activities in safety and without fear from the actions and activities of other School members.

Every member of the School community shall strive individually, and corporately, to pursue Christian Character and resolve complaints using this policy and relevant procedures and using Biblical principles.

Each member of our school community is a unique individual, created in the image of God, and is therefore deserving of respect and care from all other members of the School.

Jesus said, "By this all will know that you are My disciples, if you have love for one another", John 13:35.

Matthew 18:15-17 "If your brother sins against you, go and show him his fault, just between the two of you. If he listens to you, you have won your brother over. But if he will not listen, take one or two others along, so that 'every matter may be established by the testimony of two or three witnesses..."

COMPLAINTS THAT MAY BE RESOLVED USING THIS POLICY

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

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

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

ISSUES OUTSIDE THIS POLICY

The following matters are outside 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 school's Child Protection Policy.
- Student bullying complaints should be dealt with under the Student Bullying Policy or Positive Behaviour Management 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 and HR.
- Student or employee violence or criminal matters should be directed to the Principal who will involve the Police as appropriate.
- Formal legal proceedings.

COMPLAINTS HANDLING PRINCIPLES

Faith Christian School is committed to managing complaints according to the following principles:

- and to achieve excellence in all their endeavours.
- complaints will be resolved with as little formality and disruption as possible,
- complaints will be taken seriously,
- anonymous complaints will be treated on their merit's complaints will be dealt with fairly and objectively and in a timely manner,
- Faith Christian School of Distance Education will determine the appropriate person to deal with the complaint in the first instance. Complaints should be resolved with as little formality and disputation as possible,
- mediation, negotiation, and informal resolution are optional alternatives,
- procedural fairness will be ensured wherever practicable, including the right of interested parties to the complaint to be heard,
- confidentiality and privacy will be maintained as much as possible,
- all parties to the complaints will be appropriately supported,
- Faith Christian School of Distance Education will give reasonable progress updates,
- appropriate remedies will be offered and implemented,
- provide a review pathway for parties to the complaint if warranted,

- complainants, respondents, and people associated with them will not be victimised as a result of lodging the complaints and they will not suffer any other reprisals,
- the school will keep records of complaints,
- the school's insurer will be informed if a complaint could be connected to an insured risk.

RESPONSIBILITIES

School

The school has the following role and responsibilities:

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

All Parties to a Dispute

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

- apply and comply with the school's Complaints Handling Policy and Procedures
- lodge the complaint as soon as possible after the issue arises
- expect that the complaint will be dealt with fairly and objectively; in a timely manner; with procedural fairness 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
- 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
- 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 school's Complaints Handling Policy and Procedures
- inform the party lodging the complaint 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 school's Complaints Handling Policy and Procedures
- maintain confidentiality
- keep appropriate records
- to forward complaints to more senior employees, including the Principal, as appropriate
- not victimise or act in reprisal against the complainant, respondent or any person associated with them.

IMPLEMENTATION

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

Faith Christian School 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.

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

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

Faith Christian School has appointed two Equity and Staff Support Officers to provide confidential and impartial support and information about the school's relevant policies and processes. The appointed staff are Mrs. Christine Scott and Pastor Warren Spooner.

ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

A list of who must know the policy, role and responsibilities are the following:

- Executive Principal
- Principal
- Business Manager
- Executive Team
- Managers
- HR Officer
- All Staff

Responsibility for implementation of this policy lies with the Board and Executive Principal.