



COMPLAINT MANAGEMENT POLICY

Issue no: Version 2.0

Prepared by: Phong Pham
Date Issued: August 2019

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Change History

Version	Date Approved	Author	Comments
1.0	01.05.2017	Debbie Dunwoody	Initial Version
2.0	13.08.2019	Phong Pham	New policy template Renamed 'Complaints' to 'Complaint Management Policy' Separate complaints procedures for parents, students, staff and other community members Added reference to (AS/NZS 10002:2014) Added 'Introduction' section Expanded 'Scope' section Expanded 'Guiding Principles' section Expanded 'Key responsibilities' section

1. INTRODUCTION

At Camberwell Girls Grammar School (CGGS) one of the six key Strategic Pillars identified in the Strategic Plan 2015-2019 is a commitment to building a connected community amongst its students, parents and staff that is inclusive and caring. One of the ways the school does this is by recognising that all members of the school community have a voice and are encouraged to speak up if they have a complaint and/or grievance about the school. CGGS views every complaint as an opportunity for reflection and growth.

The school recognises the right of members of the school community to make a complaint and its responsibility to providing an effective complaint handling framework that is in accordance with the Australian / New Zealand Standard – Guidelines for Complaint Management in Organisations (AS/NZS 10002:2014), which provides the best practice benchmarks for handling complaints.

Commitment to Child Safety

All students who attend Camberwell Girls Grammar School (CGGS) have a right to feel and to be safe. The wellbeing and safety of all students in our care is our first priority and we have zero tolerance to child abuse. The protection of students is the responsibility of everyone who is employed at, or is engaged by CGGS in child connected work. To ensure the safety and best interests of all students, we take into account the needs of those with an Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander heritage, those from culturally and/or linguistically diverse backgrounds and those with a disability.

Scope

The Australian / New Zealand Standard defines a 'complaint' as an '*expression of dissatisfaction made to or about an organisation, related to its products, services, staff or the handling of a complaint, where a response or resolution is explicitly or implicitly expected.*' When an individual makes a complaint, they are saying that they have been personally treated poorly and are expecting the organisation to whom they have made the complaint to acknowledge and respond to their complaint. Therefore, a complaint is generally a matter of personal interest and does not impact on the wider school community.

This policy applies to all students, parents, staff and members of the CGGS community.

Issues that may be considered under this policy, include but is not limited to, the following:

- The mishandling of the collection, use and disclosure of personal information in accordance with the school's Privacy Policy
- Availability of information about the school's performance
- The right of a parent or student to access information about the student's achievement
- Decisions, actions, or activities for which the school is responsible and which are thought to go against the spirit of the school's mission and values or which are alleged to be inequitable or procedurally unfair.
- Concerns in relation to employment matters for staff
- Concerns in relation to a student's educational experience at CGGS

Refer to the relevant complainant sections within this policy for further details (i.e. parent, student, staff, etc).

The scope of this policy does not apply to matters of serious misconduct, such as sexual offences, criminal charges, serious incidents or matters related to mandatory reporting and reportable conduct. For all child safety related matters, complainants and respondents should refer to the Child Safety Reporting Policy and seek guidance from the School's Child Safety Officers for further details.

For matters of a serious nature such as corruption, unethical practices, danger or illegality that affects others and the wider school community, refer to the school's Whistleblower Protection Policy on SEQTA.

For International Students, refer to the Complaints and Appeals Policy - International Students on SEQTA.

Policy objectives

The purpose of this policy is to provide the process and procedures for receiving, responding to and investigating complaints from parents, staff, students and the wider school community. Refer to the relevant section within this document for further details.

Policy Review

CGGS is committed to the continuous improvement of its complaint handling processes. All complaints are recorded on the school's complaints register, handled in accordance with this policy and reviewed upon completion for opportunities for improvement.

This policy will be reviewed annually or more often as circumstances require.

Next scheduled review date is August 2020.

Communication

The school community will be informed about this policy. It will be publicly available. It will be available on the school's website and communicated during the induction and enrolment processes.

Further questions regarding this policy should be addressed to the Human Resource department.

Guiding Principles

CGGS's complaint handling process is built upon the guiding principles as set out in AS/NZS 10002:2014.

Visibility	Information about how and where to make a complaint, as well as how a complaint will be handled is regularly publicised within the school community. The actions taken to respond to a complaint is well documented and includes the reasons underpinning any decisions made.
Accessibility	Information about how to make a complaint and the procedures when responding to a complaint is readily accessible on the school's intranet and website. The complaint-handling process is flexible and includes the ability to make a complaint in person, by phone or in writing. Support is provided to complainants with special needs, including interpreting services, support persons and/or witnesses.
Responsiveness	CGGS acknowledges, investigates and responds to complaints within an appropriate and timely manner. Complainants are kept informed of the progress of their complaint. When the matter is complex and additional time is required to bring the matter to resolution, complainants will be advised accordingly.
Objectivity	CGGS welcomes diverse views and opinions and acknowledges that the expression and exploration of alternate views are elements of a safe, open, healthy and dynamic environment.
Cost	There is no cost to the complainant to access the internal complaint-handling process of the school.
Protection of Privacy	Complainants will not be victimised or discriminated against. Personally identifiable information concerning the complainant are protected from disclosure except where needed in relation to the complaint. This means that the complaint is only discussed with those directly involved in the complaint-handling process.

