

Complaints Resolution Policy (Parents, Guardians and Students)

Policy Audience: Staff, Parents and Students



Help for non-English speakers.

If you need help to understand this policy, please contact us at enquiries@kilvington.vic.edu.au

1.0 Rationale

Kilvington Grammar School (the School) acknowledges that parents and students have a right to raise concerns and have them addressed. Complaints should be handled objectively and with sensitivity.

2.0 Purpose

This Complaints Resolution Policy (Parents, Guardians and Students) (the Policy) aims to:

- Determine whether there has been any unsatisfactory/inappropriate practice or action.
- Implement changes to bring about better educational, pastoral or administrative outcomes, as appropriate.
- Achieve reconciliation between the parties.

3.0 Scope

This Policy applies to grievances, complaints and interpersonal disputes, other than any matters relating to the safety and wellbeing of a child or whistleblowing.

This Policy applies to all staff members, parents/guardians/carers (hereinafter referred to as parents) and students.

3.1 International Students

For the purposes of this Policy, an overseas student also referred to as an international student.

Where the complaint is made by an international student, in addition to the persons outlined above, this policy will also apply to an international student's:

- legal guardian(s)
- parent representative(s)
- eligible relative(s)
- homestay host(s)
- education agent.

4.0 Definitions

Appeal	A request for a review of a formal decision.
Complaint	An expression of dissatisfaction made to the School by a student in relation to: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• the quality of an action taken or service provided• a delay or a failure in providing a service• taking an action• making a decision.

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Overseas Student	<p>An overseas student is a person who:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Lives either within or outside Australia Holds a student visa as defined by the Education Services for Overseas Students Act 2000 (Cwlth) (ESOS Act). <p>Students of a kind prescribed in the ESOS Regulations are not considered to be overseas students.</p> <p>Where the overseas student is under 18 years of age and is required to exercise rights or enter obligations as a legal person, this term may refer to the student's parents or legal guardian.</p>
Student	Any person enrolled at the School.

5.0 Process for Making a Complaint

For information about how to make a complaint or concern in relation to a child safety incident or concern, please refer to the School's Procedures for Managing Child Safety Incidents or Concerns, including Child Safe Complaints, at or involving the School or its Staff, Volunteers or Contractors.

A child safety incident or concern is any behaviour that may be:

- A breach of our Child Safe Codes of Conduct.
- Child abuse, grooming or other harm of a current or former student by:
 - Current or former staff members.
 - Current or former students.
 - Other people on Kilvington Grammar School premises or at Kilvington Grammar School events.
- "Reportable conduct" as defined in the Child Wellbeing and Safety Act 2005 (Vic).
- Other child safety-related staff misconduct.

5.2 Informal Complaints Process

For the purposes of this Policy, informal complaints include:

- Student grievances where there is no child health, safety or wellbeing risk to the student.
- Complaints that have arisen as a result of unclear or lack of communication.
- Less serious matters where there is no harm to any person.
- Academic concerns which have not been raised previously with the School.
- Operational grievances or concerns.
- Commercial grievances or concerns.

When a student, parent, guardian or carer makes an informal complaint, the following process will be followed.

- Parents, legal guardians eligible relatives, the student or staff member should raise their concerns in the first instance with the student's classroom teacher (Junior School) or Mentor (Senior School). If the concern involves that staff member, parents and students should raise their concerns with a senior staff member as shown in the table below.

Junior School	Senior School
Junior School Team Coordinator (P - Y2) / (Y3 – Y6)	Heads of House/Year International Student Coordinator
Deputy Head of Junior School	Deputy Head of Senior School
Head of Junior School	Head of Senior School
Deputy Principal or Director of Business	

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2. The appropriate member of School Staff will arrange a meeting.
3. Following this meeting, an investigation will take place. Any investigation will follow procedural fairness.
4. Wherever possible, another meeting will be held to enable both parties to present their views with the aim of achieving a mutually agreeable outcome to resolve the complaint.

If, at the conclusion of this informal complaints process, a mutually agreeable outcome cannot be reached, this Complainant can escalate the complaint to the Formal Complaints Process.

Students can also make a complaint (which can be anonymous) by leaving a message via a Drop Box. These drop boxes are located at:

- Main Reception.
- Junior School Reception.
- Senior School Reception.
- Music Reception.

5.3 Formal Complaints Process (Excluding Complaints regarding the Principal)

For the purposes of this Policy, a formal complaint is any complaint deemed not to be informal or an informal complaint that has been escalated by the Complainant.

We understand the process of making a formal complaint can be stressful and are mindful of the impact of this process on the wellbeing of our students. Wanting our students to feel empowered and safe we encourage them, their parents/carers, other family members and/or other community members to raise issues or concerns with the School.

Before making a complaint, we encourage students wherever possible to write down as much information as they can recall, so they remember to raise this when talking to the trusted adult.

