Complaints Policy

Purpose

This policy sets out the principles governing the School's approach to the management of complaints from all members of the School community. This policy, together with the School's complaints procedures, form the School's Complaints Management Framework.

A complaint is an expression of dissatisfaction, either written or verbal, with an action taken, decision made or service provided/ or not provided by the School.

Scope

This policy applies to all operations of Haileybury.

This policy is applicable to any member of the Haileybury community wishing to make a complaint about a decision, action or activity for which the School may be responsible.

For the purposes of this policy, School community includes parents of children enrolled at Haileybury (both domestic and international), past parents, past and present students and members of the public who may be affected by the operations of the School.

This policy does not apply to grievances or complaints from employees. Please refer to the Staff Complaints Procedure.

This policy does not include the management of Whistleblower complaints or Whistleblower protection. The School maintains a separate Whistleblower Policy and Program.

Principles

Principles Governing the Complaints Management Approach

Haileybury's approach to complaints is based on the following principles:

- Haileybury is committed to the development of professional, trusting and cooperative relationships among the School community
- Victimisation of any person who makes or is involved in a complaint is unlawful and counter to Haileybury's culture, and will not be tolerated
- The opportunity to receive and handle complaints may constitute an important mechanism through which the School can receive constructive feedback, and thus provide an avenue for continuous improvement

- The School is committed to child safety and has zero tolerance for child abuse. In the context of this policy, the response to a complaint relating to child safety will be given the highest priority and most immediate attention possible
- It is not always possible to respond to complaints received from an anonymous source and, by definition, it is not possible for the School to communicate any resolution or response to the anonymous complainant. The School will always act when anonymous concerns about child safety are raised
- The complaints policy and complaints procedures are intended to be conciliatory, non-adversarial and non-legal.

Principles Governing the Handling of Complaints

Haileybury commits to the following principles:

- The complaints procedures will be simple and accessible. Haileybury recognises that complaints are best handled at the local/campus level and often resolved informally, without requiring an investigation. If a complainant is not satisfied with the outcome of the handling of the complaint at the campus level, they can escalate the complaint in accordance with the Complaints Procedure
- In handling any complaint, the School will give priority to students' wellbeing and educational requirements
- The School will respond to complaints in a timely manner and maintain communication with complainants throughout the process
- Complainants will be treated with respect and protected from victimisation
- Complainants may require a support person to assist them to understand and participate in the complaints handling processes. This would usually be a member of their family. If necessary, the School will assist with access to interpreters
- The School will endeavour to respond to each complaint in a fair, objective and unbiased manner, taking into account the School's mission and values
- In dealing with any complaint, the School is committed to acting in a confidential manner and expects that all parties to the complaint will respect the confidentiality of the other(s)
- Complaints that are found to be vexatious (where the complaint is designed to harass, annoy or embarrass the School or another party) will be dismissed and the School reserves the right to take action against the complainant

- The School will ensure that any actions, outcomes and the resolution of a complaint are documented and that the complainants have a copy of the final decisions, to the extent possible in relation to the privacy and confidentiality of the individuals involved
- The School will ensure that the handling of complaints does not contravene its privacy, whistleblowing or child protection reporting obligations. The School will seek actively to prevent the disclosure of personally identifiable information concerning the parties involved in the complaint unless legally compelled otherwise.

Record Keeping

Haileybury maintains a record of all formal complaints in its complaints register. Additional information may be retained independently of the complaints register where the School has an obligation to do so, such as in the case of child protection complaints or privacy breaches. In all cases, documentation will be maintained securely and confidentially.

The following documentation will form the record of the complaint. The record of the complaint will comprise the following:

- the formal complaints form, whether completed by the complainant or by the School
- a record of the complainant's interview(s) and the steps followed as set out in the Complaints Procedure
- a record of the outcome of the matter.

The management and retention of these records will follow the School's Record Management Policy and the Australian Society of Archivists Record Retention Schedule for Non-government Schools.

Escalation and Appeals process

Informal complaints may be escalated to the formal complaint process at any time. If a complainant is not satisfied with the outcome of a complaint investigation, they may appeal in accordance with the Complaints Procedure.

If the complaint remains unresolved, the complainant may seek an investigation by the Victorian Registration and Qualifications Authority (VRQA), Queensland Curriculum and Assessment Authority or Quality Education and Care NT (QECNT). Generally, these bodies will only investigate matters related to a possible breach of the obligations of the School in relation to the Minimum Standards for Registration.

Responsibilities

School Council

The School Council is responsible for:

- Ensuring that the School has appropriate policies and procedures in place to receive and respond to complaints
- Responding to formal complaints that relate to the CEO | Principal or complaints that have been escalated in accordance with the appeals procedures.

CEO | Principal

The CEO | Principal is responsible for:

- Ensuring that the School's complaints handling policy and procedures are effectively implemented
- Ensuring that this policy is accessible to the School community through Haileybury's website
- Responding to significant complaints and as a point of escalation where attempts to resolve complaints have been unsuccessful
- Ensuring that the School maintains a register of complaints
- Reports to the School Council as required.

Complaints Officer

Haileybury has appointed the Vice Principal Community Engagement and Advancement as the Complaints Officer for Haileybury Melbourne, and the Principal for Haileybury Rendall School. The Complaints Officer is responsible for:

- Ensuring that the Complaints Policy and Procedure remain up to date and available to the community on the School's website and in other accessible ways to staff and parents
- Maintaining and monitoring the School's complaints register, and providing relevant reporting to the School Council and Senior Executive Team
- Ensuring that the complaints register covers all campuses/departments and allows for the monitoring and reporting of any new or emerging, systemic or recurring issues
- Monitoring the implementation of the School's Complaints Procedure in general and in relation to specific complaints
- Responding to specific complaints as required.

Managers

Managers within the School are responsible for:

- Ensuring that complaints received within their area of responsibility are handled in accordance with this policy and the School's Complaints Procedure
- Ensuring that staff under their supervision are aware of the School's Complaints Policy and Procedures
- Responding to complaints in their area of responsibility
- Monitoring and reporting of any new or emerging, systemic or recurring issues
- Being a point of contact and or escalation for inquiries about campus concerns or informal complaints.

All Staff

All staff are responsible for:

- Receiving and responding to concerns or informal complaints
- Ensuring that complaints they receive are handled in accordance with the Complaint's Management Procedures, whilst under their control.

Relevant Legislation, Standards and Codes

Education and Training Reform Act 2006 (Vic).

Education and Training Reform Regulations 2017 (Vic).

VRQA Guidelines to the Minimum Standards and Requirements for School Registration 2022.

Education (Accreditation of Non-State Schools) Act 2017 (Qld).

Education (Accreditation of Non-State Schools) Regulation 2017 (Qld).

Education (Queensland Curriculum and Assessment Authority) Regulation 2014 Child Safe Standards Ministerial Order 870.

Privacy Act 1988 (Cth).

Educational Services for Overseas Students (ESOS) Act and Regulations, including the National Code.

Related Documents

Haileybury Enrolment Agreement – Business Notice

Haileybury Complaints Procedure

Haileybury Student Complaints Management Procedures

Haileybury Child Safety and Wellbeing Policy

Haileybury Child Safety Code of Conduct

Haileybury Whistleblower Policy

Haileybury Privacy Policy

HRS Child Safety and Wellbeing Policy