Student-focused	<p>The school is open and receptive to complaints and committed to resolving them with the educational wellbeing of students as the first priority.</p> <p>The school is committed to child safety and has a zero tolerance of child abuse. The response to a complaint relating to child safety, particularly any in relation to Indigenous children, children from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds, children with disabilities, and children who are vulnerable, will be given the highest priority and attention.</p>
Accountability	<p>Complaints are handled in accordance with procedural fairness, respect and in good faith. The school is accountable, both internally and externally, for its decision making and complaint-handling performance. The school is able to provide explanations and reasons for its decisions.</p>
Continual improvement	<p>Complaint-handling procedures are regularly reviewed for improvement. Complaint data and feedback are used to identify recurrent themes and to implement improvement measures where a need is identified to improve the care and service provided.</p>

Key Responsibilities

- The Governing Board is responsible for determining this policy, reviewing it on an annual basis, and responding to any appeals referred to by the Principal
- The Chair of CGGS School Council is responsible for receiving and managing complaints against the Principal or a member of CGGS School Council.
- The Deputy Chair of CGGS School Council is responsible for receiving and managing complaints against the Chair of CGGS School Council.
- The Principal holds overall accountability for ensuring that the system for managing complaints within CGGS is effective and communicated throughout the school
- The Chief Financial and Operating Officer is responsible for responding to general service and operation complaints, tuition fee complaints and complaints from nearby residents.
- The Deputy Principal/Head of Senior School is responsible for all complaints regarding Senior School.
- The Head of Junior School is responsible for all complaints regarding Junior School.
- The Director of Human Resources is responsible for all complaints regarding staffing and employment

Anonymous Complaints

CGGS is committed to considering all complaints. However, it should be recognised that the school may not be able to fully consider a complaint if it cannot effectively liaise with a complainant. Anonymous complaints raise natural justice issues for respondents, who have a right to know particulars of allegations made against them.

In consultation with relevant CGGS staff, the Principal will determine the extent to which an anonymous complaint will be investigated.

Vexatious Complaints

Inaccurate, misleading, malicious or false accusations have negative consequences for the person(s) concerned, interpersonal relationships and the morale of the school community. Where it is found that a complaint has been made in bad faith to cause distress to one or more persons, or as practical joke, disciplinary measures will be taken.

Breach of Policy

Any breach of this policy will be handled by the Principal, or delegated by the Principal to an authorised representative, to handle on a case-by-case basis. The Principal may take such action as considered appropriate in response to a breach of this policy and may include but is not limited to the following:

- Provision of a verbal or a written warning
- Withdrawal of certain privileges or opportunities
- Exclusion from future school events or functions
- Exclusion from the school grounds and facilities
- Revocation of their child's enrolment

Definitions

Complaint	An expression of dissatisfaction with an action taken, decision made, or service provided, or the failure to provide a service, take action or make a decision.
Grievance	A dispute or disagreement between two parties. A grievance is also a complaint one party has against another party for some alleged wrong committed by the second party.
Complainant	The party that brings a complaint against another
Respondent	The person against whom the complaint is made
Support Person	Has the role of providing moral support but cannot interfere with procedures and should refrain from interrupting and adding their personal opinion. This person cannot be someone who will be interviewed as part of the investigation.
Resolved	A complaint is considered to be 'resolved' when an acceptable outcome is reached between both the complainant and respondent
Finalised	A complaint is considered to be 'finalised' when the Principal has made a final determination on the matter after exhausting the processes set out in this policy
Unresolved	A complaint is considered to be 'unresolved' when agreement cannot be reached on a course of action and/or a remedy, or if the remedy cannot be implemented.

2. COMPLAINTS AND GRIEVANCE – PARENTS

A parent may wish to make a complaint to the School over matters such as but not limited to the following:

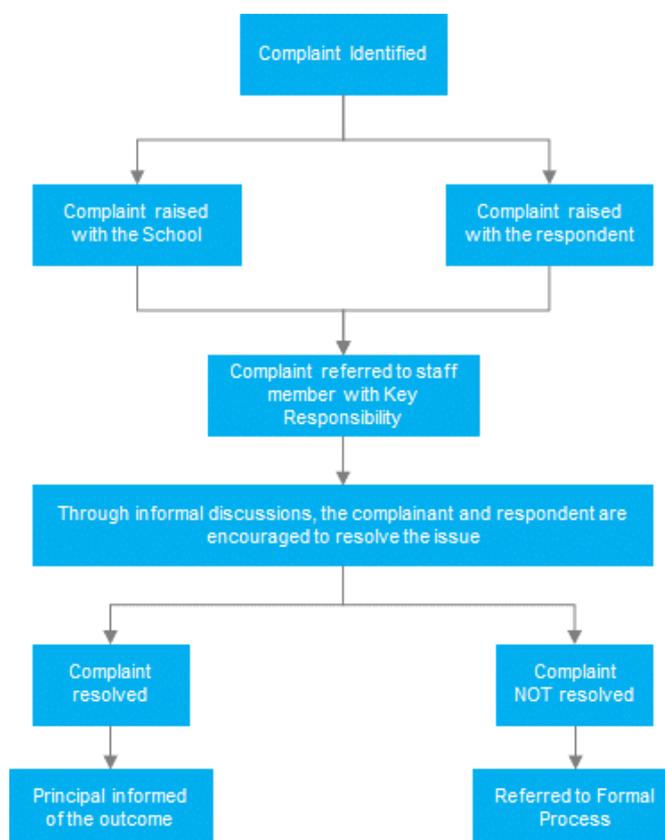
- General issues of staff and/or student behaviour that are contrary to CGGS code of conduct
- Incidents of bullying, harassment and/or victimisation in the classroom or school yard
- Curriculum, assessment and reporting of student learning
- Communication with parents
- School fees and payments
- General administration issues
- School practices, policies or decisions made or ignored that is perceived to be unfair, unreasonable or inappropriate

