

Complaints Resolution Procedure

STATUS	Ratified	Document No.	3.20.1
Authorised by	Board Chair	Date of Authorisation:	27 April 2026
Review Date	Bi-annually	Next Review Date:	March 2028
Policy Owner	Cairns Hinterland Steiner School Governing Body		
References	Cairns Hinterland Steiner School Complaints Resolution Policy		

Purpose

The purpose of this procedure is to ensure that complaints about the operations of Cairns Hinterland Steiner School are received, managed and resolved with respect, natural justice and in alignment with our core values.

Scope

This policy applies to any type of complaint about the operations of Cairns Hinterland Steiner School and may include employees, parents/carers, students, clients, contractors, volunteers, directors and agents of Cairns Hinterland Steiner School, persons undertaking work experience or vocational placements and members of the wider community.

Application

This Procedure is to be read in conjunction with the Complaints Resolution Policy and the steps within are to be undertaken in line with the Complaints Resolution Principles.

Cairns Hinterland Steiner School (the school) encourages the raising of complaints when dissatisfaction occurs in relation to an action, inaction or decision from any part of the school.

Complaints Resolution Procedure

Overview

Cairns Hinterland Steiner School (CHSS) is committed to ensuring that concerns and complaints are managed fairly, respectfully, and transparently in accordance with the School's Complaints Policy and relevant governance standards.

This overview explains how complaints can be submitted and how they are handled.

How to submit a complaint

School-level complaints

Complaints relating to school operations, staff, students, or programs should be submitted to the Head of School.

Email: principal@chss.qld.edu.au

Letter: Addressed to the Head of School, Cairns Hinterland Steiner School

Board-level complaints

Complaints relating to governance matters, the Head of School, or the Board may be submitted to the Board.

Email: companysecretary@chss.qld.edu.au

Letter: Addressed to the Board Chair or Company Secretary

How Complaints are managed

1. School-level complaints

Most complaints are managed at the school level.

- Complaints are reviewed by the Head of School.
- The School will respond in accordance with the Complaints Policy.
- If a matter remains unresolved, it may be escalated to the Board for review or appeal.

2. Complaints about the Head of School

Complaints regarding the Head of School are referred directly to the Board for consideration.

- Correspondence should be addressed to the Board Chair.
- The Board manages the matter in accordance with governance procedures and procedural fairness.

3. Complaints about the Board or a Director

Complaints regarding the Board or an individual Director should also be submitted to the Board.

- Correspondence should be addressed to the Board Chair.
- If the Chair is the subject of the complaint, the matter will be managed by an independent proxy, coordinated through the Company Secretary.

Complaints Resolution Procedure

What to include in a Complaint

When submitting a complaint, please provide:

- Your name and contact details
- A clear description of the concern
- Relevant dates or supporting information
- The outcome you are seeking (if known)

Providing this information helps the School assess the matter and determine the most appropriate response.

What you can expect

When a complaint is submitted, CHSS will:

- Acknowledge receipt within a reasonable timeframe
- Assess and review the matter appropriately
- Conduct further investigation if required
- Communicate the outcome once the matter has been reviewed
- Maintain confidentiality and procedural fairness throughout the process

Appeal or review

If you believe a complaint has not been resolved appropriately at the school level, you may request a review by the school's governing body in accordance with the Complaints Handling Policy.

Our commitment

All complaints are managed in accordance with the following principles:

Fairness – Concerns are considered equitably and impartially.

Transparency – Clear processes guide how complaints are handled.

Accountability – Governance oversight ensures compliance with regulatory obligations.

Confidentiality – Information is shared only with those responsible for resolving the matter.

What happens next

Your complaint will be acknowledged and reviewed in accordance with the School's Complaints Policy. Some matters may require further investigation.

If you believe the issue has not been resolved appropriately, you may request a review by the School Board.

CHSS manages all complaints with procedural fairness, confidentiality, and appropriate governance oversight.

Complaints Resolution Procedure

Student Version

If You Have a Question, Worry or Problem

If something doesn't feel right, or you have a question about your learning or a teacher, here is what to do:

Step 1

Talk to your class teacher, specialist teacher or your class guardian.

