



Complaint Management and Resolution Process

May 2023

CATHOLIC SCHOOLS BROKEN BAY

Caroline Chisholm Centre Building 2, 423 Pennant Hills Road, Pennant Hills, NSW 2120 | PO BOX 967 Pennant Hills NSW 1715
02 9847 0000 | csbb.catholic.edu.au | CSBB@dbb.org.au

Introduction

This document outlines how Catholic Schools Broken Bay (CSBB) reviews, assesses, resolves, and follows up complaints and feedback received by CSBB.

This document is consistent with the requirements prescribed by the New South Wales Education Standards Authority (NESA) with respect to ensuring all schools in the Broken Bay Diocese provide a safe and supportive environment to its students, and establishes a consistent, fair, effective process for raising and responding to matters of concern, complaints and grievances identified by students, families, or the wider community.

This document should be read together with the CSBB Complaint Management and Resolution Policy (dated March 2023).

Scope and Purpose

This document supplements the CSBB Complaints Management and Resolution Policy and applies to all CSBB schools and offices in handling complaints made in respect of services provided by CSBB, its schools or against people employed or engaged by CSBB.

The process has been developed to address matters of concern, complaints and grievance that fall within scope of the document and received by schools and CSBB from members of the CSBB community including but not limited to students, parents and carers, and other stakeholders and service providers.

The following matters are not to be dealt with under this document:

- allegations of a safeguarding nature against a person employed or engaged by the School or CSBB that fall within the CSBB Safeguarding & Child Protection Policy[#]
- allegations of criminal conduct, corrupt conduct, or other misconduct
- a risk of harm or significant harm to a child or young person
- privacy issues
- legal proceedings and requests for payment of damages.

#Complaints of abuse or neglect

Where a complaint alleges a child/ren are at risk from abuse, harm or neglect by an adult or another child, this should be reported immediately to the CSBB Safeguarding team on (02) 7256 2211 or via email safeguarding@dbb.catholic.edu.au. Such matters can also be reported directly to NSW Police.

Complaint & Feedback Resolution Process

The following four step process is to be followed in respect of the resolution of complaints, concerns, or feedback.

a) Discussion with the class teacher at school

- The best outcomes arise when complaints and concerns are addressed to, and quickly resolved with the classroom teacher or member of staff.
- In Primary Schools, this would usually be the classroom teacher in the first instance, whereas in Secondary Schools it may be the Year Coordinator or Pastoral Care Teacher.

b) Discussion with school principal (or delegate)

- Where the complaint or concern cannot be immediately resolved after speaking to the class teacher, the complaint should be discussed with the school principal.
- The school principal may delegate the responsibility for resolving the concern or complaint to their delegate (usually a member of their leadership team).
- The complaint or concern will be assessed, and further information may be obtained (student records etc) to allow for a proper assessment and a timely resolution.
- Complaints to the principal can be submitted in person, by phone, in writing or via email. Receipt of a complaint shall be acknowledged by the school, usually within 2 working days of receipt.

c) Contact the CSBB Community Engagement Team

- Where the complaint or concern remains unresolved, this can be referred to the Community Engagement Team via email cet@dbb.catholic.edu.au.
- The complaint can be lodged online via the Feedback form [link](#). This should outline the steps taken to resolve the issue and the desired outcome. Where a complaint is received by phone, a request may be made for the issue to be submitted in writing to ensure clarity and accuracy.

- The complaint or concern will be assessed by the Community Engagement Partner in the first instance, who will contact the complainant within 2 working days to acknowledge receipt and advise of the process to be followed to investigate the complaint.
- An investigation into the complaint will be conducted, and the Community Engagement Partner will maintain contact with the complainant during this period to clarify or gather additional information. with further information being obtained from the school to allow for a proper assessment and resolution.
- The complaint resolution process should be completed as quickly as possible and within twenty-one (21) days from the date of receipt of the complaint, unless there are extenuating circumstances that lead to a reasonable delay, in which case complainants will be advised.
- Once an outcome of the complaint is determined, a written response will be shared with the complainant, including any action to be taken, the reasoning behind the decision and options for review. In respect of safeguarding matters, limited information may be provided to the complainant dependent on the circumstances of the matter.
- The matter will be considered closed if this response is accepted.
- Where a complaint is made to CSBB that has not been initially discussed at school level, then the complainant may be directed back to the school.
- Anonymous complaints will be considered and acted upon, but the lack of interaction with the complainant means the ability to act upon the complaint may be limited. Similarly, if a complainant asks to remain anonymous, it may affect the ability to investigate and resolve.

d) Contact the Office of the Director of Schools

- Where a complainant seeks a review of the decision based on additional information or feels that the complaint handling process did not follow due process, a request may be lodged with the Office of the Director of Schools.

- The request for review must be in writing addressed to the Director of Schools and made within 10 working days from the initial complaint decision.
- The request should outline the steps undertaken to resolve the issue, the reasons for the request for review, and proposed resolution.
- The Office of the Director of Schools will respond to the request as expeditiously as possible, usually no more than 10 working days of receipt.
- Whilst it remains the strong preference of Catholic Schools Broken Bay that mutually acceptable outcomes be negotiated, the outcome of the review by the Director of Schools will be binding on all parties and no further appeal will be possible.

Possible Remedies & Outcomes

A complaint is considered resolved when the complainant and school or CSBB agree on an appropriate response or remedy.

Where a complaint is found to be justified, schools can resolve complaints by:

- an apology or expression of regret, either verbal or written
- reconsideration and/or change of a decision
- a change of policy, procedure, or practice to prevent a reoccurrence
- offering the opportunity for student counselling or other support.

Record Keeping

A full and adequate file must be kept for all complaints and stored confidentially.

Access to the file is only in accordance with CSBB's Privacy Policy, applicable State or Commonwealth legislation or for appropriate professional reasons by authorised persons.

The level of detail of records will depend on the level of complexity of the complaint and information provided by complainants and respondents, but at a minimum will include:

- a. the key steps taken to manage the complaint
- b. information gathered
- c. outcome/s of the complaint, including whether any complaints were substantiated and the outcome actions, if any; and
- d. steps taken to implement, follow up and monitor outcomes.

Applicability

This document applies to all CSBB schools and offices in handling complaints made in respect of services provided by CSBB, its schools or against people employed or engaged by CSBB. However, it excludes receipt or handling of allegations about CSBB workers, which are to be dealt with under Safeguarding and/or Capability and Enablement Frameworks.

This document and the associated procedures are not applicable to complaints related to ongoing legal proceedings, industrial agreement or under the jurisdiction of other organisations/statutory bodies, including, but not limited to, the Department of Communities and Justice, NSW Police, or the Office of the Children's Guardian.

Related Processes/Procedures

CSBB Catholic Charter
CSBB Code of Conduct

Related Policies

Catholic Diocese of Broken Bay Complaint Handling Policy.
Complaint Management and Resolution Policy (2023)
Conflict of Interest Policy
Related Parties Policy
Privacy Policy
Complaint and Feedback Form (2023)

Review

The Complaint and Feedback Resolution Process and related Policy/ies will be reviewed every three (3) years unless there is a legislative or regulatory requirement to do so earlier.