Informal resolution process

The complainant wishes to make a complaint to the School over a matter that is within the scope of this policy. They may do so by raising the complaint directly to the:

- Deputy Principal / Head of Senior School
- Deputy Head of Senior School – Student Well Being
- Deputy Head of Senior School – Teaching and Learning
- Deputy Head of Senior School – Co-Curricular Programs
- Head of Junior School
- Chief Financial Operating Officer
- Respondent against whom the complaint is made

INFORMAL DISPUTE RESOLUTION



If the complaint is made directly to the respondent, the respondent must inform the appropriate staff member with Key Responsibility to respond to the complaint. A resolution will be encouraged through informal discussion between the complainant and respondent. All meetings, discussions, telephone calls or emails will be recorded and documented by the staff member with Key Responsibility on the complaints register.

The Principal will be briefed about the complaint and the outcome of the process.

If the matter is not resolved informally, the complainant will be advised to submit a formal written complaint to the Principal.

Formal resolution process

Before an investigation to a formal complaint is commenced, the complainant must have made reasonable attempts to resolve the complaint informally with the respondent in the first instance.

Step 1: Written complaint

The complainant completes a Formal Complaint Form noting key facts such as what, where, when, how and any supporting evidence she/he may have, including witnesses, emails, photographs, texts etc. Refer to SEQTA for a copy of the latest Formal Complaint Form.

All formal complaints are to be lodged with the Principal.

Upon receipt and depending on the nature of the complaint, the Principal will initiate the investigation process by delegating the complaint to an appropriate member of staff who has Key Responsibility.

Step 2: Investigation

The investigator:

- Will meet with the complainant and outline the principles that apply to the procedure to be followed
- May choose to interview any witnesses identified by the complainant, check the accuracy of the evidence before making a written statement of the evidence given by the witnesses.
- Will meet with the respondent, who will be provided with a copy of the complaint and given opportunity to present their right of reply.
- Will offer the complainant the opportunity to meet with the Principal to discuss the complaint and provide additional information where relevant.
- Will document, in writing, all meetings and interviews conducted during the formal process. Any supporting evidence such as emails, photographs or other documentation will be copied and attached to any written notes.
- Will review relevant information and documents.
- Will obtain any other relevant information or documentation that will assist in resolving the complaint.
- May seek advice, where appropriate, from individuals or organisations that may be able to assist in resolving the grievance.

If a complaint against a member of the School Management Team is received, the Principal may undertake the investigation, or may choose to appoint an external independent arbiter.

Step 3: Outcome

The investigator will provide a written report to the Principal detailing all the evidence and a finding as to whether the complaint is substantiated or not.

The Principal will make a determination on the report, following which both parties will be provided with the Principal's conclusion in writing.

If the determination substantiates the complaint, the Principal may decide outcomes that may include the following:

- Counselling;
- Support for the parties involved, as deemed appropriate;
- Staff professional learning and development;
- Warning – oral/written;
- Apology, if appropriate;
- Suspension; and
- Dismissal/Expulsion

If the decision concludes that the complaint is not substantiated, the complainant and the respondent will both be advised accordingly. Each party has the right to appeal and request an independent arbiter to review the decision.

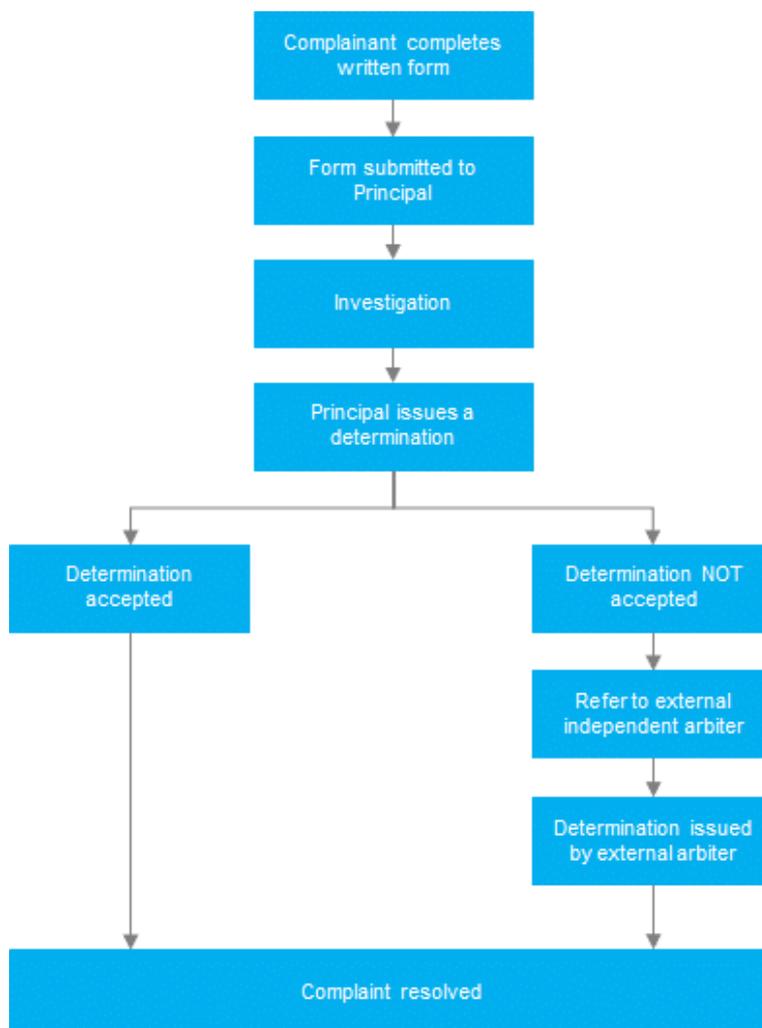
If an appeal is lodged, the Principal will outsource to an independent arbiter to examine all of the evidence and advise accordingly. The independent arbiter's review will be final with CGGS.

