



COMPLAINTS POLICY

Students, Parents/Guardians

College Statement	<p><i>Brigidine College Indooroopilly is a Kildare Ministries Independent Catholic Girls Secondary College for students from Year 7 to Year 12. The College is committed to the Brigidine vision of transformation of society through faith and education. It has a proven record of providing quality and affordable education for the empowerment of young women. The College strives, in the spirit of Brigid, to build a true community of students, parents and teachers, reflecting gospel values. The College motto, Fortiter et Suaviter (Strength and Gentleness) is lived daily in all interactions. There is an emphasis on the individual and the common good in all aspects of College life.</i></p>		
Date Approved	8 November 2022	Policy Owner	Principal
Next Review Due	2025	Author	Risk and Compliance Officer
Audience	<p>Students, parents, guardians, employees (including full-time, part-time, permanent, fixed-term and casual), contractors, volunteers and people undertaking work experience and/or vocational placement.</p>		
References	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Complaints Procedure – Students, Parents/Guardians • Codes of Conduct (various) • Privacy Policy • Grievance Policy • Positive Behaviours Policy (Students) • Student Protection Guidelines • Student Protection Processes • Whistleblower Policy • Kildare Ministries Whistleblower Policy • <i>Education (Accreditation of Non-State Schools) Act 2017 (Qld)</i> • <i>Education (Accreditation of Non-State Schools) Regulation 2017 (QLD)</i> • <i>Privacy Act 1988 (Cth)</i> (Australian Privacy Principles) • https://www.education.gov.au/NTCH 		
Contact	office@brigidine.qld.edu.au		

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Policy Overview

Brigidine College Indooroopilly (the College) is committed to effective complaints management by managing student, parent and guardian complaints in an accountable, transparent, timely and fair manner, while protecting the health and safety of College employees through proactive management of unreasonable complainant conduct.

This policy will ensure that complaints from students, parents and guardians are managed consistently and in accordance with the Australian Standard on complaints management (AS/NZS ISO 10002:2014 – Guidelines for complaints in organisations) and relevant legislation.

Purpose

The College recognises that it is in the best interest of students and parents or guardians for there to be a trusting and co-operative relationship between members of the community and the College.

Complaints and grievances are an important way for the College community to provide information and feedback to the College. The College considers that every complaint provides a valuable opportunity for reflection and learning. The College recognises a person's right to make a complaint and its responsibility to provide a framework within which efforts can be made to resolve complaints.

The College believes that complaints are best handled in an environment where people feel able to speak up about issues concerning the education and wellbeing of their children. An effective complaint-handling system has a clear process for resolving complaints, treats people fairly, is timely and provides those people involved in a complaint with a fair opportunity to respond to issues and to present their views.

When addressing parent/guardian concerns or complaints, the College must:

- abide by relevant regulatory and legislative frameworks;
- maintain confidentiality;
- balance the rights and responsibilities of all parties;
- ensure all parties are aware of their right to advocacy;
- act in a manner that seeks to achieve an outcome acceptable to all parties.

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Principles

In managing a complaint from a student, parent or guardian, the following principles apply:

Accessibility	Information about how to make a complaint and the College's procedures when responding to a complaint should be easily accessible and regularly publicised within the College community. The complaint-handling process should be flexible and include the ability to make a complaint in person, by phone and in writing. Support should also be given to parents with special needs, including translations, interpreters and enabling a parent to seek the services of an advocate.
Confidentiality	Personally identifiable information concerning the complainant should be actively protected from disclosure except where needed in relation to the complaint. The complaint should only be discussed with those directly involved in the complaint-handling process. Complaint information is confidential and managed in accordance with Australian Privacy Principles within the <i>Privacy Act 1988</i> (Cth).
Cost	There should be no cost to the complainant for access to the complaint-handling process.
Learn, improve, grow	This policy and procedures should be regularly reviewed for improvement. Complaint data and feedback should be used to identify recurrent themes and to implement improvement measure where a need is identified.
Local resolution	Resolve complaints promptly and at the point of receipt, where possible.
No detriment	Students, parents and guardians are not adversely affected because they have made a complaint.
Objectivity and fairness	Apply procedural fairness and withhold judgement.
People focus	Build trusting relationships by respecting individuals and the community. Students, parents and guardians have a right to voice complaints.
Responsiveness	Receipt of written complaints should be acknowledged by communicating with the complainant as soon as possible. Progress of the complaint should be communicated when the matter is complex and will take time to bring to resolution.

