

Complaints Handling

Policy

Dunlea Centre strives to provide the best quality service. If a client, be it student, parent/carer of other external parties, is unhappy with the service they receive at Dunlea Centre or a decision made by a Dunlea Centre staff member, they are entitled to make a complaint. All complaints are taken seriously and addressed in a timely manner.

Scope

This policy applies to Dunlea Centre in handling complaints made in respect of services provided by the agency or against staff members, which includes employees, contractors, volunteers or tertiary placement students.

This policy does not apply to:

- Personal grievances between parents/carers or other members of the Dunlea Centre community
- Whistleblowing disclosures **Refer to Whistleblower Policy**

Complaints in relation to Reportable Conduct are addressed in accordance with Dunlea Centre's **Child Safeguarding Policy**.

Complaints regarding a grievance between staff members about work matters are addressed in accordance with Dunlea Centre's **Grievance Resolution Policy**.

Complaints regarding unlawful discrimination, harassment or bullying between staff are generally addressed in accordance with Dunlea Centre's **Discrimination, Harassment and Bullying Policy**.

Providing Information on Complaints Policy

The Youth and Family Program Manager or their delegate will advise all young people and parents/carers of the Complaints Policy at orientation to the program.

The Complaints Policy is available in hard copy format in reception or on request and on the Dunlea Centre website.

Complaints

A complaint or grievance is an expression of dissatisfaction made to the school about an educational and/or operational matter relating to services provided Dunlea Centre or the behaviour or decisions of a staff member, contractor or volunteer, including misconduct.



If a parent/carer or student has a concern about the conduct of a staff member, they should raise their concern with the school in accordance with the Raising a Complaint section of this policy. If a complaint that concerns the behaviour of a staff member may constitute reportable conduct, the matter will be addressed in accordance with Dunlea Centre's **Child Safeguarding Policy**. Complainants are not required to assess whether their concern meets the threshold of reportable conduct before making a complaint. Any concern about a child's wellbeing may be reported under this policy.

Complaints may be made by a student, parent/carer or member of the community.

The school will seek to resolve complaints informally where possible but acknowledges that in some cases a person may wish to make a formal complaint.

All parties involved in complaints handling are required to maintain appropriate confidentiality.

Raising a Complaint

Informal complaints may be raised by a complainant directly with the person involved. However, if the complainant does not feel comfortable doing so or the matter is one where it may not be appropriate to do so a complaint can be made to the Executive Director. Any complaint about the conduct of a staff member should be raised directly with the Executive Director in the first instance.

Should the matter not be resolved through informal processes, the complainant may raise the matter formally with the school. A formal complaint can be made in writing to the Executive Director, via email director@boystown.net.au

Where a person wishes to make a formal complaint concerning the Principal the complaint should be made in writing to the Chair of the Board via email. Contact details are available by contacting Administration at Dunlea Centre. In this situation, the references in this policy relating to the role of the Executive Director should be read as references to the Chair of the Board.

The Executive Director will generally acknowledge receipt of a formal complaint in writing as soon as practicable.

Assessing a Complaint

The Executive Director generally will assess the complaint and determine:

- whether the complaint is one to be addressed under this policy or is a staff grievance or reportable conduct matter which are dealt with by the relevant policies; and
- the priority of the complaint in accordance with the urgency and/or seriousness of the matter raised; and



- whether Dunlea Centre may be required to report the matter to the Ombudsman, Police, Family and Community Services or other relevant authorities should the complaint relate to possible unlawful conduct or other reportable matters.

Managing a Formal Complaint

The Executive Director generally will manage a formal complaint by:

- advising the complainant of the likely steps that will be undertaken by the School in relation to the complaint;
- if appropriate, advising the relevant parties of the complaint at the relevant time and providing them with an opportunity to respond;
- collecting any additional information the agency considers necessary to assess the complaint;
- making a decision about how the complaint will be resolved (“resolution decision”); and
- advising the complainant in writing, and any other relevant parties as appropriate, of the resolution decision of Executive Director and if appropriate, any proposed action to be taken.

There may be circumstances where some of the steps outlined above are not appropriate and the school will determine, on a case by case basis the most appropriate method of handling the complaint.

A complainant and the relevant parties that the complaint is about may choose to have an appropriate support person present at any meeting with representatives of the School about the complaint. However, the School maintains the right to determine whether the person’s preferred support person is appropriate and may not approve the attendance of a support person where they are determined by the School to be inappropriate.

The Executive Director will seek advice from external sources when and if required.

