

# CAMPBELLTOWN ANGLICAN SCHOOLS



## **Complaints and Grievances Policy and Procedures CPo200**

**CASC**  
**Broughton Anglican College**  
**St Peter's Anglican Grammar**  
**St Peter's Heart**  
**Corporate Services**

## Table of Contents

1. Introduction .....	3
2. Policy Statement.....	3
3. Biblical Basis .....	3
4. Expanded Policy Statement.....	4
4.1 Purpose and Scope.....	4
4.2 General Principles .....	4
4.3 Complaints Managers .....	4
4.4 Raising a Complaint or Grievance.....	5
4.5.1 Assessing a Formal Complaint .....	5
4.5.2 Managing a Formal Complaint .....	5
4.6 Complaint Outcomes .....	6
4.6.1 Decision in Favour of the Complainant.....	6
4.6.2 Decision in Favour of the Respondent.....	6
4.6.3 Complaint is Determined as Requiring Mediation / Arbitration.....	6
4.6.4 Complaint is Held to be Frivolous or Vexatious .....	7
4.7 Reviewing a Complaint.....	7
4.8 Protections for a Complainant.....	7
5. Stakeholders.....	7
6. Communication Plan and Visibility .....	7
7. Ownership and Approval of Policy.....	7
8. Evaluation and Review .....	8
9. Definitions.....	8
10. Related Documents .....	8
11. Appendices.....	8

## **1. Introduction**

Campbelltown Anglican Schools' Council develops and reviews policies necessary for the proper functioning, governing and operation of Campbelltown Anglican Schools to manage risk, provide strategic guidance, monitor strategic progress and operational performance and to satisfy its legal obligations (see section 47, NSW Education Act and the NESAs Registration & Accreditation manual).

## **2. Policy Statement**

The purpose of this policy is to outline the approach and the high-level procedures necessary to facilitate the resolution of a dispute or complaint and to outline the principles applied to the handling and resolving of all disputes and complaints made to Campbelltown Anglican Schools (CAS) involving staff, students and parents.

## **3. Biblical Basis**

CAS seek to offer families an education deeply shaped by the Christian faith. The policies and procedures all therefore will be an affirmation of several significant Christian truths including:

- i. Love one another (Matthew 22:37-39): We understand that love is at the core of our Christian faith. This policy seeks to uphold the commandment to love our neighbours as ourselves, ensuring that conflicts and grievances are addressed with compassion and understanding.
- ii. Resolve conflict peacefully (Matthew 5:23-24): The Bible encourages us to seek reconciliation and resolution when conflicts arise. This policy emphasises the importance of addressing grievances promptly and in a manner that promotes peace and restoration.
- iii. Speak the truth in love (Ephesians 4:15): In handling complaints, we are committed to fostering a culture of honesty and open communication, guided by the principle of speaking the truth in love. This approach seeks to build up our community and promote spiritual growth.
- iv. Show mercy and forgiveness (Colossians 3:13): As recipients of God's grace and forgiveness, we acknowledge the call to extend mercy and forgiveness to one another. This policy promotes a spirit of understanding and compassion, reflecting God's love for us.
- v. Seek mediation (Matthew 18:15-17): When informal resolution attempts fail, this policy encourages parties involved to seek and willingly participate in mediation with the assistance of a neutral third party, in accordance with Biblical principles.

## **4. Expanded Policy Statement**

### **4.1 Purpose and Scope**

This procedure applies to CAS in handling complaints about services provided by the schools or against staff members, including employees, contractors, and volunteers.

This procedure does not extend to personal grievances between parents, carers, or other members of the schools' community.

Grievances brought by a student against another student will be dealt with under the appropriate CAS Behaviour Management Policy.

### **4.2 General Principles**

In handling complaints and grievances, it is generally expected that all involved will seek to undertake the following:

- maintain privacy and confidentiality.
- ensure procedural fairness and natural justice prevail.
- maintain objectivity and avoid conflicts of interest.

Furthermore, all staff involved will:

- follow child protection protocols.
- undertake required and mandatory reporting.
- support students with adult assistance.
- offer support for persons involved in a complaint.

### **4.3 Complaints Managers**

The Complaints Manager at CAS is the following:

- Corporate Services: Head of Corporate Services
- Broughton Anglican College (BAC): Principal
- St. Peters Anglican Grammar School (SPG): Principal
- St. Peter's Heart: Director

The relevant Complaints Manager, in consultation with the Executive Head, may appoint an investigator to review the details of a complaint and submit a report. The investigator may be an internal staff member of appropriate authority or a suitably qualified and experienced external provider.

If the complaint concerns one of the Complaints Managers listed above, their Complaints Manager is the Executive Head. If the complaint concerns the Executive Head, the Complaints

Manager is the Chair of CASC. If the Chair can be demonstrated of gross moral failure or illegal activity, the President of CASC is to be informed, with an explanation of the allegation and documented evidence.

If the complaint involves a confirmed conflict of interest with the Complaints Manager, the complaint will be investigated by the Executive Head and the Complaints Manager will not be involved.

#### **4.4 Raising a Complaint or Grievance**

Complaints should be raised directly with the person involved to informally resolve the issue through mediation or informal resolution of the complaint. As part of this informal process, the complainant may also raise the matter with a member of the appropriate school executive who could reasonably be considered a line manager of the person involved. It is expected that most complaints will be satisfactorily dealt with via this informal process.

If the matter cannot be resolved through the various means associated with the informal process described above, a formal complaint should be made. Formal complaints should be made in writing to the relevant Complaints Manager, via email and be labelled as a complaint. If a complaint is moved to the formal process for resolution, it will be added to the relevant Complaints Register of the school or Corporate Services.

The Complaints Register will be reviewed annually, and a summary reported to CASC.

Complaints or grievances should be raised in a timely manner so that any issues and investigations (if necessary) can be dealt with expediently.

#### **4.5 Handling Formal Complaints**

##### **4.5.1 Assessing a Formal Complaint**

The Complaints Manager will assess the complaint expediently and determine:

- whether the complaint is one to be addressed by this policy and/or another relevant policy, such as the School's Child Protection Policy and/or Staff Code of Conduct
- the priority of the complaint in accordance with the urgency and/or seriousness of the matter raised.

##### **4.5.2 Managing a Formal Complaint**

The Complaints Manager will:

- establish the precise nature of the complaint.
- investigate the complaint for substance.
- notify the respondent in writing of the complaints against them.

- advise in writing both the complainant and respondent of their right to have a support person with them at all interviews and discussions.
- interview the complainant and respondent separately.
- keep written accounts of all interviews and discussions.
- decide how the complaint will be resolved.
- advise the relevant parties of the resolution decision and, if appropriate, any proposed action to be taken.

#### **4.6 Complaint Outcomes**

A variety of outcomes may arise as a result of the complaint management process described in 4.5.

##### **4.6.1 Decision in Favour of the Complainant**

Where a complaint is found to be justified, CAS can resolve the complaint by various means, including but not restricted to:

- an apology or expression of regret
- a change of decision
- a change of policy, procedure, or practice
- whether any disciplinary action is required
- offering the opportunity for counselling or other support.

##### **4.6.2 Decision in Favour of the Respondent**

If it is established the complaint has no substance and evidence, is vague or ill-defined, then the complaint can be dismissed. A written account of the outcome of the investigation must be sent to both the complainant and the respondent.

##### **4.6.3 Complaint is Determined as Requiring Mediation / Arbitration**

Where a complaint is held to be reasonable, but the circumstances surrounding the complaint lead the Complaints Manager to conclude that no single party is clearly at fault, mediation is the required outcome. Mediation aims to reach an agreement or find a solution that is acceptable to both parties. The Complaints Manager (or their delegate) will act as mediator. Mediation may also be conducted by an external mediator if required.

Should no solution be found as a result of the mediation process, the Complaints Manager will be required to arbitrate a solution. In keeping with the finding of the original complaint management process, this arbitrated decision should not be one which stands in favour of either party.

#### **4.6.4 Complaint is Held to be Frivolous or Vexatious**

Vexatious complaints are considered serious misconduct. If the Complaints Manager determines a complaint to be vexatious or frivolous in nature, then the Executive Head can dismiss the complaint with no further action. The Complaints Manager will write to advise the complainant if the complaint is dismissed, and on what grounds.

#### **4.7 Reviewing a Complaint**

A complainant may request a review of the resolution decision if they are not satisfied with the decision or that the process for handling the complaint was unfair. A complainant should make such a request in writing to the Executive Head within seven (7) days of receiving notification of the resolution decision.

A review of a decision made by the Complaints Manager will be conducted by the Executive Head. A review of a decision made by the Executive Head will be conducted by the Chair of CASC. A review of a decision made concerning the Chair of Council will be conducted by the CASC. All review decisions are considered final.

#### **4.8 Protections for a Complainant**

Any retaliation against any CAS employee who raises a grievance or complaint, or against a student whose parent or carer has raised a grievance or complaint is prohibited and can result in the retaliator being subject to disciplinary action (see the Whistle-blower Policy).

### **5. Stakeholders**

Key stakeholders include:

- Campbelltown Anglican Schools Council (CASC)
- all staff employed by CASC
- contracted staff
- volunteers
- students
- parents and carers
- visitors

### **6. Communication Plan and Visibility**

This policy will be visible and accessed through the Campbelltown Anglican Schools document management system. Upon request, this policy will be made available to parents and carers.

### **7. Ownership and Approval of Policy**

This policy is the property of CASC and is to be approved by council members and the Executive Head of Campbelltown Anglican Schools.

## 8. Evaluation and Review

The policy will be reviewed annually by the Executive Head of Campbelltown Anglican Schools in partnership with CASC.

## 9. Definitions

In this Policy, unless the context otherwise requires or indicates:

**Complaint or Grievance:** an expression of dissatisfaction with an action taken, decision made, or service provided, or the failure to provide a service, take action or make a decision at the College.

**Formal Complaint:** a complaint which has not been able to be resolved by informal means and has been communicated via email to the appropriate Complaints Manager.

**Mediation:** a structured negotiation process in which an independent person, known as a mediator, assists the parties to identify and assess options and negotiate an agreement to resolve their complaint or grievance.

**Resolution Decision:** the required outcome of the complaints management process conducted by the Complaints Manager.

**Complaints Manager:** the person who manages the complaints management process and makes the determination as to the outcome of the complaint.

## 10. Related Documents

- Child Protection Policy
- Staff Code of Conduct
- Whistle-blower Policy

## 11. Appendices

Nil.