If the Principal believes that there is a risk of litigation, the school's insurers and Chair of School Council will be notified.

Step 4: Review

The School reviews all data from the complaint and the complaint process and procedures to identify opportunities to improve its care and service.

FORMAL RESOLUTION PROCESS



3. COMPLAINTS AND GRIEVANCE – STUDENTS

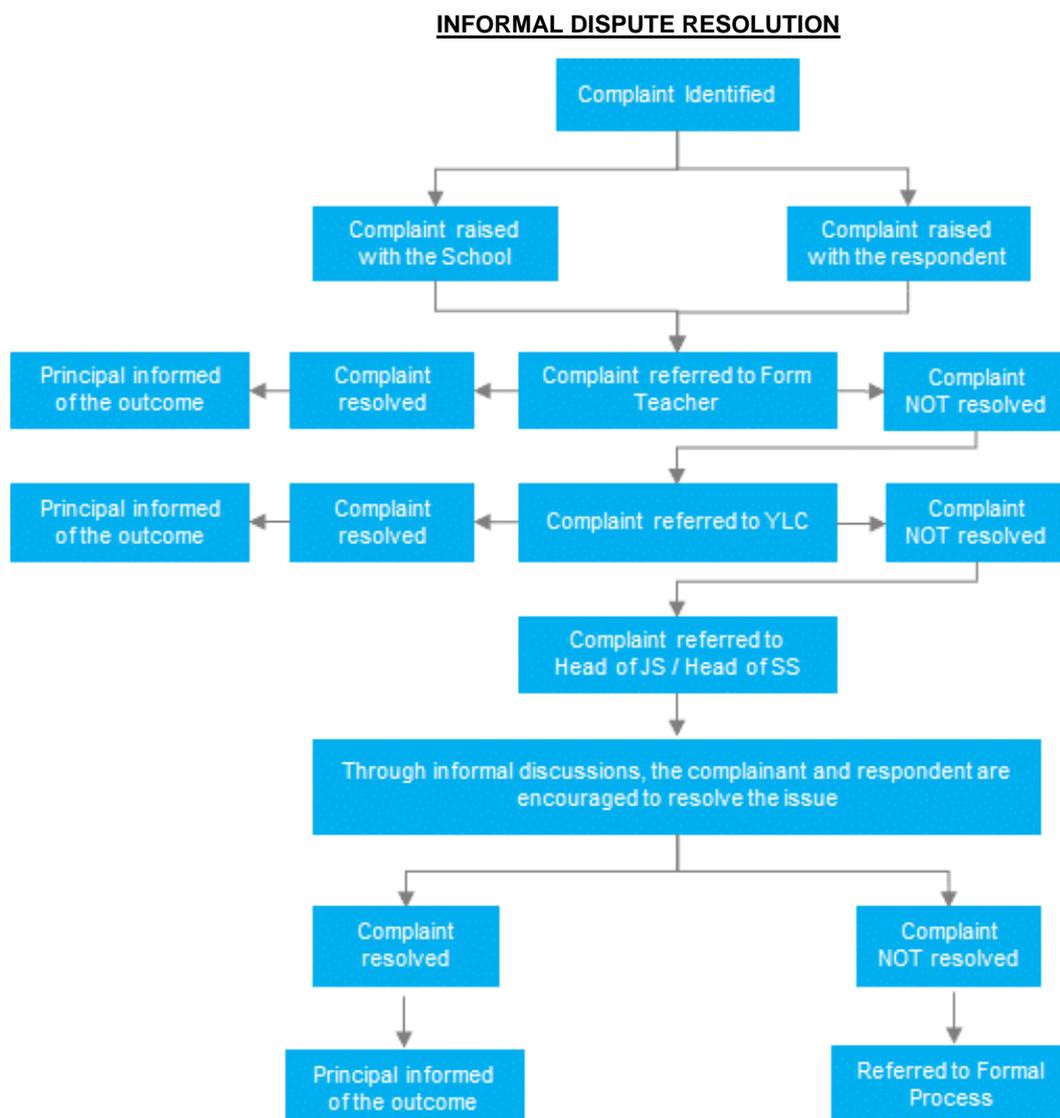
A student may wish to make a complaint to the school over matters such as but not limited to the following:

- General issues of staff and/or student behaviour that are contrary to CGGS code of conduct
- Incidents of bullying, harassment and/or victimisation in the classroom or school yard
- Academic matters such as teaching methods, curriculum, assessment and school reports
- School practices, policies or decisions made or ignored that is perceived to be unfair, unreasonable or inappropriate

Informal resolution process

The complainant wishes to make a complaint to the school over a matter that is within the scope of this policy. They may do so by raising the complaint directly to the:

- Form Teacher
- Year Level Coordinator
- Deputy Principal / Head of Senior School
- Head of Junior School
- Respondent against whom the complaint is made



It is recommended that students follow the escalation process when initiating a complaint. This means that all student complaints should first be directed to the respective form teacher for resolution. If the complaint is made directly to the respondent, the respondent must inform their respective form teacher. A resolution will be encouraged through informal discussion between the complainant, the respondent and the form teacher(s). All meetings, discussions, telephone calls or emails will be recorded and documented by one of the form teachers handling the complaint on the complaints register. In the event that a resolution cannot be reached, the matter will be escalated to the Year Level Coordinator followed by the Head of Junior School or Head of Senior School respectively.