They are there to help you.

☞ Did this fix the problem?

- **Yes** – Great! It's all sorted.
- **No** – Go to Step 2.

Step 2

Ask Reception to help you make a time to talk with the Head of School (HOS).

If your concern is about the Head of School, you can talk to another member of the Senior Leadership Team – Jenny or Julia instead.

☞ Did this fix the problem?

- **Yes** – The matter is now closed.
- **No** – Go to Step 3.

Step 3

A parent or caregiver can email Reception to discuss with HoS or another member of the Senior Leadership Team – Jenny, Chani or Julia at:

reception@chss.qld.edu.au

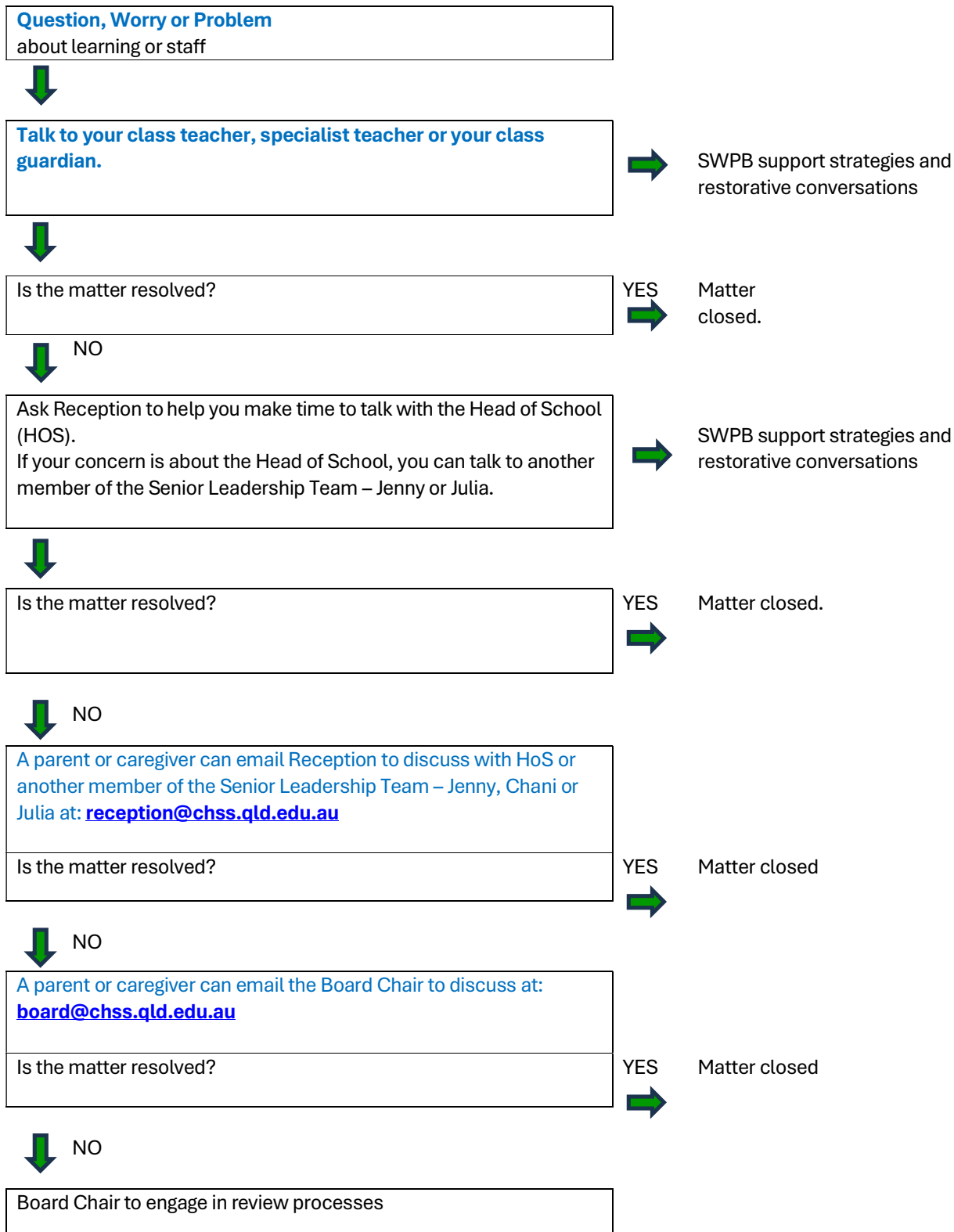
Step 4

A parent or caregiver can email the Board Chair to discuss at:

board@chss.qld.edu.au

Complaints Resolution Procedure

Cairns Hinterland Steiner School resolution and communication pathways for **students**



