COMPLAINTS HANDLING POLICY

Rationale
The Mission of St Benedict’s Catholic College bases itself on the three core concerns of ‘Love of God, Love of Neighbour and Love of Learning’. Whilst it is clearly within the College mission and vision to create an environment of compassion, equity and collegiality, there may be times when situations or people create tension. In these situations, it is fair that people are able to raise their concerns in an appropriate and non-threatening manner in order to achieve a resolution. St Benedict’s is committed to supporting a valid and equitable complaints handling process.

Guidelines
1. In terms of the Christian value of social justice, it is accepted that all staff, parents and students have the right to raise concerns in an appropriate and respected manner. In accordance with this value, all complaints will be received impartially and confidentiality should be restricted to those directly involved in the complaint or solution.
2. Complaints that are subsequently deemed vexatious or malicious will be dealt with in an appropriate manner.
3. Where appropriate and possible, any concern should be dealt with as closely as possible to the point of tension. That is, the person with the concern should in the first instance approach that person with whom the concern arises.
4. All complaints must be dealt with in accordance with current legislation and Catholic Education office policy. This may result in some complaints being initiated at Principal or CEO level.
5. Where it is felt that a complaint has been unacceptably dealt with, there will be a process of who is next to deal with the complaint. This will be published in a flowchart for easy access.
6. Complaints handling procedures will be published on the College website and copies of the flowchart displayed in the College administration office. Staff will be informed of the complaints procedure as a part of their process of induction to the College.
7. Records of all complaints must be made and kept at the point where the complaint was resolved.

Basis of Discretion
The principal has the right of discretion to depart from the policy guidelines in the event of exceptional circumstances.

Supporting Documents
• St Benedict’s Catholic College Process for a resolution of a school based complaint
• College website
• Catholic Education Office Wollongong Complaints handling guidelines and Complaints form
• NSW Government Legislation such as the Child Protection Act

Evaluation
The Policy will be reviewed in 2013 by the policy group.

Date of Implementation

Principal ………………………………………….. Date: ……………………………
COMPLAINTS HANDLING PROCEDURE

In accordance with the St. Benedict’s Catholic College Complaints handling policy, the following procedures apply.

1. Any complaint that is received within the College will be dealt with as close to the point of origin of the concern as possible.
2. All complaints will be listened to impartially and investigated to an appropriate level with necessary confidentiality.
3. Where a complaint is received that entails risk of significant harm, the matter will be taken directly to the Principal and where appropriate, reported to community services and or the Catholic Education Office. Where the complaint is of a serious legal matter, the incident will be reported to the police.
4. All formal complaints must be submitted on the standard CEO complaint form. They may also be accompanied by supporting documentation where appropriate.
5. Records and notes of all complaints are to be taken by each person who hears the complaint.
6. Minor and low level complaints about students will be retained in the student’s private file.
7. Complaints about staff will be retained in a file that is accessible only by the Principal and Senior School Support Officer.

What happens when a complaint is received?

A complaint is lodged → Complaint referred to appropriate person for investigation/ resolution

If a formal complaint is lodged

The respondent to the complaint is notified in writing where appropriate and allowed by law

The respondent is provided with an opportunity to present a written reply to the complaint

Where appropriate, a meeting will be held with both parties and the person to whom the complaint was made

A determination of the complaint will be made and given to both parties in writing

Records of the complaint, notes from investigations and resolutions will be retained at the school in a file held with the Principal
St Benedict’s Catholic College Process for a resolution of a school based complaint

1. **Complaint** taken to the person involved
   - **No satisfactory Outcome**
     - **Teacher or Coordinator**
       - **No satisfactory Outcome**
         - **Mr Steve Lo Cascio Assistant Principal**
           - **No satisfactory Outcome**
             - **Mr Michael Hanratty Principal**
               - **No satisfactory Outcome**
                 - **Catholic Education Office Head of School Services**

2. **Satisfactory Outcome**
   - **Staff**
     - **Parent**
       - **Community Members**

 Unless there are reasons* why it should not be taken directly to the person involved

* For example:
- if it is too serious; or
- if you feel too emotional; or
- if it is not appropriate for you to take it up with a child

Designated Person

(if you are unsure who a complaint can be addressed with, please contact the Assistant Principal – Mr Steve Lo Cascio)
COMPLAINT FORM

1. Your details
   Family Name: ____________________________________________
   Given Name(s) ____________________________________________
   Address: ________________________________________________
   Phone Number (home) ___________________ (work) _____________
                (mobile) ________________________________________

2. Are you a…(Please tick box)
   ☐ Student
   ☐ Parent or Caregiver (Name of student) ________________________
   ☐ Staff
   ☐ Other (Please specify) ______________________________________

3. Have you discussed your matter with a designated staff member?
   ☐ Yes   ☐ No
   If Yes when? ___________ Who dealt with the matter? _____________
   What was the result? _______________________________________
                       ________________________________________

4. Please give details of complaint and outcome you are seeking.
   __________________________________________________________
   __________________________________________________________
   __________________________________________________________

Date: __________________________ Signature: ______________________

Please mail this form or hand it in at the school office.

Privacy Notice:
The information provided on this form will be used by the school to follow up your complaint. The information may be provided by the school to the Catholic Education Office who monitor the services provided by the school or to the police for law enforcement purposes. The provision of this information is voluntary. It will be stored securely. You may correct any personal information provided at any time by contacting the school office.