COMPLAINTS POLICY

Help for non-English speakers

If you need help to understand the information in this policy, please contact Ms. Susanne Phillips, the EAL Coordinator or a member of the Principal Team on **03 9743 9211.**

PURPOSE

The purpose of this policy is to:

- provide an outline of the complaints process at Kurunjang Secondary College so that students, parents, and members of the community are informed of how they can raise complaints or concerns about issues arising at our college
- ensure that all complaints and concerns regarding Kurunjang Secondary College are managed in a timely, effective, fair, and respectful manner.

1.1 SCOPE

1.2 THIS POLICY RELATES TO COMPLAINTS BROUGHT BY STUDENTS, PARENTS, CARERS, OR MEMBERS OF OUR COLLEGE COMMUNITY AND APPLIES TO ALL MATTERS RELATING TO OUR COLLEGE.

1.3 IN SOME LIMITED INSTANCES, WE MAY NEED TO REFER A COMPLAINANT TO ANOTHER POLICY OR AREA IF THERE ARE DIFFERENT PROCESSES IN PLACE TO THE MANAGE THE ISSUE INCLUDING:

- Complaints and concerns relating to fraud and corruption will be managed in accordance with the department's Fraud and Corruption Policy
- Criminal matters will be referred to Victorian Police
- Legal claims will be referred to the Department's Legal Division
- Complaints and concerns relating to child abuse will be managed in accordance with our Child Safety Responding and Reporting Obligations Policy and Procedures
- Complaints and concerns pertaining to complex matters will be managed with support with complex matters department.

1.4 POLICY

Kurunjang Secondary College welcomes feedback, both positive and negative, 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 college community. We understand that it is in the best interests of students for there to be a trusting relationship between families and our college.

When addressing a complaint, it is expected that all parties will:

- 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.
- act in good faith and cooperation.
- behave with respect and courtesy.
- respect the privacy and confidentiality of those involved, as appropriate.
- operate within and seek reasonable resolutions that comply with any applicable legislation and Department policy.
- recognise that colleges and the Department may be subject to legal constraints on their ability to act or disclose information in some circumstances.

1.4.1 Complaints and concerns process for students

Kurunjang Secondary College acknowledges that issues or concerns can cause stress or worry for students and impact their wellbeing and learning. Kurunjang Secondary College encourages our students to raise issues or concerns as they arise so that we can work together to resolve them.

Students with a concern or complaint can raise them with a trusted adult at college, for example, with your Home Group Teacher, Year Level Coordinators, Wellbeing staff, Koorie Education Support Officers, Multicultural Education Aides, Education Support staff, or a member of the Principal Team.

This person will take your concern or complaint seriously and will explain to you what steps we can take to try to resolve the issue and support you.

You can also ask your parent, carer, or another trusted adult outside of the college, to talk to us about the issue instead. Information about our parent/carer complaints and concerns process is outlined further below. The parent/carer process also applies to students who are mature minors, refer to: Mature Minors and Decision Making.

Other ways you can raise a concern or complaint with us include:

- talking to a member of the Student Representative Council, and Class Captains, about your concern and any suggestions you have for resolving it
- participating in our Student Forums held every term

Further information and resources to support students to raise issues or concerns are available at:

- Report Racism Hotline (call 1800 722 476) – this hotline enables students to report concerns relating to racism or religious discrimination
- Reach Out

- Headspace
- Kids Helpline (call 1800 55 1800)
- Victorian Aboriginal Education Association (VAEAI)

1.5 COMPLAINTS AND CONCERNS PROCESS FOR PARENTS, CARERS AND COMMUNITY MEMBERS

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.
- remember you may not have all the facts relating to the issues that you want to raise.
- think about how the matter could be resolved.
- be informed by checking the policies and guidelines set by the Department and Kurunjang Secondary College

Support person

You are welcome to have a support person to assist you in raising a complaint or concern with our college. Please advise us if you wish to have a support person to assist you, and provide their name, contact details, and their relationship to you.

Raising a concern

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 your child's teacher, Year Level Coordinators, Assistant Principal or Principal. Where possible, college staff will work with you to ensure that your concerns are appropriately addressed.

Making a complaint

Where concerns cannot be resolved in this way, parents or community members may wish to make a formal complaint to the relevant College Executive Assistant Principal or the College Principal, noting that formal complaints should be directed to this Leadership Team.

If you would like to make a formal complaint, in most cases, depending on the nature of the complaint 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 relevant 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, you may choose to take further action about it. This will require a written complaint addressed to the College Principal. In some circumstances, the Principal may determine what action will be taken, if necessary. In this situation, a response to the written complaint will be provided in writing.

4. **Timelines:** Kurunjang Secondary College will acknowledge receipt of your complaint as soon as possible (usually within two college 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 ten 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.

Please note that unreasonable conduct (e.g., vexatious complaints) may need to be managed differently to the procedures in this policy.

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 college values that are intended to support the student, parent and college relationship, engagement, and participation in the college community.

In some circumstances, Kurunjang Secondary College may also ask you to attend a meeting 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 college, 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 1300 333 232 or swvr@education.vic.gov.au

Kurunjang Secondary College may also refer a complaint 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 process, including the role of the Regional Office, please see: Raise a complaint or concern about your college.

Record keeping and other requirements

To meet Department and legal requirements, our college must keep written records of:

- Serious, substantial, or unusual complaints
- Complaints relating to the Child Information Sharing Scheme and Family Violence Information Sharing Scheme, to meet regulatory requirements - refer to Child and Family Violence Information Sharing Schemes for further information.

Our college also follows Department policy to ensure that record-keeping, reporting, privacy, and employment law obligations are met when responding to complaints or concerns.

COMMUNICATION

This policy will be communicated to our college community in the following ways:

- Available publicly on college website
- Included in staff induction processes.
- Included in our staff handbook/manual.
- Included in transition and enrolment packs.
- Hard copy available from college administration upon request

FURTHER INFORMATION AND RESOURCES

The Department's parents' website:

- Raise a complaint or concern about your college
- Report racism or religious discrimination in colleges

POLICY REVIEW AND APPROVAL

Policy last reviewed	June 2024
Consultation	Principal Class Officers, June 2024
Approved by	Ms Aylin Gökmen College Principal
Next scheduled review date	June 2026