



TABLE OF CONTENTS

1. POLICY STATEMENT 1
2. OPPORTUNITIES FOR FEEDBACK 2
3. CONCERNS AND COMPLAINTS - INFORMAL PROCESS 2
4. CONCERNS AND COMPLAINTS - FORMAL PROCESS 3
5. COMPLAINTS HANDLING PROCESS 3
6. REVIEW BY THE CHAIR OF THE SCHOOL'S BOARD OF GOVERNORS 3
7. WHAT IS PROCEDURAL FAIRNESS 4
8. ANONYMOUS COMPLAINTS 4
9. STUDENT WORRIES AND COMPLAINTS 4
10. COMPLAINTS REGISTER 5
11. ROLE OF THE DIRECTOR GENERAL 5
12. OVERSEAS STUDENTS 6
13. APPENDIX – PROCESS FOR RESOLVING A COMPLAINT OR CONCERN 6
14. USEFUL CONTACT INFORMATION 6

1. POLICY STATEMENT

Bunbury Cathedral Grammar School (the School) is committed to creating and maintaining a welcoming and safe environment which enables each student to achieve to their full potential; where every member is respectful of self and others; and all strive for excellence in learning. The School welcomes suggestions and comments from students, parents, and guardians, and takes seriously any complaints and concerns that may be raised.

The School is committed to handling complaints and concerns promptly and comprehensively, and in keeping with Principle 6 of the National Principles for Child Safe Organisations.

The School strives to ensure that its Complaints Handling process is easily accessible, user-friendly, and flexible, while also allowing us to capture, manage, resolve, and report on complaints.

The School's Complaints Handling processes ensure that reporting, record keeping, privacy and employment law obligations are met.

The School's Complaints Handling process conform to the rules of procedural fairness.

The School is committed to maintaining the confidentiality of the information in respect of the complainant and the person who is the subject of the complaint. Information about a complainant will only be made available for the purpose of addressing a complaint and (unless the complainant consents) will be actively protected from disclosure.

The School values diversity and is respectful of cultural, linguistic, gender and religious difference. The School's Complaint Handling process is a culturally appropriate way of making complaints and is managed by people who are aware of and sensitive to potential complainant's culture and cultural attitudes.

The School will comply with all its legislative obligations to report to child protection authorities and police, and its reportable incident obligations to the Director General of the Department of Education WA, where appropriate.

The School confirms that no one will be penalised or suffer adverse consequences for making a complaint.

The School undertakes regular analysis of the complaints to identify any systemic issues or trends/patterns to inform our commitment to continuous improvement. (Principle 9 of the National Principles for Child Safe Organisations). The School will use this information to improve our services and enhance the safety and wellbeing of our students.



2. OPPORTUNITIES FOR FEEDBACK

The School hosts many meetings through the academic year that encourage parents to attend the School and to meet the staff. The dates and times are published in a semester calendar, which is made available on the School's website and are also detailed in the School's fortnightly Newsletter. These meetings may have an academic, wellbeing, sporting, or cultural focus, or purely social in nature. The School strongly encourages parents to attend these as a means of staying informed and voicing opinions.

The School commissions an external provider to carry out a biennial survey of the School community – students, parents, and staff – inviting the views and perspectives of the community on a range of issues. All responses are confidential and de-identified, and only collated summaries are provided to the School Leadership. This feedback is important as we continue to build a successful and safe school.

3. CONCERNS AND COMPLAINTS - INFORMAL PROCESS

Many causes for concern can be handled and resolved quickly and effectively in an informal discussion with appropriate staff. The School encourages that, where appropriate, concerns are raised directly with the member of staff involved. Staff are required to note any issues or concerns in the School's Learning Management System (SEQTA), which will allow the School to review these concerns and identify whether there are any systemic issues or patterns of behaviour and take appropriate remedial action where necessary.

What is a Complaint?

A complaint is a statement of dissatisfaction with a particular situation, whether related to the School's educational services, programs beyond the classroom, boarding or operations more broadly, including the Complaint Handling process itself.