The Principal will be briefed about the complaint and the outcome of the process.

If the matter is not resolved informally, the complainant will be advised to submit a formal written complaint to the Principal. At this point in time, parents may be contacted, depending on the severity of the complaint.

Formal resolution process

Before an investigation to a formal complaint is commenced, the complainant must have made reasonable attempts to resolve the complaint informally with the respondent in the first instance.

Step 1: Written complaint

The complainant completes a Formal Complaint Form noting key facts such as what, where, when, how and any supporting evidence she/he may have, including witnesses, emails, photographs, texts etc. Refer to SEQTA for a copy of the latest Formal Complaint Form.

All formal complaints are to be lodged with the Principal.

Upon receipt and depending on the nature of the complaint, the Principal will initiate the investigation process by delegating the complaint to an appropriate member of staff who has Key Responsibility.

Step 2: Investigation

The investigator:

- Will meet with the complainant and outline the principles that apply to the procedure to be followed
- May choose to contact the parents of students involved,
- May choose to interview any witnesses identified by the complainant, check the accuracy of the evidence before making a written statement of the evidence given by the witnesses.
- Will meet with the respondent, who will be provided with a copy of the complaint and given opportunity to present their right of reply.
- Will offer the complainant the opportunity to meet with the Principal to discuss the complaint and provide additional information where relevant.
- Will document, in writing, all meetings and interviews conducted during the formal process. Any supporting evidence such as emails, photographs or other documentation will be copied and attached to any written notes.
- Will review relevant information and documents.
- Will obtain any other relevant information or documentation that will assist in resolving the complaint.
- May seek advice, where appropriate, from individuals or organisations that may be able to assist in resolving the grievance.

If a complaint against a member of the School Management Team is received, the Principal may undertake the investigation, or may choose to appoint an external independent arbiter.

Step 3: Outcome

The investigator will provide a written report to the Principal detailing all the evidence and a finding as to whether the complaint is substantiated or not.

The Principal will make a determination on the report, following which both parties will be provided with the Principal's conclusion in writing.

If the determination substantiates the complaint, the Principal may decide outcomes that may include the following:

- Counselling;
- Support for the parties involved, as deemed appropriate;
- Staff professional learning and development;
- Warning – oral/written;
- Apology, if appropriate;
- Suspension; and
- Dismissal/Expulsion

If the decision concludes that the complaint is not substantiated, the complainant and the respondent will both be advised accordingly. Each party has the right to appeal and request an independent arbiter to review the decision.

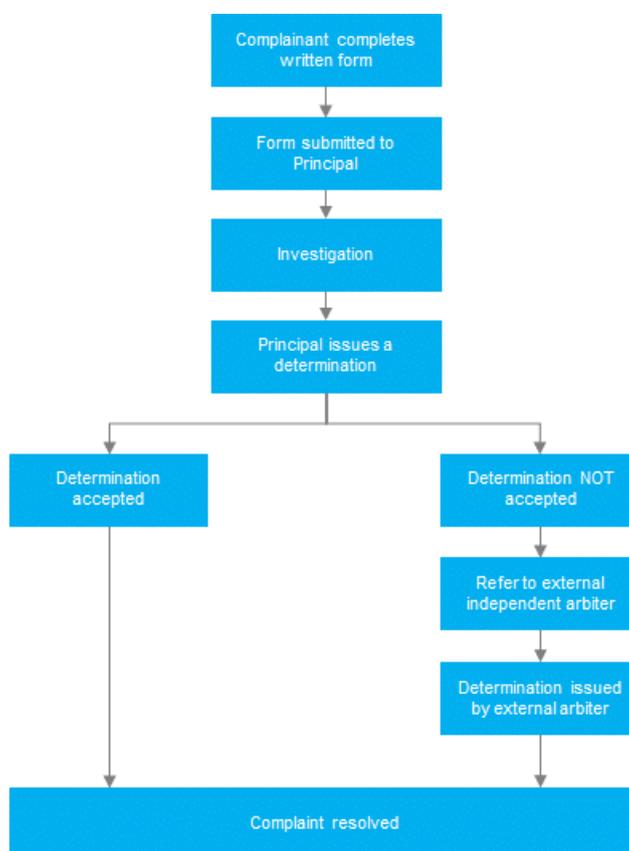
If an appeal is lodged, the Principal will outsource to an independent arbiter to examine all of the evidence and advise accordingly. The independent arbiter's review will be final with CGGS.

If the Principal believes that there is a risk of litigation, the school's insurers and Chair of School Council will be notified.

Step 4: Review

The School reviews all data from the complaint to identify opportunities to improve its care and service.

