



MINARAH
RABBI ZIDNI ILMA

Complaints, Compliments and Suggestions Policy

February 2024

Purpose

This policy outlines the process and timelines to make a complaint about Minarah College. This policy applies to any person who wishes to make a complaint or provide feedback for continuous improvement.

Date of last review:	February 2024	Author:	Principal/s
Date of next review:	February 2025	Owner:	School Board
Type of policy:	State-wide (DoE) Tailored by school	Approval:	School Board
Key contract email:	schoolboard@minarah.nsw.edu.au	Key Contact Name:	Principal/s
		Key Contact Phone:	02 8783 9188

Positioning within Minarah College operational model

Component	Element
<input type="checkbox"/> Strategic Leadership and Planning	
<input type="checkbox"/> Monitoring, Reporting and Data	
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Governance and Accountabilities	
<input type="checkbox"/> Teaching and Learning	
<input type="checkbox"/> Culture, Ethos and Wellbeing	
<input type="checkbox"/> Curriculum and Assessment	
<input type="checkbox"/> Pathways and Enrichment	
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Parents and Community	
<input type="checkbox"/> Finance, IT & Estates	
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Our People	

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1.0 Introduction

Minarah is committed to providing the very best education and school experience to students. If you would like to provide feedback, make a complaint, or inform us of actions we have completed well, you are welcome to share. We are committed to resolving complaints promptly at a local level.

This policy intends to explain how to raise a concern or make a complaint and what process Minarah will follow to resolve the matter as quickly as possible.

Our commitment to you

We will deal with your issue thoroughly and fairly.

We value your feedback

We are constantly improving the way we work, so let us know if you have any suggestions. We would like to have your feedback on where we are doing well and making a difference. This can allow us to continue to improve effectively the education and training at Minarah. We'll make sure your message is valued and acted upon.

What can a complaint be about?

You can make a complaint about:

- any aspect of the services we provide
- any decision, including those about enrolment
- any practice, policy, or procedure
- staff behaviour or conduct

Complaint or Compliment

We will support people who need assistance to make a complaint. All complaints will be handled fairly, objectively, and promptly, and at the local level where possible.

We encourage you to raise your complaint/ compliment/ feedback directly with the school. You can do this in person, by email, over the telephone or by letter if you prefer. Alternatively, you can also use our online complaints and compliments and Suggestion Policy.

2.0 Related processes

In some specific situations an alternative policy will need to be followed to deal with the concern appropriately. This is usually because a statutory process must be followed to meet our legal duty. The following list details some specific situations where this applies:

Subject of concern	Appropriate Policy	Available from
Student admissions	Enrolment Policy	www.Minarah.nsw.edu.au Internal policies (available for staff on the Minarah Intranet)
Student exclusion	Wellbeing Policy	www.Minarah.nsw.edu.au Internal policies (available for staff on the Minarah Intranet)
Staff grievance, capability or disciplinary	Minarah Schools has network-wide policies for grievance, capability and disciplinary	www.Minarah.nsw.edu.au Internal policies (available for staff on the Minarah Intranet)
Anonymous complaints	Whistleblowing Policy	www.Minarah.nsw.edu.au Internal policies (available for staff on the Minarah Intranet)
Subject Access (Data Protection)	Privacy Policy	www.Minarah.nsw.edu.au Internal policies (available for staff on the Minarah Intranet)

3.0 Safeguarding

Wherever a complaint indicates that a child's safety or wellbeing is at risk, Minarah has a duty to report this immediately to the relevant Local Authority. Any action taken will follow the Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy, available from the school's website and Intranet accessible to all staff.

Most concerns can be dealt with outside of the formal complaints process and should be raised by phone, email or in person with a relevant member of staff. The best person to speak to initially will be the member of staff who will have the best understanding of the situation and can best answer your queries, for example:

Parents/Career:

- A concern regarding homework allocation for a particular subject could be raised with the subject teacher or Associate Deputy Principal (Primary)/or Head of Department (High).
- A parent's concern about their child's friendship with another child in their class could be raised with the class or form teacher or Associate Deputy Principal (Primary) or Stage Advisor (High).
- A concern about a member of staff could be raised with the Associate Deputy Principal (Primary)/Head of Department (High) or Principal/s.

Staff

- Initial staff concerns should be raised with the respective Associate Deputy Principal per stage (Primary) or Head of Department (High), followed by respective Deputy Principal.

Wherever possible, informal concerns will be responded to quickly and resolved amicably. Ideally, your concern will be addressed within 24 hours or a meeting may be arranged with you to discuss the issue. However, where a matter is regarding classroom-based staff please be

mindful of their availability and reasonable in your expectation of response times, particularly to concerns received by email.

Confidentiality

- Confidentiality should be adhered to throughout the complaint resolution process. This means that the complaint should only be discussed with those people directly involved in the resolution process. Observing confidentiality helps to protect the rights of everyone by limiting knowledge of the details of the complaint to those who will work together for a resolution. In addition, it helps to limit damage to any existing trust between the parties, thereby facilitating a resolution and developing greater confidence in one another.

