



Complaints Handling Policy



Good Shepherd
Lutheran School Angaston

INTRODUCTION

Good Shepherd Lutheran School welcomes feedback from all members of the school community and takes all complaints or concerns that may be raised seriously. A complaint is an expression of dissatisfaction made to the school, related to our services or operations, or the complaints handling process itself, where a response or resolution is explicitly or implicitly expected¹.

RATIONALE

This Policy is designed to: help us comply with this obligation; help you understand how to make a complaint; and inform you about how the school responds to different kinds of complaints.

SCOPE

This policy and its procedures apply to all staff, volunteers and contractors at the school.

POLICY STATEMENT

The School's Commitment

Good Shepherd Lutheran School is committed to handling all complaints effectively and efficiently.

To manage complaints effectively, we have established a Complaints Handling Policy and Procedures in line with:

- Principle 6 of the National Principles for Child Safe Organisations, using the Office of Child Safety's "Complaint Handling Guide: Upholding the rights of children and young people"
- the Australian complaints handling standard (AS 10002:2022 Guidelines for complaint management in organizations)
- the Australian Privacy Principles (APP).

Our Complaints Handling process includes the establishment of an online complaints management system which allows us to effectively capture, manage and report on complaints.

Making a Complaint

Complaints may be made anonymously, however, if you make an anonymous complaint, we will be unable to provide you with feedback on the progress and outcome of your complaint. It may also limit our ability to fully investigate the complaint if we are unable to contact you to obtain further details.

We will support and provide practical assistance to complainants to make a complaint and throughout the complaints process.

We insist on all complainants being respectful to and cooperating with staff as a prerequisite to the management of their complaint.

Confidentiality and Privacy

The school is committed to maintaining the confidentiality of information throughout the complaints process. This includes maintaining the privacy of information relating to the person making the complaint and any person named in the complaint.

PROCEDURES

Informal Complaints Resolution

Most issues causing concern in schools can be handled quickly and in an informal manner. We therefore ask that, where appropriate, you first raise your concern directly with the relevant staff member.

Even if the issue is resolved informally, the relevant staff member will log it through our online complaints management system so that we are able to identify any systemic issues arising and take appropriate rectification action.

How Do I Make a Formal Complaint?

If you have been unable to resolve a matter informally, or if you otherwise wish to make a formal complaint, you can do so in the following ways:

- Sending an email to the Principal at principal@goodshepherd.sa.edu.au
- Telephoning the school on (08) 8564 2396 and asking to speak with the Principal.

All formal complaints are logged through our online complaints management system and managed in accordance with the following procedure.

Our Internal Complaints Handling Process

The following process is a guide only and may be varied by the school as circumstances require:

1. All formal complaints are logged through our online complaints management system where they are screened by the Principal or in the case of complaints against the Principal by the School Board Chairperson.
2. All valid complaints are acknowledged in writing, as soon as practicable, and allocated a status, a priority and a target resolution date. It is our policy, where possible, to resolve all disputes within 14 working days.
3. The Principal or delegate will conduct an investigation into the issues raised, following principles of procedural fairness.
4. Following the investigation, if appropriate, the Principal or delegate will formulate a resolution and provide a written response to the complainant. If the complainant accepts this response, the matter is noted as “resolved” and closed.
5. If the complainant does not accept the response, the matter will be reviewed internally by the Principal or delegate, who may seek additional information or submissions from the relevant parties. The Principal or their delegate seeks to resolve all disputes within 14 working days from the date that the review process is initiated. If the complainant accepts the Principal's, or their delegate's response, the matter is noted as “resolved” and closed.
6. All complaints received are entered into our Complaints Register and, where appropriate, corrective actions will be made to address any underlying processes which the complaints investigation revealed may require improvement.
7. If the matter remains unresolved, and/or the complainant is not satisfied with the outcome or the way that the complaint has been managed, the complainant may pursue external resolution alternatives.

Complaints About Child Safety Incidents or Concerns Involving the School or its Staff Members

If a complaint, disclosure or allegation is about:

- a breach of the Child Safe Codes of Conduct
- harm to any child or young person (including but not limited to harm to a current or former student) or to a current or former student aged 18 or over by:
 - a current or former staff member
 - a current or former student
 - another person, while on School premises or at a school event
- inappropriate behaviour by a staff member
- inappropriate behaviour or sexual misconduct by another person who has a connection to the school
- other child safety-related staff misconduct

the school does not follow the above procedures (although its handling of the matter may be informed by them). This is because:

- the school has legal obligations to report certain staff conduct to external authorities and to conduct investigations in a particular way; and
- there are additional confidentiality and privacy requirements involved in these kinds of matters. We refer to these kinds of complaints as child safe-related complaints.

If your complaint is a child safety-related complaint, please make your complaint to a Child Safety Officer:

Name	Position	Contact No.	Email
Darren Altus	Principal	(08) 8564 2396	principal@goodshepherd.sa.edu.au
Renae McDonald	Teaching & Learning Coordinator	(08) 8564 2396	renae.mcdonald@goodshepherd.sa.edu.au
Dan Hausler	Wellbeing Coordinator	(08) 8564 2396	daniel.hausler@goodshepherd.sa.edu.au

or if the Principal is the subject of your complaint, please notify the School Board Chairperson by emailing Paul McGorman at pmcgorman@live.com.au

Definitions

Term	Definition
Complaint/Complainant	A complaint is an expression of dissatisfaction made to the School, related to our services or operations, or the complaints handling process itself, where a response or resolution is explicitly or implicitly expected. A complaint may be made by a student, parent/carer, former student, parent/carer of a former student, member of the wider School community, strategic partner, regulator or a member of the public generally. A complaint can also be made anonymously. We refer to anyone who makes a complaint as a “complainant”. They could be a natural person, an organisation, or a representative of an organisation.

Related Policies

[Child Safe Complaints Management Policy](#)

References

- 1 Australian Complaints handling standard AS 10002:2022.

Policy Administration

Policy Development	LESNW/CompliSpace	
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