



Complaints Management Policy

Rationale

Our school has both a desire and a responsibility to ensure that high standards of conduct are maintained by staff and students at all times. Complaints are to be managed and resolved fairly, efficiently, promptly and in accordance with relative legislation and as part of our priority for achieving corporate excellence.

Aims

Corinda State High School is committed to effective and efficient customer complaints management. We strive to manage customer complaints in an accountable, transparent, timely and fair manner in accordance with relative legislation.

Implementation

The Principal is required to use local complaints resolution procedures, where appropriate, for resolving complaints in relation to issues that fall within the school's area of responsibility.

All cases of serious misconduct (ie: sexual offences, criminal charges, or other serious incidents) must be directly referred to the Principal in the first instance. A complainant may at any stage choose to take their complaint directly to an external agency such as the Queensland Police, the Criminal Justice Commission, the Equal Opportunity Commission, the Human Rights and Equal Opportunity Commission or the Ombudsman.

It is important that all complaints, ensuing procedures and outcomes are fully documented.

The Principal may choose to respond to a complaint through an informal process in cases where the complaint is minor, the complainant wishes the matter to be dealt with informally or the complaint has arisen from lack of or unclear communication.

Additionally, Corinda State High School has subscribed to a special service called Stymie, a notification system which allows students, parents and staff to report anonymously about an issue that they believe needs to be reported. The notification interface allows bystanders to upload evidence like screen shots of Facebook discussions, Snapchats, text messages or instant message conversations and an outline of the incident(s). Stymie may be accessed at: <https://www.stymie.com.au/>

Community members may also make an anonymous complaint through stymie or by providing a written statement through the administration. The complaint will be assessed and progressed where sufficient details are provided. If insufficient information is provided any further action may be limited.

Formal processes will be used when informal processes have not been successful, a complainant seeks a formal process, or the Principal believes the complaint warrants formal investigation.



Process

How to make a complaint

We want to hear your concerns. We aim to provide a service that can be improved through your feedback.

You can raise an issue with any member of our staff. Contact the school to make an appointment to see the relevant person. Issues you think are serious should be raised with the administration. Our staff are encouraged to deal positively and sincerely with your concerns. They will listen. They will ask questions to make sure they understand. They may take notes to help in following up your concern. They will help you to take your complaint to the right place.

If you wish to bring a friend or if you want help or support, such as an interpreter, we will be happy to help. A full list of staff and their responsibilities is set out on the school website.

What can you expect

There are usually four phases in handling a complaint. In most cases these can all be worked through quickly in one process.

Phase 1 - Reception

Try to state your concern calmly, clearly and courteously. Being aggressive will not help resolve this issue.

The staff member:

- will listen to your concern and make sure they are understood
- will summarise the main points
- will usually explain the school policy or procedure on the issue.
- will work out an action plan with you: what he or she will do, what you should do, what your child should do and when you will talk again.
- may deal with the complaint themselves or refer it to another person. In many cases your concern should be resolved straight away.

Phase 2 - Deciding how to handle the matter

Some matters must not be handled in our school, because they are so serious. They must be referred to the Department of Education. In this phase the Principal assesses the matter and follows the Department of Education's processes for referral and/or further investigation.

Phase 3 - Finding out about the matter

In this phase the person handling the complaint will try to find out all about your concern, and will try to understand the context and causes.



You should help by providing all the information you can. The person handling the complaint may need to talk to people to get a complete picture, and as they do this may begin to explore options to resolve the matter.

You can help by focusing on a positive resolution of the matter. Your information will be treated confidentially (but where the matter must be investigated by an external agency it will need to be passed on to it).

You need to be aware that the person who is being complained about usually has the right to be made aware of the complaint.

Phase 4 - Resolution

The person who is handling your complaint will use the facts that have been gathered to make a decision/recommendation that is fair to all.

They will work to put things right for you and would appreciate your help to do this.

Our commitment

We are committed to dealing positively with your concern. It helps us to learn how we can do things better for you.

We will try to make sure that your complaint is resolved quickly. Sometimes a complex matter will take time. But we will always try to make sure you understand what we are doing and why.

If the person who has made the complaint is dissatisfied with the outcome or the way we handled their complaint, they can contact the [regional office](#) to ask for an internal review. A [Request for internal review form](#) should be completed and the request should be submitted within 28 days.

There is also an external review option (for example, the Queensland Ombudsman or Queensland Human Rights Commission), which becomes available once the department's complaints process has been exhausted.

Related Policies, Procedures and Guidelines

The following resources contain additional information:

- [Customer complaints management framework, policy and procedure](#)
- [Compliments, suggestions and customer complaints website](#)
- [Making a customer complaint: Information for parents and carers.](#)



Principles

Corinda State High School's complaints management principles are aligned to the guiding principles of the department.

What this means for Corinda State High School	
<i>Stakeholder focus</i>	- Our stakeholders have a right to complain and to not be adversely affected by their complaint. - All stakeholders making a complaint are treated with respect. - Our actions and decisions consider, and are compatible with, the human rights of our stakeholders. - The department proactively seeks and receives feedback and complaints from stakeholders.
<i>Accessibility and transparency</i>	- Corinda State High School's complaints process is free and accessible. - Corinda State High School clearly displays information about how and where a complaint may be made via email/phone and at the Administration Service desk. - Corinda State High School provides all reasonable assistance and support to make it easy for all stakeholders, including children, to make a complaint. - Complaints can be made anonymously.
<i>Responsiveness</i>	- Complaints are acknowledged and responded to fairly, reasonably and in a timely manner. - Stakeholders are kept informed about the progress of their complaint, and advised about the outcome reached, reasons for the school's decision, and any review options available. - Complaints are recorded and tracked, and timeframes for resolution are monitored.
<i>Objectivity, fairness and equity</i>	- Complaints are managed objectively, without bias and in a way that is compatible with, and properly considers human rights. - Corinda State High School respects the confidentiality of personal information about the complaint and others involved in the complaint. - Natural justice and procedural fairness are embedded in complaint management activities. - If the complainant's conduct is unreasonable, Corinda State High School may implement strategies to manage the conduct so the complaint can be productively resolved and staff welfare and wellbeing is protected.
<i>Accountability, continuous improvement and prevention</i>	- Corinda State High School uses formal, documented processes to manage complaints. - School resources are regularly reviewed to ensure relevance, accuracy and effectiveness. - Complaints are recorded and data is regularly analysed to understand performance and drive improvement. - Data is regularly reported internally and externally to ensure visibility of complaints trends and meet legislative reporting obligations.
<i>Staff training and support</i>	- Corinda State High School trains staff to manage complaints in accordance with, the department's complaints framework, policy and procedures. - A centralised departmental complaints coordinator is available to provide advice, support and guidance to staff involved in customer complaints management.