



## Complaints Policy

### 1 Rationale

- 1.1 Pymble Ladies' College (the College) views complaints as a valuable source of information to improve relationships, policy, practice and systems.
- 1.2 The College recognises the importance of having a process that fosters a culture of disclosure whereby concerns can be raised and then managed in a supportive, co-operative and respectful manner, with confidentiality and sensitivity.
- 1.3 The purpose of this Policy is to outline the framework for managing complaints objectively and properly, to enable the making of fair decisions.

### 2 Scope

- 2.1 This Policy applies to contractors, volunteers, parents/guardians, students and members of the public who are making or receiving complaints and feedback.
- 2.2 It should be noted that:
  - Reportable conduct complaints are addressed in accordance with the *Child Protection Policy* and *Reportable Conduct Procedure*
  - Unlawful discrimination, harassment and workplace bullying are addressed in accordance with the *Discrimination, Harassment and Workplace Bullying Policy*
  - Complaints made by staff are addressed in accordance with the *Grievance and Dispute Resolution Policy and Procedure*
- 2.3 This Policy should be read in conjunction with the *Complaints Procedure*.

### 3 Definitions

In the context of this document:

- 3.1 **Complainant** is any person who has a complaint or grievance.
- 3.2 **Complaint** is an expression of dissatisfaction made to or about the College related to its services, staff or the handling of a complaint, where a response or resolution is explicitly or implicitly expected or legally required (Adapted from AS/NZS Guidelines for complaint management in organisations 10002:2014).
- 3.3 **Respondent** is any person against whom a complaint/grievance is brought.

- 3.4 **Procedural Fairness** (also known as natural justice) are the principles developed to ensure as far as practicable, that decision-making is fair and reasonable. It involves the decision-maker informing people of the case against them or their interests, giving them the right to be heard, not having a personal interest in the outcome and acting only on the basis of logically probative evidence.

## 4 Policy

- 4.1 The College is committed to taking reasonable steps to ensure that complaints are managed fairly, impartially, confidentially, sensitively and in a timely manner, in accordance with the principles of procedural fairness.

- 4.2 The College observes the following key principles for managing complaints:

- People are entitled to raise concerns and make complaints in person, by email or via the telephone
- Complaints will be assessed, investigated and managed in a timely manner at the appropriate level, in line with their complexity and nature
- All parties will be treated respectfully, have the opportunity to put their case forward and be heard
- Decisions will be made objectively having considered the perspectives and facts presented from all parties
- Appropriate confidentiality is expected from all parties involved and in the storage and handling of records relating to the concern and its resolution.

- 4.3 Complaints about:

- A child protection matter should be immediately directed to the Principal or Deputy Principal – Students (K-12), if the Principal is not available
- A key staff member should be directed to the Deputy Principal or Principal
- A member of the Senior Executive Team should be put in writing to the Principal or an appointment made with the Principal to discuss the matter
- The Principal should be put in writing and forwarded to the Chair of the Board at the College Postal Address.

- 4.4 The Chair of the Board and/or the Principal has the delegated responsibility to determine whether the College has followed due process.

- 4.5 The Chair of the Board and/or the Principal may delegate to an external person or agency the authority to review a complaint and report the result of the review to the Chair of the Board and/or the Principal, as applicable.

- 4.6 Information about the complaints process will be disseminated to all members of the College community through appropriate channels such as the College website, newsletters, lessons, portal, assemblies, staff meetings, parent information evenings and included in relevant handbooks or other publications.

- 4.7 This Policy is not intended to extend the responsibilities of the College beyond the law.

- 4.8 The College reserves the right to change or modify this Policy at any time by notice on the College portal.

## **5 Responsibilities**

- 5.1 Principal

## **6 Related Documents**

- 6.1 Child Protection Policy
- 6.2 Discrimination, Harassment and Workplace Bullying Policy
- 6.3 Grievance and Dispute Resolution Policy and Procedure
- 6.4 Anti- Bullying Policy (Student)
- 6.5 Privacy Policy
- 6.6 Student Behaviour Expectation Policy
- 6.7 Staff Code of Behaviour
- 6.8 Student Code of Behaviour
- 6.9 Complaints Procedure

## **7 Authorisation**

- 7.1 Principal

***This document is uncontrolled if printed. Please refer to the Portal for the most current version.***

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