



## *Marian Catholic College Kenthurst*

### **COMPLAINT HANDLING POLICY**

#### **Introduction**

Marian Catholic College, Kenthurst, is a co-educational, comprehensive Years 7 - 12 school in the Diocese of Parramatta. The school is a member of the systemic Catholic schools conducted by the Parramatta Catholic Education Office (CEO) which is committed to developing an educational and organisational culture based on mutual trust and respect.

At Marian college, we are committed to providing a safe and supportive working and learning environment for all employees and students. We acknowledge that employees, students and parents may sometimes have a complaint about a decision, behaviour, act or omission that they feel is unacceptable. Whilst most issues can be resolved through direct discussion with the parties, there may be instances in which this is not possible.

#### **Scope of the Policy**

This policy provides a process for those employed by the CEO and those receiving services from the Catholic Education System to raise a complaint. This includes students, employees, parents, pastors and members of the wider community.

Complaints may relate to any practice or policy of Marian College or of the Parramatta CEO related to the treatment of or education of students. The Parramatta Catholic education system has some specific complaints processes. The Child Protection Kit has specific policies and procedures to address complaints of child abuse and reportable conduct. Maintaining Right Relations Policy and Procedures addresses complaints of harassment, bullying and discrimination. Nothing in this document replaces the processes outlined in these documents.

#### **Underlying Principles**

The Parramatta Catholic education system is committed to the following principles to ensure complaints are addressed appropriately:

- Complaints will be investigated in a fair and impartial manner.
- A person facing a complaint is entitled to know detailed information about the substance of the complaint and to have the opportunity to respond.
- Confidentiality will be observed

- The complaints' management process will be conducted in a manner that is respectful to all parties
- Persons making a complaint will not be victimised.
- It is expected that complaints are made in good faith and are not vexatious or malicious.
- Complaints will be addressed in a timely manner and complainants will be advised if the matter cannot be finalised within one month.

### **Options available to persons with complaints:**

- **Deal with the Situation Personally**

In less serious matters in which there is no risk of harm to any person, it may be preferable to discuss the issue of concern with the relevant person to endeavour to reach an amicable resolution.

- **Contact the School**

A complainant may feel unable to approach the relevant employee of Marian College directly or may not be satisfied with that person's response. The matter may be more serious in that the complainant believes that someone is at risk of harm. In such instances, the complainant may wish to contact the school. An inquiry at the school reception may be the first point of contact for people with complaints. The office staff will inquire about the general nature of the complaint, involving any member of the Marian College community and refer it to the person designated to deal with the nature of the complaint. This person may be a Leader of Learning, the Assistant Principal or Principal.

If the complaint is about a member of the College Staff and the matter is confidential, the complainant should inform the receptionist of this without mentioning the person's name and ask to be transferred to the appropriate Leader of Learning or member of the College Executive.

- **Contact the Catholic Education Office**

There may be occasions when a person wishes to take their concern directly to the Catholic Education Office.

It may be they are not satisfied with the school's response or other legitimate reasons for not approaching the school directly, such as a conflict of interest.

The Catholic Education Office has a community liaison line for taking general inquiries or concerns. The CEO Officer will take the complaint and refer it to the relevant CEO personnel.

In some instances, the CEO Officer may advise that the complaint is more appropriately dealt with at the school level. In general, the CEO Officer will refer the complaint to the Area Administrator for the school involved.

For matters concerning CEO staff, in the first instance the complaint would be taken to the person's immediate supervisor. If the complainant is not satisfied, they may address their concern to the Director of the relevant Department.

### **Procedural Fairness**

In all dealings with complaints and grievances, the College will follow procedural fairness which means that processes will be conducted in a manner ensuring fair practice and equity, respect to all parties, and due observance of confidentiality. Every effort will be made to ensure that the facts relating to the complaint are thoroughly investigated and established. Any subsequent actions relating to the complaint will be based on an unbiased decision which stems from a fair hearing.

**Signed:**

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "J. Bell". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large initial "J" and a long, sweeping underline.

**Year:** August 2018