

## Complaints Handling Procedure

### Lodging a Complaint

- a) Complaints can be lodged with the most appropriate staff member at the local level, for example, the initial contact point for many complaints is the student's relevant classroom teacher.
- b) Complaints about the principal must be lodged with the Board. Contact details: [business.manager@fbcs.qld.edu.au](mailto:business.manager@fbcs.qld.edu.au)
- c) Complaints can be lodged through various methods, including:
  - Phone
  - Email
  - In-person (by appointment)
- d) If the complainant is unsure where to direct their complaint, they can contact the school's administration office for guidance.
- e) If the complainant is uncomfortable directing the complaint to the most appropriate member at the local level, or wants to make a formal complaint, they can submit a complaint by:
  - Completing the online complaint form (available on the school website)
  - Report to a member of the staff, the principal or chairman of the governing body
- f) Where an anonymous complaint is lodged, the school will follow the complaints handling policy, when there is sufficient information to do so.

### Acknowledgement, Assessment and Referral

- a) The staff member receiving the complaint will:
  - acknowledge the complaint within two (2) business days, outlining the next steps and where possible the estimated timeframes.
  - assess the complaint, using the definitions of informal and formal complaints in this policy, and refer the complaint to the informal or formal complaints process.

### Registration and Support

- a) The recipient of the complaint will promptly enter it onto the complaints register, regardless of whether it proceeds through the informal or formal process.
- b) The recipient of the complaint will offer support to the complainant as appropriate, which may include assistance with completing forms or understanding procedures.
- c) If a student is a complainant, respondent or victim, or the child of a complainant, respondent or victim of a matter being managed through this policy, the school may offer the student support where appropriate e.g. discussing suitable adjustments with parents/caregivers.

### Informal Complaints Handling Process

- a) The informal process is designed to resolve issues promptly and collaboratively at the local level.

b) It may involve constructive discussion and negotiation between the complainant and the relevant staff member(s).

c) If the complaint cannot be resolved informally, it will be escalated to the formal process.

### **Formal Complaints Handling Process**

a) The formal process begins with the assessment of the complaint by a designated staff member (e.g., a member of the senior leadership team or the board chair for complaints against the principal)

b) The staff member may gather additional information through investigation, interviews, or evidence review

c) The staff member will determine appropriate action, which may include:

- Mediation
- Disciplinary measures
- Implementation of policy changes
- Referral to external agencies (e.g. police)
- Provision of written updates to the complainant throughout the process
- Other actions the principal may determine as appropriate in the circumstances.

### **Complaint Closure**

a) The complaint register will be updated with the date the complaint is closed and a brief summary of the outcome.

b) The complainant will receive written notification of the outcome and any actions taken where appropriate.

### **Appeals Process**

a) Complainants may appeal the outcome of a complaint by writing to:

- the principal (for complaints not previously managed by the principal)
- the board chair (for complaints previously managed by the principal, or complaints about the principal).