4.0 Complaints that result in staff capability and disciplinary

If, at any stage, it is necessary to undertake staff disciplinary or capability proceedings as the result of a complaint, the details of this action will remain confidential to the individual's line manager and any relevant member(s) of the Minarah Executive Leadership Team (ELT) directly involved in the proceedings. The complainant is entitled to be informed that action is being taken but they are not entitled to participate in proceedings or receive any detail about them.

5.0 Procedure and Timeframes

Wherever possible, please raise initial concerns with the relevant member of staff as detailed in section 3 of this policy. If you are not satisfied with the response and believe the issue has not been resolved, please follow the procedure below.

For the majority of complaints, Minarah ELT or the School Board will follow the timescales in this policy. However, in complex cases more time may be needed to conduct a full and fair investigation or convene a panel of school board members. In this instance, extended timescales will be confirmed at the earliest possible opportunity.

Minarah reserves the right not to investigate complaints that have been made more than three months after the subject of the complaint took place unless in exceptional circumstances; for example: where new evidence has come to light; if the complaint is about an especially serious matter or where there is reasonable justification for why the complainant couldn't raise the matter sooner. The Principal/s will make the decision on whether or not to invoke the complaints procedure in this instance and inform the Chairman of the School Board of the decision.

6.0 Procedure and Timeframes (Continue)

Concerns	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Concern raised informally with relevant staff by email, phone or in person • Quick response and resolution (usually within 24hrs) or meeting scheduled to
Stage 1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Concern escalated to Deputy Principal (or nominated representative) for an informal investigation • Where complainant is dissatisfied with outcome; submit formal
Stage 2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Complaint escalated to the Principal (or nominated representative) for formal investigation • Where complainant dissatisfied with outcome; submit written request for formal appeal
School Days	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Appeal panel will review stage 1 and stage 2 investigations and make final decision to uphold/reject all or part of complaint.

7.0 Complaints about the Principal/s or members of the School Board

Where a complaint regards a Principal/s, this should first be raised directly with the Principal/s to try and resolve the issue informally. If the complainant is not satisfied with this outcome, they should submit a complaint to chairman@minarah.nsw.edu.au Chairman or his delegate from the School Board will then begin the complaints process at stage 1.

Where a complaint regards a School Board Member, a complaint should be submitted to chairman@minarah.nsw.edu.au The Chairman or his delegate will then begin the complaints process at stage 1.

8.0 Complaints about Executive Leadership Team

Where a complaint regards to a member of the Executive Leadership Team this should first be raised directly with the Principal/s to try and resolve the issue informally. If the complainant is not satisfied with this outcome, they should notify the Chairman of the School.

9.0 Stages of a complaint

All complaints will be handled in the order and procedure outlined below, from Stage 1 to Stage 4 consecutively. The first point of contact for making a formal complaint is via email to the schoolboard@minarah.nsw.edu.au

Stage 1 – Informal Investigation

If an initial concern has been raised and the complainant feels the issue has not been addressed appropriately through the informal process by the Associate Deputy Principals/Deputy Principals (Primary)/ Stage Advisors/ Head of Department (High) respectively or recommends the initial concern warrants more detailed investigation, a Stage 2 formal complaints investigation will be conducted

Stage 2 – Formal Investigation

Stage 2 of the formal investigation will be as following:

1. Complainant lodges an Online Compliant Form available from the School's website (Intranet for Staff) or alternatively submit a completed online form to schoolboard@minarah.nsw.edu.au requesting their concern to be investigated.

The complainant also should include:

- A summary of the complaint so far
 - Who has been involved (use job titles if names are not known)
 - Why the complaint remains unresolved
 - What is needed to resolve the complaint (e.g. an explanation / apology / further action)
2. Within two school days a response will be given to acknowledge receipt of the complaint, confirm who the complaint has been forwarded to for investigation and the timescales for a response.
 3. The Principal/s (or delegate) may conduct the stage 2 formal investigation themselves or instruct an appropriate member of their team to conduct the investigation.
 4. Within two school days a response will be given to acknowledge receipt of the formal complaint, confirm who the complaint has been forwarded to for formal investigation stage 2 and the timescales for a response.
 5. The School may conduct the stage 2 formal investigation themselves or instruct an appropriate external investigator to conduct the investigation.
 6. The investigator will consider all relevant evidence to the complaint; this may include but is not limited to:
 - The formal complaint from the complainant
 - Written records from the phase 1 informal investigation

- Previous correspondence regarding the complaint
- A statement from the complainant
- A statement from any individual who is the subject of the complaint
- Any supporting evidence in either case
- Interview with anyone relevant to the complaint

The investigator may decide to meet with the complainant, or anyone who is the subject of the complaint, if they feel it would be appropriate for the investigation; however, there is no expectation that an investigation will always include this.

7. The School will consider the findings and evidence from the formal investigation and confirm the outcome in writing within twenty school days of confirming a formal investigation was undertaken.

