



# MARIST COLLEGE ASHGROVE

## Marist College Ashgrove's Complaints Handling Policy

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### Policy History and Schedule

Approved by:	Head of College
Person(s) responsible:	Deputy Head of College
Date approved:	04/09/2021
Next review date:	04/09/2022
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# MARIST COLLEGE ASHGROVE

## Introduction

Marist College Ashgrove welcomes feedback from all members of the college community and takes all complaints or concerns that may be raised seriously. This Complaints Handling Policy is designed to assist you to understand how to make a complaint.

For the purposes of this policy, we use the terms “staff” and “staff member” to include all teaching and non-teaching staff, Board members, volunteers, contractors and external providers.

## What is a complaint?

A complaint is an expression of dissatisfaction made to Marist College Ashgrove, related to our services or operations, or the complaints handling process itself, where a response or resolution is explicitly or implicitly expected.

Complaints about breaches of our Child Safe Codes of Conduct or about other conduct that has caused, or has the potential to cause, harm to current or former students by:

- current or former staff members
- current or former students
- other people on College premises or at College events

are managed differently to other complaints.

Refer to the section at the end of this policy – Complaints About Child Safety Incidents or Concerns At or Involving the College or its Staff Members – for more information.

## Marist College Ashgrove’s Commitment

Marist College Ashgrove is committed to handling complaints effectively and efficiently. To manage complaints effectively, we have established a Complaints Handling Program in line with:

- Principle 6 of the National Principles for Child Safe Organisations, using the Office of Child Safety’s “Complaints Handling Guide: Upholding the Rights of Children and Young People”
- the international complaints handling standard (ISO 10002:2018 Quality management – Customer satisfaction – Guidelines for complaints handling in organizations), and



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- the Australian/New Zealand complaints handling standard (AS/NZS 10002:2014 Guidelines for complaint management in organizations).

Our internal complaints handling process is available at no cost.

Our Complaints Handling Program includes the establishment of an online complaints management system which allows us to effectively capture, manage and report on complaints.

Regular analysis of complaints received and the implementation of rectification action, where deficiencies are identified, are key to the College's commitment.

### **Informal Complaints Resolution**

The vast majority of issues causing concern in schools can be handled quickly and in an informal manner. We therefore ask that, where appropriate, you first raise your concern directly with the relevant staff member.

### **How do I make a Formal Complaint?**

If you have been unable to resolve a matter informally, or simply wish to make a formal complaint you can do so by any of the following means:

1. Sending an email to [community@marash.qld.edu.au](mailto:community@marash.qld.edu.au)
2. Writing a letter to the College addressed to the Community Engagement Officer.
3. Telephoning the College and asking to speak to the student's Head of House or a member of the College Leadership Team.

All formal complaints will be logged into our online complaints management system and managed in accordance with the following procedure.



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### Our Internal Complaints Handling Process

**Step 1** – All formal complaints are logged through our online complaints management system where they are screened by our Community Engagement Officer, or in the case of complaints against the Head of College by the MSA Regional Director.

**Step 2** – All valid complaints will be acknowledged in writing, as soon as practicable, and allocated a status, priority and target resolution date. It is our policy, where possible, to resolve all disputes within 14 days.

**Step 3** – The Community Engagement Officer will organise an investigation into the issues raised, following principles of procedural fairness, in order to make a determination.

**Step 4** – Following the determination, if appropriate, the Community Engagement Officer will organise a resolution and provide a written response to the complainant. The matter will be closed and filed if this response is accepted.

**Step 5** – Internal reviews: If the initial response is not acceptable the matter will be reviewed internally by the Head of College or the Head of College's delegate, who may seek additional information or submissions from the relevant parties. The Head of College or their delegate seek to resolve all disputes within 14 days from the date that the review process is initiated. The matter will be closed if the response of the Head of College, or their delegate, is accepted.

**Step 6** - All complaints received will be entered into our Complaints Register and, where appropriate, a corrective action request will be made to address any underlying processes which the complaints investigation revealed may require improvement.

**Step 7** -If the matter remains unresolved, the complainant may pursue external resolution alternatives. Depending on the nature of the complaint, possible alternatives include:

- Regional Director, Marist Schools Australia ([mark.elliott@marists.org.au](mailto:mark.elliott@marists.org.au) / 07 3354 0600)
- Non-State Schools Accreditation Board ([www.nssab.qld.edu.au](http://www.nssab.qld.edu.au))
- Queensland College of Teachers (<https://www.qct.edu.au/standards-and-conduct/complaints-against-teachers>)



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- Other external agencies include a Court or Industrial Tribunal, the QLD Anti-Discrimination Board or the Australian Human Rights Commission.

### Overseas Students

If an overseas student is not satisfied with the outcome of College's internal complaints handling process, they may lodge an external appeal through the Overseas Students Ombudsman (OSO) which investigates complaints about problems that overseas students or intending overseas students may have with private education and training in Australia. The services of the OSO are free. The contact details for OSO are as follows:

**Email:** [ombudsman@ombudsman.gov.au](mailto:ombudsman@ombudsman.gov.au)

**Call:** 1300 362 072 within Australia. Outside Australia call +61 2 6276 0111.

**Enquiries:** 9:00am to 5:00pm Monday to Friday, Australian Eastern Standard Time (Australian Eastern Daylight Time when daylight savings is in effect)

**Postal:** Commonwealth Ombudsman, GPO Box 442 Canberra ACT 2601.

**Website:** <https://www.ombudsman.gov.au/How-we-can-help/overseas-students>

Marist College Ashgrove agrees to be bound to the OSO's recommendations, and will ensure that any recommendations made are implemented within 30 days of receipts of the report.

### Confidentiality

Confidentiality applies with respect to both information relating to the person making the complaint, and, if relevant to a person against whom a complaint is made. The College is committed to maintaining the confidentiality of information throughout the complaints process.

Personally identifiable information about a complainant will only be made available for the purpose of addressing the complaint and (unless the complainant consents) will be actively protected from disclosure.



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### Complaints About Child Safety Incidents or Concerns At or Involving the College or its Staff Members

Complaints about or allegations of:

- breaches of the Child Safe Codes of Conduct
- conduct that has caused, or has the potential to cause, harm to current or former students

by

- current or former staff members
- current or former students
- other people on College premises or at College events

are managed by the College in a different way to other complaints.

This is because of the additional confidentiality and privacy requirements surrounding these kinds of matters.

We refer to these as child safeguarding-related complaints.

If your complaint is a child safeguarding-related complaint, please make your complaint to: the Senior Child Safeguarding Officer, Bruce McPhee on 0407 673 611 or [mcpheeb@marash.qld.edu.au](mailto:mcpheeb@marash.qld.edu.au), or the Head of College, or if the Head of College is the subject of your complaint please notify the MSA Regional Director, Mark Elliott on 07 3354 0600.

For information about how the College manages child safeguarding-related complaints, as well as any child safety incidents or concerns at or involving the College or its staff members, please refer to our *Procedures for Managing Child Safety Incidents or Concerns At or Involving the College or its Staff, Volunteers or Contractors*, available on our public website.