



# Guidelines for Parents and Carers in Raising Complaints

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# FAMILY AND SCHOOL PARTNERSHIP PRINCIPLES

Catholic Schools Parramatta Diocese (CSPD) acknowledges that parents are the first educators of their children. CSPD and its schools value parents as partners and this partnership is critical in supporting each child to achieve their best throughout their learning and faith journey.

The faith development, learning and wellbeing of every child is a shared responsibility between the school and parents. You can learn more about our Family and School Partnership Principles at <https://www.parra.catholic.edu.au/about/policy-central>



## Working together

Our Catholic faith calls us to care for one another and create communities where everyone can flourish. We know that students thrive when parents work together with educators and support staff who are skilled in supporting students' learning and wellbeing.

## Building strong partnerships

A mutual commitment to building strong partnerships between schools and families is critical to creating relationships that are based on transparency, honesty and respect. Our Catholic schools are committed to ensuring that schools are places of welcome and belonging, and provide a safe place for all members of their community.

## Working together

The relationship between families and the school must be:

- |                                |  |
|--------------------------------|--|
| ▶ <b>based on mutual trust</b> | ▶ <b>respectful</b>  |
| ▶ <b>honest</b>                | ▶ <b>free from discrimination and abuse</b>                    |
| ▶ <b>open</b>                  | ▶ <b>focused on the learning and wellbeing of all students</b> |

## Complaints Resolution Process

CSPD promotes and maintains positive relationships and harmonious working environments. Guidelines for Parents and Carers in Raising Complaints outlines the principles CSPD will follow when dealing with complaints. If you have a concern or complaint, please raise this with your child's school in the first instance. If you remain unsatisfied with the response from your child's school, please contact [parentscarerssupport@parra.catholic.edu.au](mailto:parentscarerssupport@parra.catholic.edu.au)



Catholic Schools  
Parramatta Diocese

# FLOWCHART FOR RAISING INQUIRIES, CONCERNS OR COMPLAINTS FOR PARENTS AND CARERS

Refer to CSPD website for further information

## I have a concern in regards to ...



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## 1. Introduction and Purpose

This document outlines the principles to follow when parents or carers have a concern or complaint other than those managed in accordance with:

- [CSPD's Safeguarding Procedures](#) (risk of significant harm or safeguarding allegations against staff members)
- Complaints of corrupt conduct, maladministration or substantial waste (often termed “whistleblowing”) which are managed in accordance with the [Whistleblower Policy](#).

The objectives of this document are to provide information on raising a complaint.

We wish to promote and maintain positive relationships and harmonious working environments between schools and parents and to prevent, where possible, minor complaints escalating to become more serious matters. To achieve this, we will endeavour to promptly manage concerns confidentially and impartially.

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## 2. Scope

The procedures in this document should be followed by parents, carers, students, visitors, volunteers, and community members to raise an issue. However, this document is not intended to be a set of rigid procedures that must be followed to raise a concern or complaint, as the process for dealing with a particular concern will vary depending on the nature, circumstances and seriousness of the complaint. Consequently, this document provides for several avenues that can be used in attempting to resolve complaints.

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## 3. What is a complaint?

A complaint is a statement raising a concern expressing dissatisfaction with a service provided by CSPD schools, the behaviour and decisions of staff members or about CSPD practices, policies and procedures.

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## 4. Principles for raising a complaint

All complaints raised with CSPD will be considered seriously, dealt with as soon as practicable and conducted in a confidential, fair, impartial and professional manner.

Individuals raising a complaint will be treated with respect, protected from victimisation, kept informed on the status of the complaint, any recommendations that may result from the complaint management process, and have the option of a support person present at any meetings.

CSPD staff members will demonstrate discretion, respect and confidentiality in the resolution processes and as such, parents and carers are asked to act mutually. In some circumstances the complaint may not be able to be kept confidential by CSPD, as it may be necessary to interview other persons regarding the complaint and/or notify external bodies of the complaint, such as the NSW Police, if the matter involves alleged illegal activity.

