

## **Mildura Christian College**

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# **Managing Complaints & Grievances**

## GUIDELINES AND PROCEDURES FOR MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC

Mildura Christian College welcomes feedback from all members of our school community as well as members of the public. The College takes all complaints or concerns that may be raised seriously. This Complaints and Grievances Policy is designed to assist members of the public to understand how to make a complaint.

### **What is a complaint?**

A complaint is an expression of dissatisfaction made to Mildura Christian College, related to our services or operations, or the complaints handling process itself, where a response or resolution is explicitly or implicitly expected.

A complaint may be made if someone thinks that the College has:

- Done something wrong;
- Failed to do something it should have done; or,
- Acted unfairly, unjustly or improperly.

A complaint may be made about the College as a whole, about a specific department in the College or about an individual staff member.

### **Mildura Christian College's Commitment**

Mildura Christian College is committed to handling complaints effectively and efficiently. Any person making a complaint will be treated with respect and confidentiality.

### **Informal Complaints Resolution**

The vast majority of issues causing concern in schools can be handled quickly and in an informal manner. In most cases these issues can be resolved through informal discussions with appropriate staff members.

Try to resolve any problems yourself with those directly involved. If it is impossible to resolve the conflict, then seek assistance. Take the initiative in talking to those involved. Don't wait for them to come to you.

Members of staff will be happy to help. They may be able to sort things out quickly with a minimum of fuss. When you contact the College, ask to speak with the person most closely concerned with the issue e.g. Principal or the classroom teacher. Be as clear as possible about what is troubling you.

## How do I make a formal complaint?

We ask that, where appropriate, you first raise the matter directly with the relevant staff member. If you have been unable to resolve a matter informally, or simply wish to make a formal complaint you can do so by any of the following means:

- Sending an email to [principal@milduracc.vic.edu.au](mailto:principal@milduracc.vic.edu.au)
- Writing a letter to the College addressed to “The Principal”
- Telephoning the College and asking to speak to the Principal

## Our Internal Complaints Handling Process

Step 1 – All valid complaints will be acknowledged in writing, as soon as practicable, and allocated a status, priority and target resolution date.

Step 2 – The Principal shall conduct an investigation into the issues raised, following principles of procedural fairness, and make a determination.

Step 3 - Following the determination, if appropriate, the Principal shall formulate a resolution and provide a written response to the complainant. The matter will be closed if this response is accepted.

Step 4 - If the initial response is not acceptable the matter will be reviewed internally by the Principal or the Principal's delegate, who may seek additional information or submissions from the relevant parties. The matter will be closed if the response of the Principal, or their delegate, is accepted.

Step 5 - If the matter remains unresolved, the Principal will offer to refer the matter to the Chair of the College Board. Alternatively, you may wish to write directly to the Chairperson. The Chairperson will call for a full report from the Principal, and will examine matters thoroughly before responding. This may result in a positive solution, but if it does not, the Chairperson will invite you to a meeting. You may wish to be supported by a friend.

Step 6 - If the complainant is still not satisfied with the outcome of the complaint or the way it has been managed, the complainant may pursue external resolution alternatives. External agencies to which complaints may be made include the Victorian Regulations and Qualifications Authority (VRQA) ([vrqa.vic.gov.au](http://vrqa.vic.gov.au)) and the Victorian Ombudsman ([ombudsman.vic.gov.au](http://ombudsman.vic.gov.au)). For general information on mediation, counselling, advocacy and support, refer to the Dispute Settlement Centre of Victoria ([disputes.vic.gov.au](http://disputes.vic.gov.au)).

## Confidentiality

Confidentiality applies with respect to both information relating to the person making the complaint, and, if relevant to a person against whom a complaint is made. The College is committed to maintaining the confidentiality of information throughout the complaints process.



Personally identifiable information about a complainant will only be made available for the purpose of addressing the complaint and (unless the complainant consents) will be actively protected from disclosure.

