



# Our Lady of the Sacred Heart

## Catholic Primary School DARRA

**Every face has a place at OLSH**



### **Complaints and Concerns Procedures (March 2020)**

#### **Policy Statement**

Catholic education at Our Lady of the Sacred Heart, Darra, has its foundation in partnerships between staff, students, parents, parish and the wider community. These partnerships are essential in order to build and sustain a faith community where life long and life-giving education takes place.

#### **Guiding Principles**

At Our Lady of the Sacred Heart, we address grievances and manage conflict in a way which promotes dignity for all. We strive to restore relationships broken or affected by conflict. Through positive, open, honest and respectful communication, we may be able to avoid initiating unnecessary conflict.

#### **Procedure for Dealing with Complaints**

**(Please note that this procedural document works in alignment with the Brisbane Catholic Education: Student, Parent and Guardian Complaints Management Policy. Further information about the BCE Policy and Procedures can be found at this [link](#).)**

**All complaints are handled through a process of: receiving and recording the complaint or concern on the school complaints register, assessing the concern/issue, resolving the issue at the appropriate level, communicating the outcomes of the concern and closing the concern/issue. It is understood that a re-occurrence of the concern following this process will result in a further process.**

- We operate under the principle of subsidiarity. This means that every endeavor should be made to resolve the concerns or reach an agreement on how they will be addressed at the level where they occur i.e. a simple classroom matter should be addressed to the classroom teacher.
- If a parent is concerned about an issue regarding their child, they should contact the child's teacher, as soon as possible, to make a mutually suitable time to discuss their concerns.
- If a member of staff has concerns regarding a child, the staff member should make contact with the child's parents and/or the Principal, as soon as possible, in accordance with the procedures described in the Our Lady of the Sacred Heart School Darra School Student Behaviour Support Plan.
- Matters concerning serious allegations of harm should be directed to the Principal immediately.
- If there are unresolved concerns and the Principal has not been involved in discussions, then it is imperative that he/she is informed. The Principal will then work with parties toward a mutually satisfactory way forward. All parties are encouraged to work together towards resolution in a timely manner.

- If however the matter is still unresolved, then the Principal will inform the appropriate staff from Brisbane Catholic Education Centre who will assist in developing a course of action. This person would be the Senior Leader – School Operations or the Senior Leader – Learning and Identity.
- In situations where a child tells a parent about an issue involving another child, the parent should proceed as outlined above. It is not acceptable at any time for the parent of one child to address an issue from school, with a child/parent of another family.

#### **Guidelines when addressing a grievance:**

- Focus on the issue, not the person.
- Confidentiality is paramount.
- Stay calm when talking through your concern/issue/complaint even if this means bringing a support person to just be with you.
- You should explain: who was involved, what happened, and any other relevant details.
- It is inevitable, based on our humanity that conflict will arise. Constructive conflict helps everyone to learn, grow and change for the better. Where both parties agree to seek a positive resolution, positive outcomes are likely to result.
- Remember that there are always two (or three) sides to the story. It is recognised that many of us have different perceptions of the same reality. Miscommunication is the number one cause of conflict.
- If you have an issue to discuss with the teacher and/or the Principal, make an appointment to speak about/discuss this issue on behalf of ***your family only***. If another parent has a similar issue to discuss, that parent will need to make a separate time to speak with the teacher/principal.
- Negative gossip is wrong and never resolves anything.
- The rights, responsibilities and expectations articulated in Our Lady of the Sacred Heart School Darra School Student Behaviour Support Plan and Anti-Bullying policies are upheld and adhered to.
- At times a series of meetings may be necessary to resolve an issue.
- Allow reasonable time for an issue to be resolved.
- Every endeavour will be made to solve grievances at a local level.
- Recording of issues will be undertaken when grievances are brought forward. Main points raised will be summarised and confirmed to be accurate and then an assessment will be made and a resolution planned and communicated.
- If a complaint is made against a person, that person will be informed of the nature and content of the complaint and have the right to respond. No one will be victimised as the result of taking out a formal grievance.
- It is not appropriate to contact/email a teacher or staff member with a concern or grievance on the weekend or on their holidays. During the working week, it is usually reasonable to expect a response/acknowledgement within 48 hours.
- While the attempt will always be made to promptly initiate a response and resolve complaints, the time required to resolve a complaint will depend on the nature and complexity of the complaint, as well as employee availability.