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## 5. Options for resolving complaints

Given complaints can encompass a wide variety of issues, each complaint will be considered on its own merits to determine the most appropriate way to resolve it. The flow chart above provides a range of options that may be used to resolve a complaint. While it is recommended that a complaint is sought to be resolved in the order set out below, it is also recognised that in some circumstances this may not be appropriate, and it may be necessary to commence with a later option.

Any complaints directed by parents / carers to the CSPD office will be registered and responded to by a Parent/ Carer Support Specialist.

CSPD may request and review reports from Principal Leaders and Managers on the frequency, issues, resolutions and locations of complaints within the organisation. This will assist CSPD to review the effectiveness of the complaints management process and also identify any systemic problems or trends that may warrant further investigation.

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## 6. Raising complaints

After reviewing the flowchart, complaints may be raised in three main ways:

- 1) By liaising with the front office of your child's school for an appointment with the appropriate person.
- 2) In writing, using the form available on the [CSPD website](#) or your own letter or email. This allows us to know the outcome you are seeking to resolve the matter. Putting your complaint in writing is helpful when the concern is determined as needing to be resolved outside the local school level. (Refer to Flowchart) However it is not essential.
- 3) By phoning CSPD directly on (02) 9840 5600.

Parents are asked to resolve complaints involving students concerning matters related to learning, homework, behaviour, bullying, wellbeing or uniform by a conversation with the student's teacher or year coordinator in the first instance, followed by a meeting with the school Principal (or delegate) if appropriate and prior to lodging a complaint with CSPD.

Other complaints including those related to Religious Education and Mission, allegations about the conduct of a teacher or staff member, banned substances or weapons, suspension, transfer and exclusion, behaviour of students outside of school, another parent, intervention support, enrolment, will need to be raised with the Principal Leader, or their nominated delegate, prior to lodging a complaint with CSPD.

- If the concerns relate to school fees / finance / hardship or the use of digital devices / online issues, please contact Community Liaison [cl@parra.catholic.edu.au](mailto:cl@parra.catholic.edu.au)
  - If the complaint relates to corrupt conduct, maladministration, substantial waste, whistleblowing etc, the complaint should be referred directly to the CSPD Whistleblower Protection Officer via email [wpo@parra.catholic.edu.au](mailto:wpo@parra.catholic.edu.au).
  - If the complaint relates to the Principal Leader, this should be referred to the Deputy Executive Director via [parentscarersupport@parra.catholic.edu.au](mailto:parentscarersupport@parra.catholic.edu.au).
  - If the complaint relates to the Executive Director of Schools, the complaint should be referred to the Chair of CSPD Board by contacting the Company Secretary via email [spdlboard@parra.catholic.edu.au](mailto:spdlboard@parra.catholic.edu.au)
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## 7. Further information

*Parents / Carers* - For further information about matters outlined in this document or to make a complaint, please contact CSPD at [parentscarersupport@parra.catholic.edu.au](mailto:parentscarersupport@parra.catholic.edu.au) or telephone 9840 5651.

*Community members other than parents / carers of enrolled children* - For further information about matters outlined in this document or to make a complaint, please contact CSPD at [communityliaison@parra.catholic.edu.au](mailto:communityliaison@parra.catholic.edu.au) or telephone 9840 5796

[Link to download the Parent Complaint Intake Form](#)

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**CATHOLIC SCHOOLS PARRAMATTA DIOCESE – COMPLAINT FORM**

(This form can be used to raise a complaint)

**YOUR DETAILS**

Family name:

Given name:

Child's Name:

School:

Contact email and phone:

**PLEASE PROVIDE DETAILS OF THE COMPLAINT**

(Provide as much detail as possible and attach additional pages if space is insufficient. You may also attach supporting documentation)



**PLEASE PROVIDE DETAILS OF THE OUTCOME YOU ARE SEEKING**

**HAVE YOU PREVIOUSLY TRIED TO RESOLVE THIS CONCERN?**

YES

NO

If yes, when:		
With whom did you speak?		
What was the result:		
Date:		
<b>Complaint received by:</b>		
Name:		
Position:		
Signature:		Date: