

POLICY: Student, Parent and Guardian Complaints Management

1. PURPOSE

The purpose of this policy is to outline the principles Brisbane Catholic Education (BCE) employees must follow when managing a complaint from a student, parent or guardian. Complaints are an important source of information for the organisation in identifying issues and risks and improving processes and systems.

2. RATIONALE

This policy will ensure that complaints from students, parents and guardians are managed consistently and in accordance with the Australian Standard on complaints management (AS/NZS ISO 10002:2014 – Guidelines for complaints in organisations) and relevant legislation.

3. POLICY STATEMENT

BCE is committed to effective complaints management by managing student, parent and guardian complaints in an accountable, transparent, timely and fair manner, while protecting the health and safety of BCE employees through proactive management of unreasonable complainant conduct.

4. PRINCIPLES

In managing a complaint from a student, parent or guardian, the following principles apply:

- **people focus:** build trusting relationships by respecting individuals and the community. Students, parents and guardians have a right to voice complaints
- **accessibility:** information on how and where to make a complaint is available and easy to access
- **local resolution:** resolve complaints promptly and at the point of receipt, where possible
- **responsiveness:** prioritise and resolve complaints in a fair and timely manner with complainants informed of progress in the complaints handling process
- **objectivity and fairness:** apply procedural fairness and withhold judgement
- **no detriment:** students, parents and guardians are not adversely affected because they have made a complaint
- **learn, improve and grow:** improve services by learning from complaints
- **accountability:** employees know, and exercise, their roles and responsibilities
- **confidentiality:** complaint information is confidential and managed in accordance with Australian Privacy Principles within the Privacy Act 1988 (Cth).

Complaints within the scope of this policy

Complaints by a student, parent or guardian expressing dissatisfaction about a service, decision or action of a BCE employee, and the student, parent or guardian is directly affected by the service, decision or action.

Complaints outside the scope of this policy

The following complaints are outside of the scope of this policy and are responded to through other mechanisms:

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- BCE employee complaints: BCE’s Staff Complaints Management procedure
- complaints relating to non-compliance with BCE’s student protection processes: Complaints Procedure for Non-compliance with Brisbane Catholic Education's Student Protection Processes
- complaints relating to student bullying or harassment: BCE’s Preventing and Responding to Student Bullying in Schools policy
- complaints relating to conduct of religious clergy and other religious persons: Archdiocese of Brisbane Professional Standards
- complaints relating to animal use: QSAEC Animal Use Complaint Report
- reporting a work health and safety incident or near miss: BCE’s Incident Reporting and Investigation procedure.

5. REFERENCES AND DEFINITIONS

5.1 References

- Education (Accreditation of Non-State Schools) Act 2017 (Qld)
- Education (Accreditation of Non-State Schools) Regulation 2017 (QLD)
- Privacy Act 1988 (Cth)
- Privacy statement
- Code of Conduct
- Whistleblower policy.

5.2 Definitions

Complaint	An expression of dissatisfaction about a service, decision or action of a BCE employee.
Complainant	A student, parent or guardian directly affected by a service, decision or action of a BCE employee.
Internal review	A process used to assess the merits of the original complaint, the complaints processes used to resolve the complaint and the original outcome decided.
Resolution	A complaint is resolved when the complaint has been handled in accordance with BCE’s Student, Parent and Guardian Complaints Management policy and procedure.
Unreasonable complainant conduct	Unreasonable complainant conduct involves actions or behaviours which raise significant health, safety, resources or equity issues for BCE. Unreasonable complainant conduct includes: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• unreasonable persistence e.g. making excessive and unnecessary phone calls or emails• unreasonable demands e.g. demanding a different process or more reviews than allowed for by the school's complaints procedure and/or BCE's Student, Parent and Guardian Complaints Management policy and procedure or demanding a different outcome without demonstrating the original decision of the school was incorrect or unfair

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	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• lack of cooperation e.g. refusing to identify the problem or providing disorganised information• unreasonable arguments e.g. making irrational or illogical claims• unreasonable behaviours e.g. aggression or violence to BCE employees or threatening to harm BCE employees, self or others.
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