



## **COMPLAINTS & GRIEVANCES POLICY & PROCEDURES**

Fitzroy Community School prioritises the wellbeing of children and is committed to providing a safe and supportive environment for students, staff, and other members of the school community.

This policy is intended to

- Communicate the process for making a complaint
- Outline School procedures for responding to complaints & grievances
- Reflect Child Safe Standard 7: providing an accessible, child-focused complaint handling policy

### **How to Make a Complaint and What Happens With It – “Procedure”**

We want all members of the school community and general public to be able to express their concerns and make a complaint.

#### **For students**

Complaints can be made to the person you feel most comfortable talking to. This could be a parent, a teacher, chaplain, head of campus, Vice Principal, the Principal or other staff member. The person you have chosen to speak to will then share your complaint, or help you to share your complaint, with a School chaplain, the Principal, or another senior member of staff.

School staff will respond to complaints made by students in an age-appropriate and culturally sensitive way.

If the matter relates to child safety, School staff will act in accordance with school policies and the Child Safe Standards.

<https://ccyp.vic.gov.au/child-safe-standards/the-11-child-safe-standards/standard-7/>

#### **For others**

In order for a complaint to be considered a formal complaint, it will need to be made in writing.

#### **Guidelines:**

- We will take all complaints seriously
- All complaints will be acknowledged
- All complaints will be investigated in a prompt and thorough way
- Once we have investigated your complaint, we will respond to you, in writing and explain the steps we have taken. If there is an outcome based on our investigation we will outline that in our response.
- At times it may be necessary to gather more information so we may request a meeting, or further information from you before making a response or decision
- We will keep written records of all complaints on the school's Complaints Register (updated 2024)



- We will create, manage and retain records in accordance with the relevant record keeping obligations
- We will respect the privacy and confidentiality of everyone involved except when information must be shared to keep people safe
- We will review all complaints annually for trends and to inform and improve School policies and risk management strategies
- We will communicate clearly, calmly and respectfully at all times
- We will ensure that students are made aware of the steps they can take to make a complaint in an age-appropriate way

**If you wish to make a complaint, we ask that you:**

- Share your concerns as soon as possible
- Communicate in a clear, calm and respectful manner
- Make your complaint in writing, preferably via email
- Respect the privacy and confidentiality of everyone involved, except when it is unsafe to do so

**Complaints About Staff Members**

When raising concerns about the conduct of a School staff member (or volunteer) you should raise them with either the Head of Campus, Vice Principal, Principal or School Chaplain in the first instance, depending on who you are most comfortable with and which staff member is the subject of the complaint.

Depending on which staff member is the subject of the complaint, the staff member to whom the complaint is made should report the complaint to either the Principal, Vice Principal, Head of Campus or a School Chaplain promptly.

This approach exists to minimise barriers to prompt and effective reporting.

Where a complaint or grievance relates to the Principal, a member of the Board will lead the response.

Investigations and responses will not be undertaken by a person who shares a conflict or a distinctly personal relationship with the person a concern has been raised about. Examples of such a relationship include but are not limited to that of a spouse, sibling, parent, or child.

**Further Steps**

If you make a complaint and feel that the School has not responded appropriately, or has failed to address your concerns, you may escalate directly to a member of the Board. Current (2025) Board Members are Sue, Faye, Catherine, Pete Behrendorff and Clare Myers, and can be contacted via email [info@fcs.vic.edu.au](mailto:info@fcs.vic.edu.au).

In addition, you are always able to seek help and advice from the following organisations depending on the nature of your complaint:



- The Victorian Registration & Qualifications Authority (VRQA)
- Victorian Institute of Teaching (VIT)
- Independent Schools Victoria (ISV)

This Complaints and Grievances policy is available on the School website, and upon request.

### Policy Endorsement

Updated February 2025

Review Date: February 2027

Review Cycle. Every 2 years

Exceptions: This Policy may be reviewed earlier than the date specified above when expansion, clarification, or inclusion of additional measures is warranted.