FORMAL RESOLUTION PROCESS



4. COMPLAINTS AND GRIEVANCE – STAFF

A staff member may wish to make a complaint to the School over matters such as but not limited to the following:

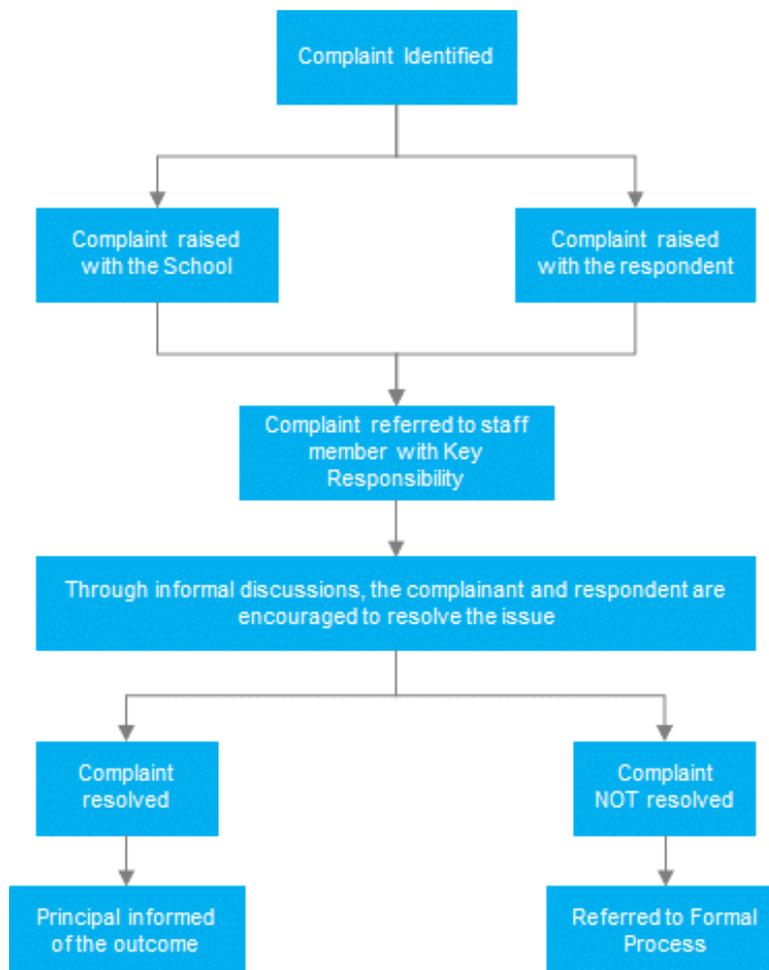
- General issues of staff and/or student behaviour that are contrary to CGGS code of conduct
- Incidents of bullying, harassment and/or victimisation in the workplace
- Occupational, Health and Safety matters
- Work load and working conditions
- General HR issues
- School practices, policies or decisions made or ignored that is perceived to be unfair, unreasonable or inappropriate

Informal resolution process

The complainant wishes to make a complaint to the school over a matter that is within the scope of this policy. They may do so by raising the complaint directly to the:

- Deputy Principal / Head of Senior School
- Head of Junior School
- Chief Financial Operating Officer
- Director of Human Resources
- Respondent against whom the complaint is made

INFORMAL DISPUTE RESOLUTION



If the complaint is made directly to the respondent, the respondent must inform the appropriate staff member with Key Responsibility to respond to the complaint. A resolution will be encouraged through informal discussion between the complainant and respondent. All meetings, discussions, telephone calls or emails will be recorded and documented by the staff member with Key Responsibility on the complaints register.

The Principal will be briefed about the complaint and the outcome of the process.

If the matter is not resolved informally, the complainant will be advised to submit a formal written complaint to the Principal.

Formal resolution process

Before an investigation to a formal complaint is commenced, the complainant must have made reasonable attempts to resolve the complaint informally with the respondent in the first instance.

Step 1: Written complaint

The complainant completes a Formal Complaint Form noting key facts such as what, where, when, how and any supporting evidence she/he may have, including witnesses, emails, photographs, texts etc. Refer to SEQTA for a copy of the latest Formal Complaint Form.

All formal complaints are to be lodged with the Principal.

Upon receipt and depending on the nature of the complaint, the Principal will initiate the investigation process by delegating the complaint to an appropriate member of staff who has Key Responsibility.

Step 2: Investigation

The investigator:

- Will meet with the complainant and outline the principles that apply to the procedure to be followed
- May choose to interview any witnesses identified by the complainant, check the accuracy of the evidence before making a written statement of the evidence given by the witnesses.
- Will meet with the respondent, who will be provided with a copy of the complaint and given opportunity to present their right of reply.
- Will offer the complainant the opportunity to meet with the Principal to discuss the complaint and provide additional information where relevant.
- Will document, in writing, all meetings and interviews conducted during the formal process. Any supporting evidence such as emails, photographs or other documentation will be copied and attached to any written notes.
- Will review relevant information and documents.
- Will obtain any other relevant information or documentation that will assist in resolving the complaint.
- May seek advice, where appropriate, from individuals or organisations that may be able to assist in resolving the grievance.

If a complaint against a member of the School Management Team is received, the Principal may undertake the investigation, or may choose to appoint an external independent arbiter.

Step 3: Outcome

The investigator will provide a written report to the Principal detailing all the evidence and a finding as to whether the complaint is substantiated or not.

The Principal will make a determination on the report, following which both parties will be provided with the Principal's conclusion in writing.

