



## COMPLAINTS POLICY

### PURPOSE

To provide a safe and secure learning and teaching environment for students and staff by establishing processes to raise parent/carer complaints or concerns at Kurunjang Secondary College.

To ensure that all complaints or concerns regarding Kurunjang Secondary College are managed in a timely, effective, fair and respectful manner. We recognise the importance of;

- Providing a safe and supportive learning environment
- Building positive relationships between students, parents/carers, and staff
- Providing a safe working environment for staff

### SCHOOL VALUES STATEMENT

The college's approach to handling complaints or concerns is based on our values statement to **"achieve success for our community through respect, responsibility, and collaboration"**. Our college values of ***Respect, Achievement, and Responsibility*** clarify the role each community member, and helps to establish a cooperative environment with realistic expectations of what can be achieved by the college.

### SCOPE

This policy relates to complaints brought by parents, carers, students or members of our school community and applies to all matters relating to our college. In some limited instances, we may need to refer the complainant to another Department of Education and Training process where there are different mechanisms in place to review certain decisions, for example, expulsion appeals.

Kurunjang Secondary College welcomes feedback, and is committed to continuous improvement. We value open communication with our families and are committed to understanding complaints and addressing them appropriately. We recognise that the complaints process provides an important opportunity for reflection and learning.

We value and encourage open and positive relationships with our school community. We understand that it is in the best interests of students for there to be a trusting relationship between families and our school.

## **EXPECTATIONS**

Kurunjang Secondary College expects a person raising a concern or complaint to:

- Do so promptly
- Provide complete and factual information about the concern or complaint
- Maintain and respect the privacy and confidentiality of all parties, in- line with DET policy and legislative requirements
- Acknowledge that a common goal is to achieve an outcome acceptable to all parties
- Act in good faith and cooperation
- Be considerate of each other's views and respect each other's role
- Be focused on resolution of the complaint, with the interests of the student involved at the centre
- Behave with respect, courtesy, and in a calm manner
- Recognise that all parties have rights and responsibilities which must be balanced
- Operate within, and seek reasonable resolutions that comply with, any applicable legislation and Department policy
- Where parent/carer behaviour is considered unreasonable, in these circumstances, the decision maker may communicate the basis on which the conclusion was made in writing.
- DET considers behaviour to be unreasonable when it: is clearly and significantly outside the expectations of cooperation, courtesy, respect, calls for staff resources and time unjustified by the nature or significance of the complaint, it is a complaint that is brought without merit, often to cause annoyance to another person and is oriented towards conflict.
- Recognise that schools and the Department may be subject to legal constraints on their ability to act or disclose information in some circumstances.

### **Preparation for raising a concern or complaint**

Kurunjang Secondary College encourages parents, carers or members of the community who may wish to submit a complaint to:

Carefully consider the issues you would like to discuss

Understand you may not have all the facts relating to the issues that you want to raise

Think about how the matter could be resolved

## Complaints process

Kurunjang Secondary College is always happy to discuss with parents/carers and community members any concerns that they may have. Concerns in the first instance should be directed to the relevant staff.

### Classroom & Learning Concerns

Contact the **Home Group Teacher** and or **Classroom Teacher** for matters related to student learning or behavioural matters that take place in the teacher's class.

Telephone the college to speak with the staff member, noting that they may be attending to other duties, or email using Compass.

If they are unavailable, leave a brief message identifying your name, your child, and concern.

The staff member will endeavour to return your call or email as soon as possible.

Where possible, school staff will work with you to ensure that your concerns are appropriately addressed.

Where concerns cannot be resolved in this way, parents or community members may wish to raise the matter with the relevant **House Co-ordinators** and or **Head of House**.

If the matter relates to complex student issues, which are not readily resolved at the House Level in the first instance, you may seek the involvement of the relevant **Assistant Principal**.

In most cases, depending on the nature of the complaint or concern raised, our college will first seek to understand the issues and will then convene a resolution meeting with the aim of resolving the complaint together. The following process will apply:

- 1. Complaint received:** Please either email, telephone or arrange a meeting through the General Office with the **Assistant Principal** to outline your complaint so that we can fully understand what the issues are. We can discuss your complaint in a way that is convenient for you, whether in writing, in person or over the phone.
- 2. Information gathering:** Depending on the issues raised in the complaint, the **Assistant Principal** or nominee may need to gather further information to properly understand the situation. This process may also involve speaking to others to obtain details about the situation or the concerns raised.
- 3. Response:** Where possible, a resolution meeting will be arranged with the **Assistant Principal** to discuss the complaint with the objective of reaching a resolution satisfactory to all parties. If after the resolution meeting we are unable to resolve the complaint together, we will work with you in the event you would like to take further action about it. In some circumstances, the **Principal** may determine that a resolution meeting would not be appropriate. In this situation, a response to the complaint will be provided in writing.
- 4. Timelines:** Kurunjang Secondary College will acknowledge receipt of your complaint as soon as possible (**usually within two school days**) and will seek to resolve complaints in a timely manner. Depending on the complexity of the complaint, Kurunjang Secondary College may need some

time to gather enough information to fully understand the circumstances of your complaint. We will endeavour to complete any necessary information gathering and hold a resolution meeting where appropriate **within 10 working days** of the complaint being raised. In situations where further time is required, Kurunjang Secondary College will consult with you and discuss any interim solutions to the dispute that can be put in place.

## Resolution

Where appropriate, Kurunjang Secondary College may seek to resolve a complaint by:

- an apology or expression of regret
- a change of decision
- a change of policy, procedure or practice
- offering the opportunity for student counselling or other support
- Other actions consistent with school values that are intended to support the student, parent and school relationship, engagement, and participation in the school community.

In some circumstances, Kurunjang Secondary College may also ask you to attend a **meeting with the College Principal**, or with an independent third party, or participate in a mediation with an accredited mediator to assist in the resolution of the dispute.

## Escalation

If you are not satisfied that your complaint has been resolved by the school, or if your complaint is about the Principal and you do not want to raise it directly with them, then the complaint should be referred to the South-western Victoria Regional Office by contacting,

**Phone:** 1300 333 232

**Email:** [swvr@education.vic.gov.au](mailto:swvr@education.vic.gov.au)

Kurunjang Secondary College may also refer a complaint to the South-western Victoria Regional Office if we believe that we have done all we can to address the complaint.

For more information about the Department's *Parent Complaints* policy, including the role of the Regional Office, please see: [Parent Complaints policy](#).

## FURTHER INFORMATION AND RESOURCES

Statement of Vision and Values, Statement of Commitment to Child Safety/Child Safety policy, Child Safety Code of Conduct, and Duty of Care.

[Communication with Staff Policy](#)

## REVIEW PERIOD

<b>Date Implemented</b>	31/05/2021
-------------------------	------------

<b>Author</b>	Aylin Gökmen
<b>Approved By</b>	College Principal
<b>Responsible for Review</b>	Aylin Gökmen Assistant Principal
<b>Review Date</b>	31/05/2023
<b>References</b>	Victorian Government Schools Policy Advisory Guide