Complaints within the scope of this policy

Complaints by a student, parent or guardian expressing dissatisfaction about a service, decision or action of a College employee, and the student, parent or guardian is directly affected by the service, decision or action.

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Complaints outside the scope of this policy

The following complaints are outside of the scope of this policy and are responded to through other mechanisms:

College employee complaints eg serious misconduct	Grievance Policy, EBA
Complaints relating to student protection processes	Student Protection Policies and Procedures
Complaints relating to student bullying or harassment	Positive Behaviours Policy – Bullying Prevention and Response, Behaviour Management Policy and Procedures
Complaints relating to conduct of religious clergy and other religious persons	Archdiocese of Brisbane Professional Standards
Reporting a work health and safety incident or near miss	Incident Reporting and Investigation procedure
Criminal activities	Report to police
Vocational Education and Training (VET)	Attempt to resolve with BCI first Contact National Training Complaints Hotline Phone: 13 38 73 w: https://www.education.gov.au/NTCH
<p>Individuals may lodge a complaint with Kildare Education Ministries (KEM) if the matter is outside the scope of the College or the College Board eg a complaint may be about the Board Chair or Director or if the complaint is about the conduct of a religious person.</p> <p>Complainants should read the Kildare Education Whistleblower Policy before making a complaint to KEM.</p>	<p><i>Kildare Ministries contacts</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Kildare Education Ministries Executive Officer; or • Kildare Education Ministries Chairperson KEM Board; or • Kildare Ministries Executive Director. <p>Brigidine Ministry Centre 54 Beaconsfield Parade Albert Park VIC 3206 Phone: 03 9682 2973 Email: adminassistant@kildareministries.org.au</p>

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Definitions

Complaint	A “complaint” and/or “grievance” is an expression of dissatisfaction with an action taken, decision made or service provided, or the failure to provide a service, take action or make a decision at the College.
Complainant	A student, parent or guardian directly affected by a service, decision or action of a College employee.
Internal review	A process used to assess the merits of the original complaint, the complaints processes used to resolve the complaint and the original outcome decided.
Parent	<p>A parent includes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A person who has parental responsibility for ‘major long-term issues’ • A person appointed as a ‘guardian’ for a child • An informal carer with whom the child normally or regularly resides, and who has day-to-day care and control of the child
Resolution	<p>A complaint is resolved when the complaint has been handled through the College’s complaints processes and in accordance the Student, Parent and Guardian Complaints policy and procedure.</p> <p>Should the complainant submit the complaint to an external agency, the complaint is considered resolved and closed, until notified by the external agency.</p> <p>A complaint is considered to be ‘unresolved’ when agreement cannot be reached on a course of action and/or a remedy, or if the remedy cannot be implemented.</p>

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Unreasonable Complainant Conduct	<p>All complaints should be considered in accordance with the College’s complaint-handling procedures, including when the complaining party’s behaviour is thought to be unreasonable.</p> <p>The Principal considers a range of factors and views however, may at any point in the process outlined in the Policy or Procedure consider a complaining party’s behaviour to be unreasonable. In these circumstances, it is appropriate for the Principal to communicate the basis on which the conclusion was made to the complainant in writing. The Principal may also indicate an acceptable procedure for future communication with the complainant about their complaint.</p> <p>Unreasonable complainant conduct involves actions or behaviours which raise significant health, safety, resources or equity issues for the College. Unreasonable complainant conduct includes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • unreasonable persistence: for example, making excessive and unnecessary phone calls or emails. • unreasonable demands: for example, demanding a different process or more reviews than allowed for by the College’s complaints procedure or demanding a different outcome without demonstrating that the original decision of the College was incorrect or unfair. • lack of cooperation: for example, refusing to identify the problem or providing disorganised information. • unreasonable arguments: for example, making irrational or illogical claims. • unreasonable behaviours: for example, aggression or violence to College employees or threatening to harm College employees, self or others. • behaviour that is outside the expectations of co-operation, courtesy and respect. • staff resources and time unjustified by the nature or significance of the complaint. • unreasonable cost impact to the College.
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Policy Review

This policy will be reviewed and amended as required in 2025 or earlier if deemed necessary.

Revision History

Document Number	Date	Revision Description	Principal Approval
Version 1	March 2019	Original version	27 March 2019
Version 2	November 2022	Review. Insert Kildare Ministries information	7 November 2022

Note: Printed copies are uncontrolled

END OF POLICY