If the determination substantiates the complaint, the Principal may decide outcomes that may include the following:

- Counselling;
- Support for the parties involved, as deemed appropriate;
- Staff professional learning and development;
- Warning – oral/written;
- Apology, if appropriate;
- Suspension; and
- Dismissal/Expulsion

If the decision concludes that the complaint is not substantiated, the complainant and the respondent will both be advised accordingly. Each party has the right to appeal and request an independent arbiter to review the decision.

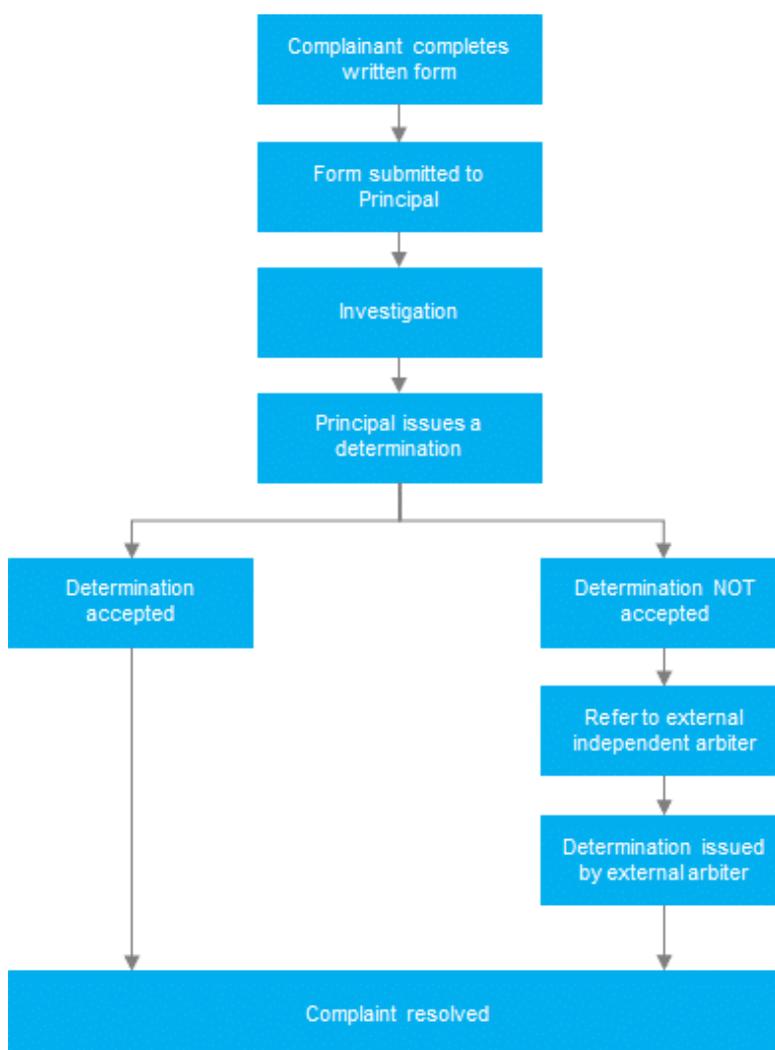
If an appeal is lodged, the Principal will outsource to an independent arbiter to examine all of the evidence and advise accordingly. The independent arbiter's review will be final with CGGS.

If the Principal believes that there is a risk of litigation, the school's insurers and Chair of School Council will be notified.

Step 4: Review

The School reviews all data from the complaint to identify opportunities to improve its care and service.