Complaints Resolution Procedure

1. Lodging a Complaint

- a) Complaints can be lodged with the most appropriate staff member at the local level, for example, the initial contact point for many complaints is the student's relevant classroom teacher.
- b) Complaints about the Head of School must be lodged with the Board: companysecretary@chss.qld.edu.au
- c) Complaints about the Board Chair or a Board Director: companysecretary@chss.qld.edu.au
- d) Complaints can be lodged through various methods, including -
 - i. Phone
 - ii. Email
 - iii. In-person (by appointment)
- e) If the complainant is unsure where to direct their complaint, they can contact RECEPTION reception@chss.qld.edu.au for guidance.
- f) If the complainant is uncomfortable directing the complaint to the most appropriate member at the local level, or wants to make a formal complaint, they can submit a complaint by:
 - i. Completing the online complaint form (available on the school website)
 - ii. Using the anonymous reporting system (call/ handwritten note)
 - iii. Report to the HoS principal@chss.qld.edu.au
- g) Where an anonymous complaint is lodged, the school will follow the complaints Resolution policy, when there is sufficient information to do so.

2. Acknowledgement, Assessment and Referral

- a) The staff member receiving the complaint will:
 - i. acknowledge the complaint within two (2) business days, outlining the next steps and where possible the estimated timeframes.
 - ii. assess the complaint, using the definitions of informal and formal complaints in this policy, and refer the complaint to the informal or formal complaints process.

3. Registration and Support

- a) The recipient of the complaint will promptly enter it into the information management system and it will then be entered by the HoS into the complaints register, regardless of whether it proceeds through the informal or formal process.
- b) The recipient of the complaint will offer support to the complainant as appropriate, which may include assistance with completing forms or understanding procedures.
- c) If a student is a complainant, respondent or victim, or the child of a complainant, respondent or victim of a matter being managed through this policy, the school may offer the student support where appropriate e.g. discussing suitable adjustments with parents/caregivers.

4. Informal Complaints Resolution Process

- a) The informal process is designed to resolve issues promptly and collaboratively at the local level.
- b) It may involve constructive discussion, restorative conversations and negotiation between the complainant and the relevant staff member(s).
- c) If the complaint cannot be resolved informally, it will be escalated to the formal process.

Complaints Resolution Procedure

5. Formal Complaints Resolution Process

- a) The formal process begins with the assessment of the complaint by a designated staff member (e.g., a member of the senior leadership team or the board chair for complaints against the Head of School)
- b) The staff member may gather additional information through investigation, interviews, or evidence review. The staff member may consult with appropriate members of the student's or the family's community
- c) The staff member will determine appropriate action, which may include:
 - i. Mediation
 - ii. Restorative practices and conversations
 - iii. Disciplinary measures
 - iv. Implementation of policy changes
 - v. Referral to external agencies (e.g., police)
 - vi. Provision of written updates to the complainant throughout the process
 - vii. Other actions the Head of School determine as appropriate in the circumstances.

6. Complaint Closure

- a) The complaint register will be updated with the date the complaint is closed and a brief summary or the outcome in the information management system and the link to the communication/ complaint/ incident.
- b) The complainant will receive written notification of the outcome and any actions taken where appropriate.

7. Appeals Process

- a) Complainants may appeal the outcome of a complaint by writing to:
 - i. the Head of School (for complaints not previously managed by the Head of School,) principal@chss.qld.edu.au
 - the board chair (for complaints previously managed by the Head of School, or complaints about the Head of School), companysecretary@chss.qld.edu.au