



**Collingwood
College**

Complaints Policy

Document Version: V5
Last Updated: 29/6/2021

Document Status:
Published
Review By: SL, JC, MD

Rationale

This policy relates to complaints brought by parents, carers, students or members of our school community and applies to all matters relating to our school. 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.

Purpose

The purpose of this policy is to:

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

Policy

Collingwood College welcomes feedback, both positive and negative, and is committed to continuous improvement. We value open communication with our community 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.

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 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

Collingwood 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 Collingwood College (see “Further Information and Resources” section below).

Complaints process

Collingwood 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 school.

The complainant should telephone, write or arrange to visit:

- The student’s teacher about learning issues and incidents that happened in their class or group
- Year Level Co-ordinator/Learning Community Leader (Secondary School), Leading Teacher (Primary) or International Students’ Co-ordinator
- The Assistant Principal
- The Principal about issues relating to school policy, school management, staff members or very complex student issues.

If you would like to make a complaint, in most cases, depending on the nature of the complaint raised, our school will first seek to understand the issues and may then convene a resolution meeting with the aim of resolving the complaint together.

Where required Collingwood College will provide a professional interpreter to assist with the process.

The following process will apply:

Complaint received

Please either email, telephone or arrange a meeting through the front office with the appropriate person(s) 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.

Information gathering

Depending on the issues raised in the complaint, the Principal, 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.

Response

Where possible, a resolution meeting will be arranged 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 to produce a written summary of the complaint 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.

Timeline

Collingwood College will acknowledge receipt of your complaint as soon as possible (usually within 48 hours) and will seek to resolve complaints in a timely manner. Depending on the complexity of the complaint, Collingwood 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 14 working days of the complaint being raised. In situations where further time is required, Collingwood College will consult with you and discuss any interim solutions to the dispute that can be put in place.

Resolution

Where appropriate, Collingwood 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, staff and school relationship.

In some circumstances, Collingwood 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.

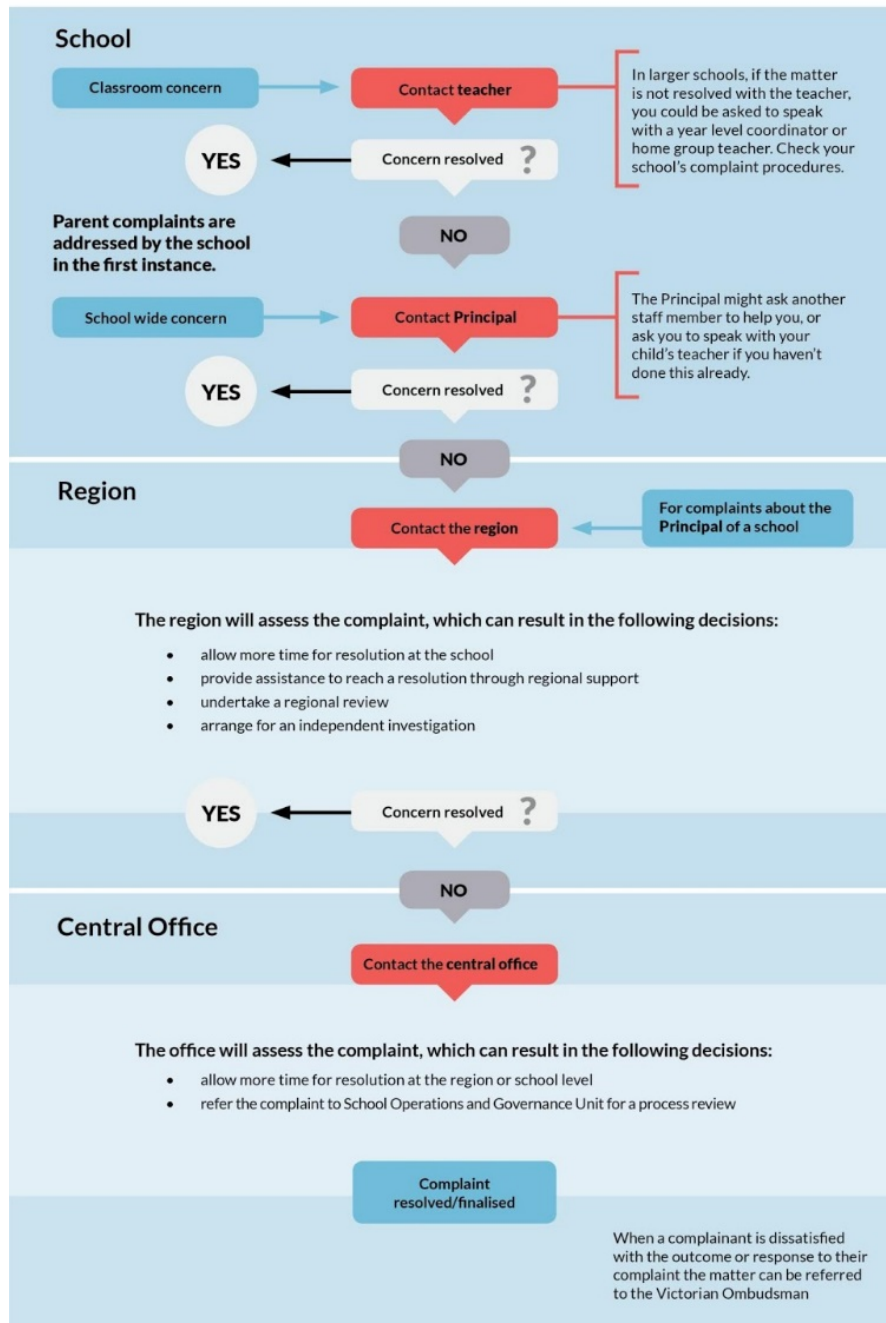
Escalation

If a parent or community member is not satisfied that their complaint has been resolved by the school, or if their complaint is about the Principal, then the complaint should be referred to the North Western Victorian Region by contacting them by phone: 039488 9488 or email nwvr@edumail.vic.gov.au

For International students the next step after school based resolutions have been tried, will be the International Education Division of the Department of Education and Training, phone: 03 9637 3581

Collingwood College may also refer a complaint to the North Western Victorian Region 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](#).

PARENT COMPLAINT FLOWCHART



Revision History

VERSION	DATE	AUTHOR(S)	CHANGES
1	29/10/2018	Judith Clelland	
2	31/10/2018		Re-formatted
3	29/06/2021	SL, JC, MD	Update from PAL (DET)