Students who wish to make a formal complaint involving the School or its staff or any other member of the school community (including but not limited to volunteers, contractors or other students), can raise this with a trusted adult at the School. This may be their classroom teacher, Mentor, Dean of Wellbeing, International Student Coordinator, one of the School's Child Safety Officers or any other member of staff.

Although we recommend students follow the guidelines as set out in the process below, we also recognise that students may prefer to discuss this with another trusted adult. This person will follow the process outlined in the table below on behalf of the student who made the complaint.

Alternatively, students can ask their parent/carer or any other trusted adult outside of the School's community to make a complaint on their behalf.

Students can also contact Kids Helpline on 1800 55 1800 for advice.

Parents, legal guardians eligible relatives, the student or staff member should raise their concerns in the first instance with the student's classroom teacher (Junior School) or Mentor (Senior School). If the concern involves that staff member, parents and students should raise their concerns with a senior staff member as shown in the table below.

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Junior School	Senior School
Junior School Team Coordinator (P -Y2) / (Y3 – Y6)	Heads of House/Year International Student Coordinator
Deputy Head of Junior School	Deputy Head of Senior School
Head of Junior School	Head of Senior School
Deputy Principal or Director of Business	

If no satisfaction is reached, the matter should be addressed with the Principal.

Where, in the judgement of the Principal or senior staff member, there is a need for a complaint to be addressed, the staff member must be informed of the complaint. Members of staff are entitled to know the details of the complaint against them, including the name of the person raising the complaint, the specific details of the complaint, and be given the opportunity to respond, with adequate notice, prior to any action being taken in response to the complaint.

The School will follow the process outlined below.

1. Parents/guardians/carers or students making a complaint should be requested by the Principal or other senior staff member to discuss the complaint with the staff member concerned.
2. If it is determined by the Principal that the concern is based on misinformation, misunderstanding, or is vexatious or misconceived, this will be raised with the complainant and the matter will rest.
3. If the complaint is deemed to be genuine, the Principal and those involved will meet. The accused will be told in advance the purpose of the meeting and who will be attending. This person will be given the opportunity to be accompanied by a support person of their choice.
4. If there is to be a joint meeting with the Principal, parents or students in relation to the complaint, the staff member concerned should be told in advance the purpose of the meeting and who will be attending the meeting. The staff member concerned must be given the opportunity to be accompanied by a support person.
5. In a case of alleged sexual or physical abuse, the matter **must be reported to the Police**. Once this is reported it becomes a police matter.

Students can also make a complaint (which can be anonymous) by leaving a message via a Drop Box. These drop boxes are located at:

- Main Reception.
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5.4 Process to Make a Complaint Involving the Principal

Where the complaint relates directly to the Principal of the School, parents/carers, family members and other community members can report their concerns by directly contacting the Chair of the Board, the details of which are:

- Email: chairofboard@kilvington.vic.edu.au.
- Telephone: 03 9578 6231.

The Chair of the Board will follow the process outlined below.

1. Parents/guardians/carers or students making a complaint should be requested by the Chair of the Board to discuss the complaint with the staff member concerned.
2. If it is determined by the Chair of the Board that the concern is based on misinformation, misunderstanding, or is vexatious or misconceived, this will be raised with the complainant and the matter will rest.
3. If the complaint is deemed to be genuine, the Chair of the Board and the Principal will meet. The Principal will be told in advance the purpose of the meeting and who will be attending. This person will be given the opportunity to be accompanied by a support person of their choice.
4. If there is to be a joint meeting with the Chair of the Board, parents or students in relation to the complaint, the Principal should be told in advance the purpose of the meeting and who will be attending the meeting. The Principal must be given the opportunity to be accompanied by a support person.
5. In a case of alleged sexual or physical abuse, the matter must be reported to the Police. Once this is reported it becomes a police matter.

6.0 International Students: Complaints and Appeals Process

We understand there may be instances where an overseas student (hereinafter referred to as international student) has a concern that may not be addressed in this Policy. The purpose of the process outlined below is to assist an international student to resolve the complaint.

1. The international student, parent, legal guardian, eligible relative or staff member will initially make contact with the International Student Coordinator who, in consultation with the Head of Senior School, will make a time to conduct a mediation process. This would usually involve all relevant parties, such as the international student, parents, legal guardians, and eligible relative. Where the complaint is regarding the International Student Coordinator, their role will be fulfilled by the international student's Head of House/Year. Where the complaint is regarding the Head of Senior School, their role will be fulfilled by the Deputy Principal.
2. In circumstances where mediation does not achieve an acceptable outcome for the international student, the School will assist in arranging external conciliation in order to resolve the complaint with, for example, a private counsellor, dispute resolution counsellor or, if requested, a nominee of the international student.
3. Until such time as the complaints and appeals process has been completed, the international student will remain enrolled at the School. The School will not notify the Department of Home Affairs (DHA) of any change to the international student's enrolment status through the Provider Registration and International Student Management System (PRISMS). Depending on the nature of the claim, the international student may or may not be permitted to attend classes during the complaints and appeals process.

