

# Has someone made a **COMPLAINT** about you?



## HERE'S HOW TO RESPOND

- 1.** The person making the complaint may ask to talk it over with you. You are encouraged to meet with the person, understand the nature of their grievance, and try and reach an amicable settlement. Often complaints are based on a misunderstanding and can be resolved through clarification, and if appropriate, an apology.
- 2.** If the issue is not resolved the complainant may seek the involvement of your Principal or line manager, who will raise the matter with you. Again, you are encouraged to positively engage in this discussion.
- 3.** If these two steps do not resolve the matter the complainant may make a formal written complaint and an independent person (a senior Catholic Education Services (CES) staff member) will be assigned to manage the process. You will be asked to respond with a written statement and may be asked to attend a meeting with or without the complainant.
- 4.** Your statement will be your version of events – who is involved, when it happened, where it happened, any contextual information, names of witnesses or confidants. This is best provided in numbered paragraphs. If you regard the complaint as frivolous or vexatious you should outline your reasons.
- 5.** Once a formal process has begun you should not have contact with the complainant without the endorsement of the process manager.
- 6.** Having investigated the matter the independent person will make a determination on the complaint. If you are not happy with the outcome you may appeal, in writing, to the Catholic Education Services Executive Director, within 30 days.

### Remember:

- You are entitled to seek independent legal advice and separate recourse through the legal process, at any stage.
- All parties have a right to expect confidentiality in the management of grievance and complaint processes.
- Our processes do not tolerate frivolous or vexatious complaints.
- If a complaint is upheld there could be consequences under the Catholic Education Codes of Conduct for staff and for parents and volunteers.

### Policy statement:

Catholic Education in the Diocese of Cairns is committed to developing an educational and organizational culture based on mutual trust and respect. We are committed to providing a safe and supportive work and learning environment for all employees and students.

We acknowledge that employees, students and parents may sometimes have a complaint about a decision, behaviour, act or omission that they feel is unacceptable. While most issues can be resolved through direct discussion between the parties concerned, there may be instances in which this is not possible. This is one of a series of three posters to provide guidance on a process for grievance resolution.



**Catholic  
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Diocese of Cairns

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