**What if I have a specific problem/question that needs to be addressed?**

<b><i>Who do I speak to?</i></b>	<b><i>About....</i></b>	<b><i>When is a good time?</i></b>
The class teacher	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Class programs</li> <li>• Projects</li> <li>• Homework</li> <li>• Discipline</li> <li>• Behaviour issues for your child</li> <li>• Friendship issues</li> <li>• Issues outside of school that affect learning</li> <li>• Class parts of school events</li> </ul>	Ring and make an appointment. Quick questions are fine to address with the teacher before or after school if the teacher has time. Do not interrupt classroom time as the teacher is responsible for the whole class and cannot leave them unsupervised whilst talking to one person.
School Secretarial Staff	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Sickness or death in the family</li> <li>• Celebrations or births in the family</li> <li>• Medical plans for students</li> <li>• Student absence from school</li> <li>• School fee information</li> <li>• School photos</li> <li>• General enquiries</li> <li>• Information and communication</li> <li>• Enrolment information</li> </ul>	Ring the school and speak with Mrs Weston, Mrs Petersen or Mrs Harrison. They will either help you or direct you to the correct staff member for your enquiry.
Mrs Libby Banks – Assistant to the Principal – Administration (APA)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Serious matters to do with overall procedures</li> <li>• Serious behaviour issues</li> <li>• Information and communication</li> <li>• Policies and functions of the school</li> <li>• Major issues involving your child</li> <li>• School social media</li> <li>• Reporting and assessment</li> <li>• Maintenance issues</li> <li>• WHS issues</li> </ul>	Ring the school and ask if Mrs Banks is available. If not, leave a message for Mrs Banks or a member of the leadership team to return your call. It is always helpful to leave a message giving information as to what the conversation will be about.

<b><i>Who do I speak to?</i></b>	<b><i>About....</i></b>	<b><i>When is a good time?</i></b>
Mrs Rebecca Tasi – Assistant to the Principal – Religious Education (APRE)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Religious Education</li> <li>• Religious Life of the School</li> <li>• Serious behaviour issues</li> <li>• Social and emotional issues</li> <li>• Sickness or death in the family</li> <li>• Situations which may impact on your child’s ability to cope at school</li> <li>• Faith development and life of your family</li> <li>• Sacramental programs</li> <li>• Pastoral care of your family</li> <li>• Behaviour issues</li> <li>• WHS issues</li> </ul>	Ring the school and ask if Mrs Gould Tasi is available. If not, leave a message for Mrs Tasi or a member of the leadership team to return your call. It is always helpful to leave a message giving information as to what the conversation will be about.
Mrs Leanne Moran - Primary Learning Leader (PLL)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Teaching and learning</li> <li>• Curriculum</li> <li>• Planning</li> <li>• Resources</li> <li>• Technology use in the classroom</li> <li>• Assessment</li> <li>• WHS issues</li> </ul>	Ring the school and ask if Mrs Moran is available. If not, leave a message for Mrs Moran or a member of the leadership team to return your call. It is always helpful to leave a message giving information as to what the conversation will be about.
Mrs Petrea Rawlinson - Principal	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Serious matters to do with overall procedures</li> <li>• Serious behaviour issues</li> <li>• Information and communication</li> <li>• Policies and functions of the school</li> <li>• school fees (via Finance Secretary Mrs Ruth Harrison)</li> <li>• Major issues involving your child</li> <li>• Child protection issues</li> <li>• Issues involving the school’s reputation</li> <li>• Complaints referring to physical, sexual, emotional abuse</li> <li>• Maintenance issues</li> <li>• WHS issues</li> </ul>	Ring the school and ask if Mrs Rawlinson is available. If not, leave a message for Mrs Rawlinson or a member of the leadership team to return your call. It is always helpful to leave a message giving information as to what the conversation will be about.

