



## Student Complaints Policy and Procedure

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*St Bernard's College is committed to a culture of "zero tolerance" for child abuse. We promote a culture that prioritises the safety and wellbeing of all young people and continue to respond positively and proactively to Ministerial Order 1359 in relation to related policies, procedures, strategies, risk mitigation and our responsiveness to emerging issues.*

*St Bernard's College is committed to the establishment of a culturally safe environment in which the diverse and unique identities and experiences of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander young people are respected and valued.*

At St Bernard's College we value and listen to our students' concerns and complaints. We strive to make sure any concerns or worries are addressed as soon as possible. We aim to make our school a place where you feel happy and feel safe. This policy has been written so that you know what to do if you have a concern or a complaint, who you can talk to and what will happen once you have made a complaint. It is important to know that you won't get in trouble if you address a concern or complaint, and we will take your complaint seriously.

### What is a complaint?

A "complaint" is something you make when you have a serious concern about something or someone that is affecting your safety or your learning.

A complaint can be reported to any trusted adult, for example, your parents, a teacher or a Year Level Leader. If you tell a teacher or another member of staff at school about a complaint, it will be taken seriously, and we will listen to what you have to say.

### Things to think about when making a complaint

- Could the issue be solved by having a conversation with the person?
- If having a conversation is unsuccessful or inappropriate, we ask that the complaint is made as soon as possible so the issue can be properly investigated.

### What will happen when I make a complaint?

- Your complaint will be taken seriously.
- The school will follow the Complaints procedure (below) and make sure you are kept informed of the investigation.
- Any complaint made will be confidential unless it relates to:
  - harming yourself or other people.
  - any matter that is criminal in nature.
- The Staff member investigating your complaint will discuss with you if other people need to be informed as to progress the investigation.
- You will be offered counselling support by the College if the issue has caused you distress or affected your wellbeing.

## What if someone is complaining about me?

- If a complaint is being made about you, you will be asked to talk to the staff member investigating the complaint and you have the chance to respond to the allegation.
- You will always be treated with fairness and respect whilst the College investigates the complaint.
- The outcome of the investigation will be communicated to you in writing.
- If you are unhappy with the outcome, you have a right to appeal the decision according to the Students Complaints Procedure (below).

## Student Complaints Procedure

Step 1- Talk with a Teacher	
<p>The student should choose to discuss the concern with the staff member with whom they are most comfortable. The student may take a friend or their parent for support.</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>1. Concern is raised with a trusted person either in person or via email.</li><li>2. The teacher, with your permission, will raise your complaint with the relevant YLL.</li><li>3. Student discusses preferred outcome and suggested solution with YLL.</li><li>4. Matter is investigated using the College's investigation process.</li><li>5. If appropriate, there will be a meeting with relevant parties.</li><li>6. Resolution agreed by all parties.</li><li>7. Matter is documented on the College's confidential database.</li><li>8. Monitoring and evaluation will be conducted by the relevant YLL.</li></ol>
Step 2- Talk to the Dean of Students (7-9) or Dean of Students (10-12)	
<p>If the student does not feel the matter has been resolved by Step 1, the student is invited to speak to the relevant Dean of Students to help resolve the issue. The student may take a friend, their class teacher, or their parent for support.</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>1. Concern is raised with the appropriate Dean of Students.</li><li>2. The Dean will review the investigation process and discuss the preferred next steps with the student.</li><li>3. The Dean will meet with all parties involved to determine the appropriate response to the complaint. This may include a restorative conversation or further investigation. The Dean will discuss the preferred outcome with all parties involved.</li></ol>

	4. Matter is documented on College’s Confidential Database. Monitoring and evaluation will be undertaken by the Dean with assistance from the relevant YLL if appropriate.
<b>Step 3- Talk with the Assistant Principal (Student Wellbeing)</b>	
If the student does not feel the matter has been resolved by Step 2, the student is invited to refer the matter to the Assistant Principal (Student Wellbeing) to resolve the issue. The student may take a friend, their class teacher, or their parent for support.	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Concern is raised with the Assistant Principal (Student Wellbeing)</li> <li>2. The Assistant Principal (Student Wellbeing) will undertake a full review of the steps taken so far.</li> <li>3. The Assistant Principal (Student Wellbeing) will meet with all parties involved to discuss why the steps to resolution have been unsuccessful to date.</li> <li>4. The Assistant Principal (Student Wellbeing) will determine if the investigation has been fair and appropriate for all parties involved and if further investigation is required.</li> <li>5. The Assistant Principal (Student Wellbeing) may decide to uphold the initial outcome of the investigation and will communicate the reasons for this in writing.</li> <li>6. Matter is documented on Student Confidential Database</li> <li>7. Monitoring and evaluation will be undertaken by the Assistant Principal (Student Wellbeing) with the assistance of the relevant Dean and YLL.</li> </ol>

***Note:** A further review can be undertaken by the Principal or another member of senior leadership if any party in this investigation is unhappy with the process taken in Steps 1 to 3. The Principal may choose to appoint a professional investigator from outside of the College if this is appropriate to do.*

#### **Policy Review**

<b>First Approved:</b>	June 2022
<b>Last Amended:</b>	June 2022
<b>Principal and Ratification Date:</b>	Michael Davies, June 2022
<b>Next Review Date:</b>	June 2024