The School can:

- Uphold the complaint and direct relevant action to resolve it
 - Reject the complaint, stating the rationale for this decision, and provide the complainant with details of the stage 3: appeals process
 - Uphold the complaint in part (i.e. uphold part of the complaint but not all of it) and direct relevant action to resolve the specific aspect of the complaint which has been upheld.
8. If the complainant is not satisfied with the outcome, they may request the complaint to be escalated to stage 3 for an Appeal Panel Review to the School Board, secretary@minarah.nsw.edu.au
 9. Written records of the complaint and informal investigation will be held at the school for twelve months, in line with the principles of the Privacy Act 1988.

A school day does not include weekends, public holidays or periods of time when the school is closed for school holidays or religious observance

Stage 3 – Complaint Review Panel (final stage)

If the complainant is not satisfied with the decision made at stage 2: formal investigation, or unhappy with the investigation process, they may appeal to a Complaint Review Panel.

The Complaint Review Panel will be made up of three Directors including the Chairman or the Board Secretary.

The complainant must request an appeal panel in writing within 20 school days of receiving the decision after the stage 2 formal investigation or it will not be considered, except in exceptional circumstances. The request should be sent to secretary@minarah.nsw.edu.au on receipt of this request, the following process will be followed:

1. The Compliant review will be acknowledged in the next Board meeting.

2. The three-member committee of the Board will review the decision made by the Principal/s.
3. In addition to the three panel members the following parties may be invited, at panel's discretion, to attend the meeting:
 - i. The complainant
 - ii. The person responsible for the stage 2 formal investigation
 - iii. Where the complaint regards a member of staff; the staff member who is the subject of the complaint.
4. The complainant is also able to bring a companion with them to the hearing if they wish. Where the subject of the complaint is about a member of staff, that member of staff may also bring a companion with them.
5. The companion will be a friend or colleague. Neither party may bring legal representation with them. If, after the hearing, any party feels that legal action is necessary, please contact the Chairman.
6. If the attendance of any student is required at the hearing, parental permission will be sought if they are under the age of 18. Extra care will be taken when a panel hearing involves the attendance of children and, where possible, alternative methods of providing the child's evidence/input will be used.
7. The panel can make the following decisions:
 - Dismiss the complaint in whole or in part
 - Uphold the complaint in whole or in part
 - Decide on the appropriate action to be taken to resolve the complaint
 - Recommend changes to the school's systems or procedures to ensure that problems of a similar nature do not recur.

All parties who attend the meeting will be informed in writing of the outcome of the appeal within five school days of the hearing date.

Complaint Review Panel is the final stage of Minarah 's complaints process. The school will not consider the complaint beyond this point.

10.0 Reporting and Recording Complaints

A written record of all formal complaints will be held centrally by Minarah, including which stage of the complaints procedure they were resolved, and any action taken by the school as a result of the complaint (regardless of whether it was upheld or not).

All correspondence, statements and records relating to individual complaints will be kept confidential, except where New South Wales Education Standards Authority or a body conducting an inspection under section 6 of the 1988 Act requests access to them.

11.0 Serial, Unreasonable and Duplicate Complaints

1. Serial Complaints

Where a complainant raises an issue that has already been dealt with via the complaints process in this policy, and the procedure has been completed, the issue will not be reinvestigated unless in exceptional circumstances, such as where new and relevant evidence has been provided.

2. Unreasonable Complaints

The Principal/s will use his/her discretion to choose not to investigate complaints that are deemed to be unreasonable. Where this decision has been made, they must inform the Chairman explaining the nature of the complaint and their reasons for choosing not to investigate. If the Chairman deems it appropriate, they may redirect the Principal/s to investigate the complaint.

The full complaints procedure will then commence from stage Unreasonable complaints include, but are not limited to, the following scenarios:

- The complainant refuses to cooperate with the school's relevant procedures.
- The complainant changes the basis of their complaint as the investigation progresses.
- The complainant seeks an unrealistic outcome.
- Excessive demands are made of the time of staff and Directors which are clearly intended to aggravate and/or cause disruption.
- The complainant acts in a way that is offensive, abusive or discriminatory.

3. **Duplicate Complaints**

When a complaint has been through the full complaints process and is closed, any subsequent complaint received from a spouse, partner, grandparent or child (where the child is a subject in the complaint) about the same subject matter will be deemed a duplicate complaint.

In this instance, the complainant will be informed that the matter has already been considered and the full complaint process completed. Minarah will therefore not re-investigate the matter.

Before deciding that a complaint will be treated as 'duplicate', Minarah will take care to ensure there are no new aspects to the complaint that have not previously been considered. Any new aspect identified will be investigated through the full complaint process as a new complaint.

12.0 Monitoring and review

Minarah has established and will maintain a system to record and monitor complaints, the action taken to resolve the complaint and the outcome. A record of all complaints received by Minarah, the action taken, and outcomes will be kept, and the information analysed to assist the Board and Management of Minarah to improve service quality and delivery.

In addition, Minarah will seek feedback from parents about the service they received and their views on the complaint resolution process as a whole.

13.0 Relevant Legislation and Guidance

- The Anti-Discrimination Act 1977 The Privacy Act 1988
- The Education Act 1990
- NESAs: Compliant Handling & Policy Process



Appendix A

Complaints Form

[Here](#)

Document Control

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