<b>Who do I speak to?</b>	<b>About....</b>	<b>When is a good time?</b>
Mrs Stacey Gorman – Support Teacher – Inclusive Education	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Learning support</li> <li>• Additional help for children who need it</li> <li>• Speech issues (or Mr Mitchell Buckley)</li> <li>• Educational assessments</li> </ul>	Ring the school and ask Mrs Gorman to ring you to talk about the issue and/or make an appointment.
Mrs Tricia Chandra and Mrs Azu Velasco - Psychologists and Guidance Counsellors	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Educational assessments</li> <li>• Behaviour issues at school and home</li> <li>• Social and emotional issues</li> <li>• Complaints referring to physical, sexual, emotional abuse</li> </ul>	Ring the school and ask Mrs Chandra or Mrs Velasco to ring you to make an appointment. Please note that Mrs Chandra or Mrs Velasco work part time and may not be available straight away. (Mrs Velasco is at school on Mondays. Mrs Chandra is at school Thursdays and Fridays and every second Tuesday.)
Sr Sue Walpole – School Pastoral Worker	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Sickness or death in the family</li> <li>• Celebrations or births in the family</li> <li>• Debriefing for families in crisis and assistance with accessing appropriate help or resources for social and emotional issues</li> <li>• Friendship issues</li> <li>• Situations which may impact on your child’s ability to cope at school</li> </ul>	Ring the school and ask for Sr Sue to ring you for an appointment.
Student Protection Contacts Mrs Petrea Rawlinson Mrs Libby Banks Mrs Tricia Chandra Mrs Azu Velasco Sr Sue Walpole	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Issues to do with child protection where a student or parent needs to report an issue of concern.</li> <li>• Situations which may impact on your child’s ability to cope at school</li> </ul>	A child may approach one of these staff at any time with a concern. A parent with a concern would ring the school for an appointment with a Student Protection Contact. Optimally this would be Mrs Rawlinson and/or Mrs Chandra as a first point of contact.
EAL-D Teacher Ms Maria Caruso	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Refugee and new arrival assistance</li> <li>• Interpreters</li> <li>• English as an additional language or dialect</li> <li>• General communications</li> </ul>	Ring the school and ask for Ms Caruso to ring you to talk about the issue or to make an appointment.

<b><i>Who do I speak to?</i></b>	<b><i>About....</i></b>	<b><i>When is a good time?</i></b>
Parish	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Faith development and life of your family</li> <li>• Sacramental programs</li> <li>• Pastoral care of your family</li> <li>• General advice</li> <li>• Major issues at OSHC</li> <li>• Youth group or participation</li> </ul>	Ring the Parish Office on 3715 8517 and ask to make an appointment to speak to the Parish Priest/Parish Administrator or speak with Ms Louise Toohey, the Parish Secretary for direction to the correct staff member for your enquiry.
Mrs Sonia Ledger  Coordinator of Outside School Hours Care	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Matters to do with overall procedures</li> <li>• Policies and functions of OSHC</li> <li>• Behaviour issues at OSHC</li> <li>• Fees for OSHC</li> <li>• Bookings and registrations for OSHC</li> </ul>	Ring OSHC on 3375 5057 and ask to speak to Mrs Ledger and/or make an appointment to see her. Alternatively, contact the Parish Office on 3715 8517 and ask to make an appointment to speak to Fr Nicholas or speak with Ms Louise Toohey, the Parish Secretary for direction to the correct staff member for your enquiry.

## **APPENDIX ONE – Also see the Brisbane Catholic Education Procedure: Student, Parent and Guardian Complaints Management (Section 2.1)**

### 2. Responsibilities

#### 2.1 General Requirements

It is the responsibility of the school to promptly initiate a response and resolve complaints from students, parents and guardians.

#### Scenario 1 – Managing a complaint about a teacher or student

1. Complainant talks with a teacher and works together to resolve complaint.
2. If the matter cannot be resolved, the complainant talks with a senior school employee e.g. Deputy Principal, Assistant Principal or other nominated school employee and work together to resolve complaint.
3. If the matter cannot be resolved, complainant talks with Principal and work together to resolve complaint.

#### Scenario 2 – Managing a complaint about a school process or policy

1. Complainant talks with Deputy Principal, Assistant Principal or other nominated school employee and work together to resolve complaint.
2. If the matter cannot be resolved, complainant talks with Principal and work together to resolve complaint.

#### Scenario 3 – Managing a complaint about a Principal\*

1. Prior to escalating, every effort should be made by a school to resolve at the lowest level, this could include a discussion with the Senior Leader, Learning and Identity.
2. If the matter cannot be resolved, the complainant submits a written complaint to BCE School Operations, GPO Box 1201, Brisbane QLD 4001.
3. School Operation forward written complaint to the Senior Leader Learning and Identity (cc'ed to the Director School Service Centre) for action.

\*A significant complaint about a Principal's behaviour, professional standard and action must be forwarded to the BCE Professional Standards. If dissatisfied with the school's complaints processes, a complainant may submit a written request for a review to the Principal (see Section 3.3 Brisbane Catholic Education Procedure: Student, Parent and Guardian Complaints Management)