



Addressing Parent Complaints

Rationale:

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

Note: 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.

Aim:

When addressing parent/guardian concerns or complaints, Kambrya College must:

- Abide by relevant regulatory and legislative frameworks
- Maintain confidentiality
- Balance the rights and responsibilities of all parties
- Ensure all parties are aware of their right to advocacy
- Act in a manner that seeks to achieve an outcome acceptable to all parties.

Implementation:

The school expects a person raising a concern or complaint to:

- Do so promptly, as soon as possible after the issue occurs
- Provide complete and factual information about the concern or complaint
- Maintain and respect the privacy and confidentiality of all parties
- Acknowledge that a common goal is to achieve an outcome acceptable to all parties
- Act in good faith, and in a calm and courteous manner
- Show respect and understanding of each other's point of view and value difference, rather than judge or blame
- Recognise that all parties have rights and responsibilities which must be balanced.

The school will address any concerns and complaints received from parents:

- Courteously.
- Efficiently.
- Fairly.
- Promptly, or within the timeline agreed with the person with the concern or complaint.
- In accordance with due process, principles of natural justice and the Department's Regulatory framework.

In the first instance, a complaint should be made to the school via: telephone, visit or written communication to:

- The student's teacher or home group teacher about learning issues and incidents that occurred in their class.
- The Sub School leader if students from several classes are involved.
- An Assistant Principal about issues relating to staff members or complex student issues.
- The Principal about issues relating to school policy, school management, staff members or very complex student issues.

Complainants can seek the services of an advocate when they feel they are unable to express their concern clearly. An advocate can be a friend or someone who is available through an appropriate support organisation who does not receive a fee for service.

All parties involved in addressing a complaint may seek the services of a mediator when there is difficulty coming to an agreement. A complainant who wishes to use these support services should ensure the person addressing the concern or complaint is aware of their intention and agrees.

The school records the following details of all complaints received, even if the complaint appears to be minor:

- Name and contact details (with permission) of the person with a concern or complaint.
- The date the concern was expressed, or complaint made.
- The form in which the concern or complaint was received (face-to-face, by telephone, in writing, by email).
- A brief description of the concern or complaint.
- Details of the school officer responding to the concern or complaint.
- Action taken on the concern or complaint.
- The outcome of action taken on the concern or complaint.
- Any recommendations for future improvement in the school's policy or procedures.

However, in the first instance, when the complaint is easily resolved in a telephone call, a brief note in the school's/Principal's/Teacher's diary recording the issue and the resolution may be all that is required.

The school will make every effort to resolve concerns and complaints before involving other levels of the Department.

- The school will determine whether a concern or complaint should be managed through the school's concern and complaints process or via other Departmental complaints processes.
- All complaints will be noted and acted on promptly by the staff member who receives the complaint.
- The school will acknowledge all complaints made in writing and will provide the complainant with a timeline for investigating the complaint.
- The staff member / Assistant Principal / Principal will investigate the complaint and will provide a response to the complainant.
- Concerns and complaints about general school matters (such as the timing of events, school policies and facilities) will be addressed by the principal or a relevant staff member.
- The school will make every attempt to resolve a concern or complaint as quickly as possible. If your complaint involves many students and a range of issues, the school will need more time to investigate and resolve it.
- Should the complaint involve complex issues, the school might need to take advice from the Department's Regional office which may take more time. The school will tell the complainant the new timeline for addressing the complaint and the reasons for any delays. In all cases, the school will try to resolve a concern or complaint within 10 school days.

Remedies:

If a concern or complaint is substantiated in whole or part, the school will offer an appropriate remedy at its discretion and depending on the circumstances, the school might offer:

- An explanation or further information about the issue.
- Mediation, counselling or other support.
- An apology, expression of regret or admission of fault.
- To change its decision.
- To change its policies, procedures or practices.
- To cancel a debt (such as for school payments) or a fee refund.
- Other actions consistent with school values that are intended to support the student, parent and school relationship, engagement, and participation in the school community.

In some circumstances, Kambrya College may also ask the parent/guardian 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.

The school will implement the remedy as soon as practicable.

Referral of Concerns or Complaints:

- If a person with a concern or complaint is not satisfied with the outcome determined by the school, they can contact the Department's appropriate regional office.
- The officer from the region will ask the complainant for a complete and factual account in writing of the concern or complaint and the complainant's opinion about why the school did not resolve it to their satisfaction.
- Kambrya College may also refer a complaint to Regional Office 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](#).

Evaluation:

This policy will be reviewed as part of the school's three-year review cycle.

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Responsible for Review	Paul Looker- Assistant Principal
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