

# Got a Complaint or Grievance?

## Here's how to resolve it

1. Seek to talk it over with the person or persons concerned. Be respectful, positive and constructive – try and see the other person's perspective.
2. If that doesn't work, ask to speak to the school principal or the person's manager. See if their assistance can help resolve the matter or contact the Professional Standards and Safeguarding Office (PSSO).
3. Still no resolution? You can lodge a formal grievance/complaint. This can occur either by advising your principal, manager or contacting the PSSO. To begin the formal process call the, PSSO on 40509765 or via email: [professionalstandards@cns.catholic.edu.au](mailto:professionalstandards@cns.catholic.edu.au). Note that in a small number of cases the matter might be so serious or sensitive that the first two steps are dispensed with and direct contact with the PSSO is warranted.
4. It is requested that you make your complaint/grievance in writing. Your statement should contain:
  - Your contact details
  - Nature of the matter, including the details of the particular allegations (what is the problem, who is involved, when it happened, where it happened, any contextual information, names of witnesses or confidants). This is best provided in numbered paragraphs
  - Resolution that is sought (for example an apology or an assurance that certain behaviour will not be repeated)
  - Whilst a complaint in writing is preferred, you may elect to make your complaint in person or via telephone.
5. Depending on the nature of your complaint/grievance, it will be referred to a senior Catholic Education Diocese of Cairns (CEDC) staff member or the PSSO to manage. In certain circumstances an external person

may be appointed to manage the process. They will keep you and the person(s) who is/are the subject of the complaint informed about the progress of the process.

6. The person managing the process will:
  - Review all relevant material/evidence
  - Make further enquiries if necessary
  - Assess whether the findings reflect the evidence
  - Make a determination and advise the parties of the decision and the reasons
  - Determine what further action (if any) is necessary
7. Not happy with the outcome? You have a right of appeal within 30 days to the CEDC Executive Director via the PSSO.



### Remember:

- You always have recourse through the legal process.
- All parties have a right to expect confidentiality in the management of grievance and complaint processes.
- If the matter relates to the commission of a crime, you should report the matter to the Police.
- If the matter involves child abuse or harm there are processes outlined in the Student Protection Processes and Guidelines.
- There are also separate policies on sexual harassment, bullying and discrimination.

### Policy statement:

Catholic Education Diocese of Cairns is committed to developing an educational and organisational 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 four posters to provide guidance on a process for grievance resolution.



**Catholic Education**  
Diocese of Cairns

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