Escalating a Concern/Complaint

The School encourages raising concerns and complaints directly with the member of staff involved and to escalate the matter should you be dissatisfied with the way the concern or complaint was handled or the outcome of the informal discussion.

In general, the most appropriate staff members with whom to raise a concern or a complaint are, in the case of a Primary Student, the class teacher, or in the case of a Secondary student, the subject teacher, or the Head or Associate Head of House. Having raised a concern or complaint, it can be escalated if the matter is not satisfactorily resolved. The table below provides some guidance around which staff member is best placed to address concerns:

	SECONDARY SCHOOL	PRIMARY SCHOOL
Academic Concerns	Subject teacher Head of Faculty Director of Studies School Psychologist Head of Secondary	Class teacher Specialist Teacher Deputy Head of Primary School Psychologist Head of Primary
Wellbeing and Behavioural Issues	Head or Associate Head of House School Psychologist or Chaplain Head of Boarding (where applicable) Deputy Head (Wellbeing)	Deputy Head of Primary School Psychologist or Chaplain Head of Primary
Administrative or Organisational Issues	Head or Associate Head of House Head of Boarding (where applicable) Deputy Head (Wellbeing) Head of Secondary	Deputy Head of Primary Head of Primary
Enrolments	Manager, Marketing and Community	
Financial concerns	Finance Manager or Director of Business and Administration	
Sport or Programs Beyond the Classroom	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Coach or Teacher in Charge of Activity, sport, or club Sports Co-ordinator or the Teacher in Charge of Primary sport Head of Secondary or Head of Primary 	



4. CONCERNS AND COMPLAINTS - FORMAL PROCESS

Where you have not been able to resolve a concern or complaint through an informal approach to the member of staff directly involved, or prefer to register a concern or complaint more formally, you can do so by any of the following:

- 1. Using the 'FEEDBACK' option on the School's website
2. Sending an email to complaints@bcgs.wa.edu.au
3. Writing a letter to the School addressed to 'The Complaints Manager'
4. A phone call to the School to the Classroom teacher, House of Associate Head of House, Residential Boarding Supervisor, Head of Primary/Secondary/Boarding.

5. COMPLAINTS HANDLING PROCESS

All complaints received as part of the formal process are logged on the School's Complaints Register and will be handled in accordance with the following process:

- i. The Complaints Manager will acknowledge all valid complaints in writing as soon as practicable. The School will endeavour to provide a resolution within 15 working days of acknowledging receipt.
ii. The complaint will be allocated a category (academic, beyond the classroom program, boarding, charges and fees, child protection, handling of a complaint, ICT, staff conduct, sport, or student wellbeing) a priority (low, medium, high), and an anticipated date for resolution.
iii. The issues raised in the complaint will be investigated, following the principles of procedural fairness.
iv. A resolution will be formulated, and the School will provide a written response to the complainant, where appropriate.
v. The matter is closed if the response is accepted by the complainant.
vi. If the response is not acceptable, the matter will be reviewed by the Head of School, or their delegate, with a further right of review to the Chair of the Board of Governors. Further information may be requested from the parties as part of the review processes.
vii. The Head of School, of their delegate, will endeavour to review a complaint withing 20 working days of acknowledging receipt.
viii. The School will take corrective action where required and provide a written response to the complainant, where appropriate.
ix. The matter is closed if the response is accepted by the complainant.
x. If the matter is not resolved, there is further recourse to request a review by the Chair of the Board of Governors of the School.

6. REVIEW BY THE CHAIR OF THE SCHOOL'S BOARD OF GOVERNORS

Where the complainant is not satisfied with the determination of the Head of School, further recourse is available to the Chair of the School's Board of Governors,

The complainant is required to formally notify the School of the request to have the Head of School's determination reviewed by the Chair of the Board.

