

Concerns & Complaints Policy

Purpose:

To enable the School to provide a consistent and equitable response to a concern or complaint raised by a student, parent or guardian and to meet the requirements of the Child Safe Standards in Ministerial Order 870.

Scope:

Students, Parents and Guardians of students enrolled at KVS

Implemented by:

Mentors, Principal

Approved by:

KVS Board

Reviewed:

Every two years or as regulatory changes arise or improvements are identified

Communicated via:

KVS website, Staff Induction and Handbook, Parent Handbook, Policies and Procedures Manual

Raising a Concern or Complaint

A student, parent or guardian can raise a concern or complaint about any aspect of the school's operations or the welfare or safety of a student.

<u>About What / Issue</u>	<u>Who to Contact</u>	<u>How</u>
Classroom activities, , friendship issues, Out 'n' About / Camps	The relevant Mentor	By email, phone, or in person.
School Curriculum	School Principal	<i>Appointments should be made for in-person contact to ensure there is sufficient time and a quiet location available to discuss the matter.*</i>
Complex student issues, Student Welfare (including Child Safety matters), Child Safety reports, Staff Members, Staff of Code of Conduct breaches, School Policy, School	School Principal	<i>Appointments with teaching staff are available between 3.15pm-5pm, Monday-Friday</i>

Management, Fees, Enrolment & General matters		
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** Please be aware that mornings are a busy time for mentors and they will not be available to discuss child-related matters or make appointments after 8.30am.*

Students, parents and guardians are asked to:

- Raise their concern as soon as possible using the previous table for guidance
- Provide detailed information, which may be requested in writing
- Maintain and respect everyone's privacy and confidentiality
- Be calm, courteous, honest and sincere

Students, parents and guardians are also asked to:

- Recognise everyone has rights and responsibilities that must be balanced
- Respect and understand each other's point of view; value difference rather than judge and blame
- Realise we need to achieve an outcome acceptable to everyone involved

Addressing Concerns and Complaints

The School's response will be prompt, courteous, efficient and fair. All matters will be dealt with in-line with School Policies, including the Mandatory Reporting Policy and Child Safe Standards Statement.

The following process will be followed in response to a concern or complaint:

- The concern or complaint will be acknowledged either in person, by telephone, or in writing
- The appropriate staff member will look into the concern or complaint and provide a response as soon as possible
- All formal discussions and actions will be recorded

Roles and Responsibilities

Mentors will investigate and address concerns and complaints relating to minor day-to-day incidents or student learning specific to that mentor

Mentors will investigate and address concerns regarding their specific learning area and the School Principal will do so for the overall school curriculum, or where concerns brought to the attention of a mentor are not considered to have been dealt with appropriately.

The School Principal is responsible for investigating and addressing concerns and complaints relating to more complex matters, such as student welfare, child safety reports, other staff members, other staff members code of conduct breaches, school policy, school management, fees, enrolment and general matters.

Where a concern or complaint involves the Principal, the matter will be addressed directly by the Board. If the Principal is present at the Board meeting, he/she shall will be asked to declare a conflict of interest and remove themselves from discussion on the matter.

Responses

The school will work with the parent or guardian to find an appropriate remedy such as:

- An explanation or further information
- Mediation, counselling or other support
- An apology, expression of regret or admission of fault
- Review a decision
- Review policies, procedures or practices
- Make a report to the Department of Human Services Child Protection or Child First

All staff involved in handling complaints and grievances will take appropriate measures to ensure each matter is dealt with discretely, and that confidentiality and privacy of information is maintained in accordance with legislative requirements.

Timeframes

Timeframes for dealing with complaints and grievances will vary depending on the complexity of the matter. However, the school will take all reasonable efforts to ensure that complaints are addressed;

- As promptly and efficiently as practicable
- Within a timeframe that is agreeable to the parties involved
- In a manner that supports due process and the principles of natural justice

If a Concern or Complaint is not Resolved

- If a concern or complaint raised with a Mentor is not satisfactorily resolved it will be referred to the School Principal.
- If the Principal is the subject of the original concern or complaint, it will be referred to the School Board.
- Any matter that remains unresolved after being dealt with by the School Principal will be referred to the School Board.
- The School Board will then investigate the matter and determine an appropriate outcome. If the complaint refers to an action of any person who is also a Board member, that person shall be required to be absent from Board deliberations of the matter.
- If required, the Board will provide information for the student, parent or guardian to lodge an appeal with the relevant authority (Victorian Registration and Qualifications Authority) if the matter still remains unresolved.

Related Resources

The National Safe Schools Framework

Child Safe Standards Statement

Step-by-step Guide to Making a Report to Child Protection or Child FIRST

Department of Justice – Failure to Disclose Fact Sheet

Protecting the Safety of Children and Young People

Related Policies

- Student Welfare Policy
- Behaviour Management Policy
- Bullying & Harassment Policy
- Mandatory Reporting Policy