



Resolving Concerns and Complaints at School

(Guidelines for distribution to parents)

Catholic School Community

Our school is a Catholic school committed to living the gospel values of justice, love and reconciliation.

We aim to:

- develop a positive and collaborative relationship between home and school
- welcome and value diversity of opinion
- inform the staff of the changing needs of students and families
- have clear and open communication within the community

These guidelines have been developed collaboratively within the context of the Vision Statement for Sydney Catholic Schools¹.

What Do the Guidelines Apply To?

These guidelines apply to concerns of parents/carers about:

- children's learning, behaviour and welfare
- school organisation and management
- student health and safety issues

Certain matters concerning Child Protection or other areas covered by specific legislation will be referred immediately to the relevant external agency.

The **resolution of conflict** in every school community is vital to the well being and success of the school community.

At our school we recognise that parents/carers must have access to processes that allow them to resolve concerns and complaints in a supportive conciliatory environment.

¹ Sydney Archdiocesan Catholic Schools Board, 2002, *Vision Statement for Catholic Schools*, pp. 9-13.

Your Rights and Responsibilities

Most concerns should be able to be **resolved informally**.

Any parent/carer has the right to raise a concern and have it **responded to promptly, fairly and without fear of repercussions**, according to principles of procedural fairness.

Confidentiality will be respected and maintained by all parties involved.

Letters of Concern/Complaint & Verbal Complaints

Any letters of concern or complaint from parents, are to be shown to the Principal. The matter is to be attended to and the teacher is to note on the letter the manner in which the concern is resolved. The letter is then to be given to the Principal for filing.

Complaints raised verbally, are also made known to the Principal so that appropriate action can be taken.

What is the Process?

Some key elements of the guidelines include:

- generally, issues involving an individual child should be raised first with the class teacher
- where the issue involves the class teacher and the complainant is unable to resolve it directly with him/her the matter should be taken up with the Principal or Assistant Principal
- matters concerning school policy or management should be directed to the Principal or Assistant Principal
- the guidelines contain clear timeframes for resolution
- where a matter cannot be resolved locally, it will be managed by Regional Catholic Education Office

A copy of the guidelines can be obtained from the School Office.