The Chair of the School's Board of Governors will not conduct a further review unless:

- i. the issue has first been discussed with the Head of School and remains unresolved to the complainant's satisfaction; and
ii. the Head of School has been formally advised that the complainant intends to take the issue to the School's Board of Governors; and
iii. complainant writes to the Chair of the Board to formally complain.

The only exception would be in the case of professional misconduct by the Head of School when, in that circumstance alone, a complainant could bypass the Head of School and write directly to the Board Chair.

Review of a complaint by the Chair of the School's Board of Governors will not be by way of a rehearing. The School's Board of Governors will determine its own procedures and will provide reasons for any decisions, where appropriate.

If the matter is still unresolved after discussion with the Board Chair, the complainant must accept that their complaint has been heard and cannot be resolved as they would wish it to be resolved, unless, in exceptional



circumstances, by mutual agreement, it was resolved to take the matter to an agreed independent, external arbitrator.

7. WHAT IS PROCEDURAL FAIRNESS

The Rules of Procedural Fairness as set out in the Registration Standards require:

- a) A hearing appropriate to the circumstances
- b) Lack of bias
- c) Evidence to support a decision
- d) Inquiry into matters in dispute

What does this mean?

- ✓ The process must be safe and fair to all parties.
- ✓ The views of all parties are listened to.
- ✓ The views of adults are not prioritised over those of children and young people simply because they are not adults.
- ✓ Conflicts of interest are identified and managed to ensure a fair process and outcome.
- ✓ Decisions are based on evidence.
- ✓ The process is sensitive to cultural, linguistic, gender, and religious difference.

8. ANONYMOUS COMPLAINTS

The School would prefer to know the identity of a person making a complaint or raising a concern, as it will assist in investigating and resolving the issues. The School will note anonymous complaints and address these having regard to the circumstances and the nature of the information provided.

9. STUDENT WORRIES AND COMPLAINTS

The School prioritises the rights, safety and wellbeing of children and young people and recognises the right of a student to feel free to speak up if they are worried or feel unsafe, and the School will endeavour to resolve that complaint in an open and fair manner. If a student is worried about something or wants to complain about something, then the following advice will be helpful.

Who can help?

There are many people ready and willing to talk to students about their worries. The student can choose **anyone** to talk to and help them to resolve their worry or concern. The student should pick the person they feel safe and comfortable with and they can take another student along if they wish. The list below are suggestions of who a student could turn to for help:

PRIMARY SCHOOL

- A student or friend
- A teacher
- School Psychologist or Chaplain
- Deputy Head of Primary
- Head of Primary
- Head of School

SECONDARY SCHOOL

- another student
- (friend, Peer Support Leader, Student Executive Member)
- Class teacher
- Year 7 House Teacher
- Home Group Teacher
- Head or Associate Head of House
- School Psychologist
- Chaplain
- Boarding Residential Supervisor
- Head of Boarding
- Deputy Head (Wellbeing)
- Head of Secondary
- Head of School

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SCHOOL MANAGEMENT	OWNER	Head of School	Print Date	26 June 2021	Next Review
Date First Publication	27.09.2005	Version	1.07.2010/24.05.2011/29.06.2011/23.03.2012/30.09.2015/16.05.17/29.06.21		



How to make a complaint

By talking about it or writing it down if this is easier. A student can initiate the process themselves, or with a friend or a group of friends, with a staff member or a parent – anyone that the student feels safe and comfortable with.

What can a student complain about?

Anything. Talking about worries and concerns often helps to find a solution.

What will happen next?

If possible, the staff member will deal with the concern. If they are not able to, they will explain who needs to be told about the concern, why and what will happen next. If the student wishes to be updated on the progress and outcome, then the School will support them in this request.

Who else will know?

Staff will respect the confidentiality of the parties to the complaint. However, where the safety and welfare of a student is concerned all staff have a duty of care to pass on concerns to those staff in a position to provide help in a collaborative and supportive way. Staff do not need the student’s permission to disclose this information and there are mandatory requirements to report certain concerns.

