



Related Legislation, Policies And Procedures

[CAGEL Complaints Policy](#)

Purpose

St Patrick's is committed to:

- building a healthy and positive school environment that is free from discrimination and harassment;
- making staff, students and community members aware of their rights and responsibilities;
- communicating effectively; and
- resolving differences justly, efficiently and promptly.

Complaints which may involve reportable allegations (Child Protection complaints) must be resolved in accordance with Child Protection – ACT/NSW Policies.

We believe that most grievances can be avoided by clear communication. While we accept our responsibility to consult and to communicate effectively, community members also have an obligation to read notices and newsletters, to attend meetings, and to seek clarification when required.

There may, however, still be times when members of the community disagree with or are confused about school decisions.

Definitions

Complaint: An expression of dissatisfaction with the service provided, a decision made or the performance of staff.

Complainant: A student, teacher, parent or community member making a complaint.

Procedure

1. Most complaints can be quickly resolved by talking to the teacher or member of staff concerned. To do this parents/carers contact the school to arrange a time to meet with the person concerned and discuss the problem. If the issue can be resolved, the staff member makes a note of the conversation and the agreed action. This is documented in Compass as a Chronicle Meeting entry with User Level 3 - Administration, title 'Complaint'.

- If it is at a level 'Concern' it is registered in the Concerns Register form in the St Patrick's School Governance Sharepoint. Folder 001, Complaints, Purple folder 003.

2. If the matter cannot be resolved directly with the person, an appointment can be made to discuss concerns with the Principal. It is helpful if issues can be put in writing via email to inform the Principal beforehand so that he/she is able to look into the matter and be able to make some informal inquiries. If the issue can be resolved, the Principal makes a note of the conversation and the agreed action in Compass. Feedback is given to the staff member.

3. All significant complaints will be documented in the Complaints Register on the St Patrick's SharePoint Site by the Principal and AP. All emails/file notes will be saved as a PDF in a Confidential folder that can be accessed by the Principal/ AP.

4. It is expected that all staff will demonstrate a commitment to ensuring that a culture of consultation and open dialogue is nurtured at every level. This allows every member of the school community the opportunity to express constructive feedback and satisfaction.

5. In a very small number of cases, the matter may not be resolved after a discussion with the Principal. When this happens, the complaint should be directed to Catholic Education (CACGEL) via email, depending on the nature of the complaint.

6. Complaint handling must be fair and confidential. While parent/carer complaints are to be dealt with at school level initially, in situations where no resolution is achieved, or where the concern is regarding systemic policy or practice, a complaint can be made in writing to the Director of Catholic Education.

7. Normally, all complaints should be handled by CACGEL personnel with no links to the issue of concern, using a fair, unbiased manner to facilitate transparency and objective assessment of the situation under consideration.

The Principal or delegate will act where unacceptable conduct is observed or brought to his or her attention. Formal processes will be used when informal processes have not been successful, a complainant seeks a formal process, or the Principal believes the complaint warrants formal investigation.

- All grievances are to be kept confidential.
- A low-risk complaint requires a low-level investigation which is fair to all.
- All discussions and processes involving formal grievances will be documented in the Complaints Register on SharePoint.
- The Principal exercises judgement about the response to anonymous complaints.
- The Principal will provide community members with appropriate contact names and numbers for Catholic Education staff if grievances are not resolved.

The person making a complaint has a right to:

- be heard;
- have the issue treated seriously;
- information about the process;
- be accompanied by support person at appointments to resolve grievances; and
- be informed about the decision and the reasons for the decision.

The person against whom the complaint is made has a right to:

- know the identity of the person making the complaint;
- have time and opportunity to prepare a response;
- respond and have their response treated seriously;
- information about the process;
- be accompanied by a support person at appointments to resolve grievances; and
- be informed about the decision and the reasons for the decision.

Resolving A Complaint

All complaints will be resolved in line with CACGEL Complaints Policy. A copy of the full Complaints Policy is available at <http://cg.catholic.edu.au/parents/policies>