FORMAL RESOLUTION PROCESS



5. COMPLAINTS AND GRIEVANCE – OTHER COMMUNITY MEMBERS

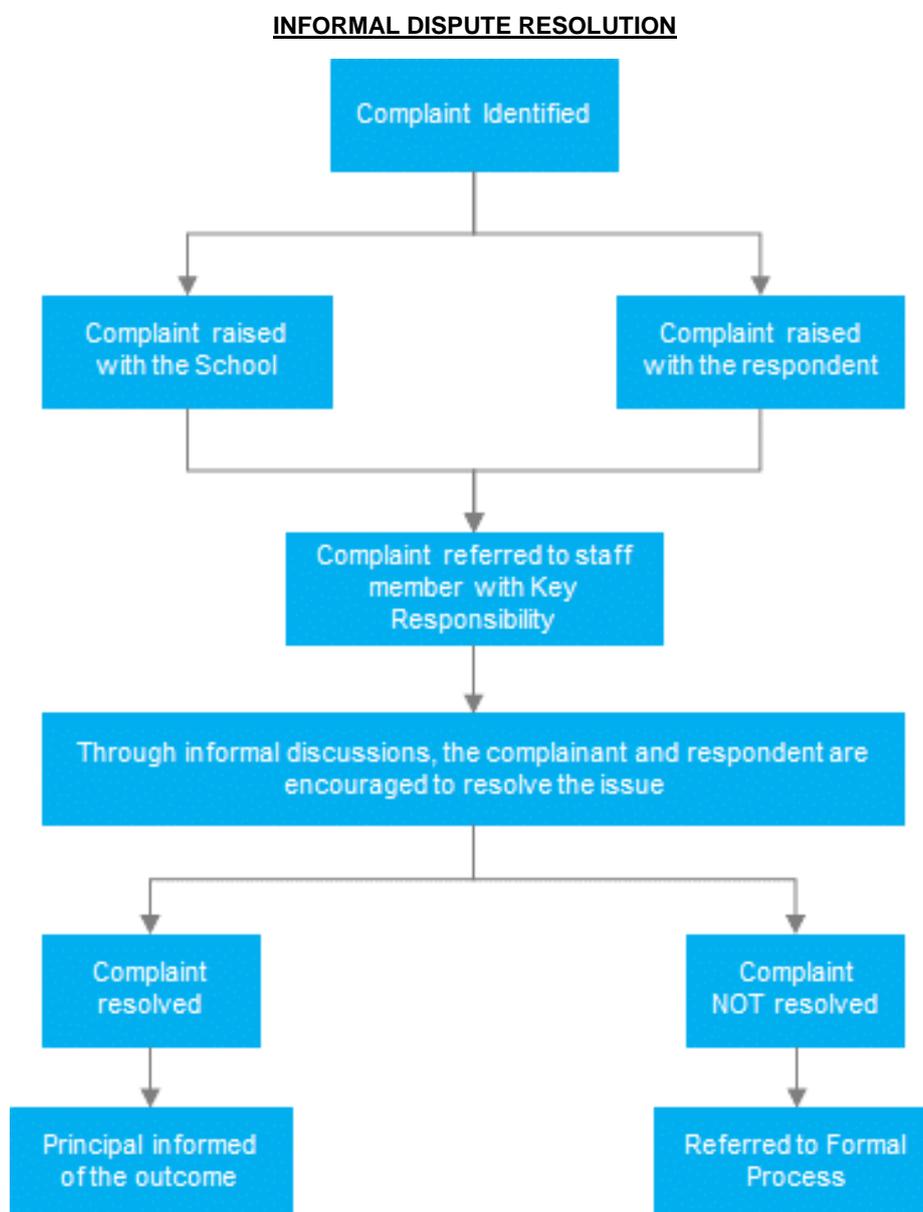
Any member of the school community (other than staff, students and parents) may wish to make a complaint to the school over matters such as but not limited to the following:

- General issues of staff and/or student behaviour that are contrary to CGGS code of conduct
- The standard of service provided by the school
- School practices, policies or decisions made or ignored that is perceived to be unfair, unreasonable, inappropriate or negatively impacting the wider school community

Informal resolution process

The complainant wishes to make a complaint to the school over a matter that is within the scope of this policy. They may do so by raising the complaint directly to the:

- Deputy Principal / Head of Senior School
- Head of Junior School
- Respondent against whom the complaint is made



If the complaint is made directly to the respondent, the respondent must inform the appropriate staff member with Key Responsibility to respond to the complaint. A resolution will be encouraged through informal discussion between the complainant and respondent. All meetings, discussions, telephone calls or emails will be recorded and documented by the staff member with Key Responsibility on the complaints register.

The Principal will be briefed about the complaint and the outcome of the process.

If the matter is not resolved informally, the complainant will be advised to submit a formal written complaint to the Principal.

Formal resolution process

Before an investigation to a formal complaint is commenced, the complainant must have made reasonable attempts to resolve the complaint informally with the respondent in the first instance.

Step 1: Written complaint

The complainant completes a Formal Complaint Form noting key facts such as what, where, when, how and any supporting evidence she/he may have, including witnesses, emails, photographs, texts etc. A copy of the latest Formal Complaint Form (available on SEQTA) is provided to the complainant.

All formal complaints are to be lodged with the Principal.

Upon receipt and depending on the nature of the complaint, the Principal will initiate the investigation process by delegating the complaint to an appropriate member of staff who has Key Responsibility.

Step 2: Investigation

The investigator:

- Will meet with the complainant and outline the principles that apply to the procedure to be followed
- May choose to interview any witnesses identified by the complainant, check the accuracy of the evidence before making a written statement of the evidence given by the witnesses.
- Will meet with the respondent, who will be provided with a copy of the complaint and given opportunity to present their right of reply.
- Will offer the complainant the opportunity to meet with the Principal to discuss the complaint and provide additional information where relevant.
- Will document, in writing, all meetings and interviews conducted during the formal process. Any supporting evidence such as emails, photographs or other documentation will be copied and attached to any written notes.
- Will review relevant information and documents.
- Will obtain any other relevant information or documentation that will assist in resolving the complaint.
- May seek advice, where appropriate, from individuals or organisations that may be able to assist in resolving the grievance.

If a complaint against a member of the School Management Team is received, the Principal may undertake the investigation, or may choose to appoint an external independent arbiter.

Step 3: Outcome

The investigator will provide a written report to the Principal detailing all the evidence and a finding as to whether the complaint is substantiated or not.

The Principal will make a determination on the report, following which both parties will be provided with the Principal's conclusion in writing.

If the determination substantiates the complaint, the Principal may decide outcomes that may include the following:

- Counselling;
- Support for the parties involved, as deemed appropriate;
- Staff professional learning and development;
- Warning – oral/written;
- Apology, if appropriate;
- Suspension; and
- Dismissal/Expulsion

If the decision concludes that the complaint is not substantiated, the complainant and the respondent will both be advised accordingly. Each party has the right to appeal and request an independent arbiter to review the decision.

If an appeal is lodged, the Principal will outsource to an independent arbiter to examine all of the evidence and advise accordingly. The independent arbiter's review will be final with CGGS.

If the Principal believes that there is a risk of litigation, the school's insurers and Chair of School Council must be notified.

Step 4: Review

The School reviews all data from the complaint and the complaint process and procedures to identify opportunities to improve its care and service.

FORMAL RESOLUTION PROCESS