10.COMPLAINTS REGISTER

A Complaints Register will be managed by the Head of School’s Assistant. The register will record:

- The date of complaint
- Name of the complainant and relationship to the School
- Nature of the complaint, including the name of any person who is the subject of the complaint and their relationship to the School
- Name and position or role at the School of the person investigating the complaint
- Date when investigation is completed
- Whether the complaint was upheld
- Resolution offered or agreed to with the complainant
- Date of referral for review, if required, and to whom, if not the Head of School
- Date review was finalised
- Review resolution agreed with or offered to the complainant
- Date of referral for review, if required, to the Chair of the Board
- Date review was finalised
- Review resolution agreed with or offered to the complainant
- If relevant, the date and details of a report made to an external agency e.g Police

All communication addressing a complaint will be kept in the Complaints Register (as well as the student’s or staff member’s file where applicable), along with a copy of the original complaint. The communication from the School must clearly show the action taken to address the complaint. If there is a protracted exchange of correspondence, then copies of all this correspondence is to be included in the Register.

The Head of School will, no less than twice a year, conduct a review of all complaints in the Complaints Register, with a view to assessing both the quality of our services and its complaints management system and to identify any causes or systemic failures to inform continuous improvement. Where required the Head of School will direct corrective action.

The Head of School will undertake regular reporting to the Board of Governors analysing the complaints received, and detailing the actions taken.

11.ROLE OF THE DIRECTOR GENERAL

‘The Director General of the Department of Education is responsible for ensuring that the school observes the registration standards, including the standard about its complaints handling system. Any student, parent or community member is entitled to contact the Director General with concerns about how the school has dealt with a complaint. Information is available on the Department of Education website (<https://www.education.wa.edu.au/>). While the Director General may consider whether the school has breached the registration standards, they do not have power to intervene in a complaint or override the school’s decision.’

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Date First Publication	27.09.2005	Version	1.07.2010/24.05.2011/29.06.2011/23.03.2012/30.09.2015/16.05.17/29.06.21		



12. OVERSEAS STUDENTS

After first exhaustively following the School's policy for students with worries and complaints, as described above, a Full Fee-Paying Overseas Student could lodge an appeal to the Overseas Students' Ombudsman (OSO), through the School's External Independent Complaints and Appeal Process for Overseas Students, at no cost to themselves (see the separate Complaints Policy for Full Fee-Paying Overseas Students on the School's website).

The website for the OSO is www.oso.gov.au
Email: ombudsman@ombudsman.gov.au
Call: 1300 362 072 in Australia
+61 2 6276 0111 Outside Australia

13. APPENDIX – PROCESS FOR RESOLVING A COMPLAINT OR CONCERN

- The School welcomes suggestions and comments from students, parents, carers, and volunteers and takes seriously any complaints and concerns that may be raised.
• Contact the staff member directly responsible or related to the issue or with whom you feel comfortable. Contact can be face-to-face, by email, telephone call, letter, meeting, or via the feedback option the School website.
• If the concern is about the Head of School, this should be directed to the Chair of the Board of Governors.
• If a concern of a complaint is not resolved to your satisfaction, the complaints handling process allows for it to be escalated to a senior member of Staff.
• The matter can be referred to the Head of School for review.
• headofschool@bcgs.wa.edu.au or 9722 6060
• The issue can be referred to the Chair of the Board of Governors if you remain dissatisfied with the resolution.
• By mutual agreement a matter may be referred to an external third party for mediation or arbitration with the aim of bringing about reconciliation.

Legal Advice
Please note that you can seek legal advice at any time. However, it may not be appropriate in the early stages of the complaints process.

14. USEFUL CONTACT INFORMATION

In an emergency call 000
Feedback on School's website FEEDBACK Tab via www.bcgs.wa.edu.au
School Email for Complaints complaints@bcgs.wa.edu.au
Head of School headofschool@bcgs.wa.edu.au
School's postal address Complaints Manager
Bunbury Cathedral Grammar School
PO Box 1198
BUNBURY WA 6231
School Telephone Number (08) 9722 6000