

## Procedures

These procedures would usually be followed by a parent/ care giver when parents/care givers of students of Loreto College Ballarat who wish to raise a concern, complaint or grievance.

In the spirit of partnership and in acknowledging the Catholic Social Principle of subsidiarity and where appropriate concerns, complaints and grievances should initially be addressed by the school.

When grievances about an apparent breach of policy or matter of compliance with the minimum standards for school registration cannot be resolved at the school, Catholic Education Ballarat or Loreto Ministries will seek to assist in resolving the issue using procedures and processes that are fair, consistent and safeguard the dignity of all parties.

## INFORMATION FOR PARENTS AND CARE GIVERS

The relationship between the home and the school is a very important part of ensuring that children are happy, secure, and open to learning. Parents, care givers and school staff need to work together to provide the best educational opportunities for children. We encourage you to discuss your child's progress with their teacher and to let the teacher know if you have any concerns so the school can work with you to resolve these as promptly and effectively as possible.

### What to do if you have a problem:

- Try to identify the problem clearly before contacting the school. If there is more than one problem, list them to ensure that the extent of the problem is clear to the school.
- Decide whether the problem is a concern, complaint, or grievance. This will help in finding a solution.
- Phone or email your concerns in writing to the Mentor Teacher or subject teacher.
- Make an appointment to speak on the phone or in person with the teacher, ensuring that you inform the College about the issue you wish to discuss. It is important to remember that teachers cannot always meet with you immediately due to other responsibilities and meetings.
- The teacher, together with any others who may be involved such as another classroom teacher, should be given a reasonable amount of time to take the steps required to resolve or address your concerns. Remember, it may not always be possible to resolve an issue to your complete satisfaction.
- If the matter is urgent and the teacher is not available then contact the College office to arrange for a member of the Leadership Team or other suitable staff member to either meet or contact you.
- Most concerns are resolved by discussing the issue with the classroom or mentor teacher. However, if the issue remains unresolved you can contact the Year Level Coordinator, Faculty Coordinator, Assistant Principal, Deputy Principal or Principal.
- To do this, you will need to request an appointment through the College office. Please note that the Principal may ask another senior staff member to speak with you on their behalf.
- If the complainant, after meeting with the Principal, believes that the College has not listened to their concerns or followed College processes, then the complainant can take the issue to Loreto



Ministries or Catholic Education Ballarat. It is important to note that Loreto College will make decisions that are not always accepted by all of the College community

- If the matter has not been resolved you have the right to seek arbitration through the courts, ombudsman, legal representation and other government commissions such as Human Rights Commission etc. These might entail some financial cost to you.

## **When you make a complaint:**

- Try to stay calm when discussing your concern. Even if you don't feel it, being calm will help you get your concerns across more clearly than if you are upset or angry. It may help to take someone with you.
- Remember, the staff are committed to resolving any issues that parents and care givers might have regarding their children and will discuss with you actions that might be taken in regard to your concern.
- If a complaint is made against a person, that person will be informed of the nature and content of the complaint and will have the right to respond.
- Discussions of complaints are confidential.
- Complaints may be made verbally or in writing.
- All serious complaints, the actions taken to resolve them, and outcomes of those actions will be documented.
- A person who has made a complaint may withdraw it at any time. If the complaint is in writing, the withdrawal should also be in writing.
- No one will be victimised as a result of taking out a formal grievance.
- At the formal stage, a person who has made a complaint has the right to be represented and supported by another person eg. a friend or other person of their choice as a support person.
- A process of mediation is an option at any stage of the process.