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4. Where the School has assessed the international student as not meeting course progress or attendance requirements, the School will follow the process as outlined in the Full Fee Paying Overseas Student Academic Progress and Attendance Policy and maintain their enrolment until the complaints and appeals process has been completed.
5. Where the School makes decision to suspend or cancel the international student's enrolment due to misbehaviour, the School will follow the process as outlined in the Full Fee Paying Overseas Student Enrolment Deferment, Suspension or Cancellation Policy and maintain their enrolment until the complaints and appeals process has been completed.
6. This Policy does not affect the rights of the international student to take action under the Australian Consumer Law if the Australian Consumer Law applies

6.1 Internal Complaints and Appeals Process

The School will respond to any complaint or appeal an overseas student makes regarding their dealings with the School, the School's education agents or any related party the School has an arrangement within order to deliver the overseas student's course or related services.

The School will commence an assessment of the complaint or appeal within 10 working days of it being made and finalise the outcome as soon as practicable.

It is the School's policy to conduct the assessment of the complaint or appeal in a professional, fair and transparent manner.

The School will ensure the international student is given a written statement of the outcome of the internal appeal, including detailed reasons for the outcome and keep a written record of the complaint or appeal, including a statement of the outcome and reasons for the outcome.

If the internal or any external complaints handling or appeal process results in a decision or recommendation in favour of the overseas student, the School will immediately implement the decision or recommendation and/or take the preventive or corrective action required by the decision, and advise the overseas student of that action.

6.2 External Complaints and Appeals Process

If the overseas student is not successful in the School's internal complaints handling and appeals process, the School will advise the overseas student within 10 working days of concluding the internal review of the overseas student's right to access an external complaints handling and appeals process at minimal or no cost. The School will give the overseas student the contact details of the Overseas Students Ombudsman as outlined below.

Overseas Students Ombudsman

GPO Box 442 Canberra ACT 2601

Telephone: 1300 362 072 (within Australia)

Telephone: +61 2 5117 3600 (outside Australia)

Email: ombudsman@ombudsman.gov.au

Website: <https://www.ombudsman.gov.au>

7.0 Mediation

If the complainant feels that the matter is unresolved and further raises the concern with the Principal, the Principal will invite a mediator to assist in trying to resolve the matter. By the end of this meeting an outcome is required to be in place.

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8.0 Record Keeping

Records of the complaint, the process for handling the complaint and any outcomes should be kept. Where the complaint is found to be vexatious or based on misinformation etc., any record pertaining to the complaint or handling of the complaint will be kept in a file separate from the staff member concerned and the student.

Where a complaint is addressed or acted on, a copy of any reports related to the handling of the complaint will be given to the staff member concerned. Staff members will have access to the files kept on them by the School as per the Privacy Act.

When keeping records of disclosures of allegations of child abuse and/or student sexual offending, the School maintains confidentiality and privacy for our students and their families in accordance with federal and state privacy legislation.

In addition, the School will ensure these records are properly managed, protected and retained over time. As such, the School will adhere to the Public Record Office Victoria Record Keeping Standards.

For records relating to investigations of incidents and allegations of child sexual abuse, the School will abide by the requirements as prescribed in the Retention and Disposal Authority for Records of Organisational Response to Child Sexual Abuse Incidents and Allegations.

9.0 Grievances

If the accused believes that the process of handling the complaint and/or the outcome of the complaint has been unfair and/or inappropriate, they have the right to pursue grievance procedures. In such situations the staff member concerned should be granted access to all file notes.

9.1 Grievance Procedures

- The accused will detail in writing to the Principal the specific concerns.
- A meeting will be scheduled to discuss unresolved issues. The accused has a right to choose, and be accompanied by, a nominee.
- A resolution will be arrived at.

10.0 Relevant Legislation and Standards and Related Documents

10.1 Relevant Legislation and Standards

- Education Services for Overseas Students Act 2000 (Cwlth)
- Privacy Act 1988 (Vic).
- Victorian Child Safe Standards (2022)

10.2 Related Documents

- Child Safety and Wellbeing Policy
- Child Safety Code of Conduct
- Full Fee Paying Overseas Student Academic Progress and Attendance Policy
- Full Fee Paying Overseas Student Assessment of English Language Proficiency Policy
- Full Fee Paying Overseas Student Business Regulations: International Students Enrolment and Written Agreement
- Full Fee Paying Overseas Student Education Agents Policy
- Full Fee Paying Overseas Student Enrolment Policy
- Full Fee Paying Overseas Student Enrolment Deferral, Suspension or Cancellation Policy
- Full Fee Paying Overseas Student Transfer Request Policy
- Full Fee Paying Overseas Student Refund Policy
- Full Fee Paying Overseas Student Younger Overseas Student Policy

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- Privacy Policy
- Procedures for Managing Child Safety Incidents or Concerns, including Child Safe Complaints, at or involving the School or its Staff, Volunteers or Contractors

11.0 Evaluation

Policy last reviewed February 2026

Approval: Executive

Review cycle 5 years