



Complaints Management Policy

Introduction

The mission of Sacred Heart College Kyneton (SHCK) is based on the core Mercy values of justice, compassion, service, hospitality, courage and respect. The College is therefore committed to ensuring that principles reflecting these values inform the College's reception of, and, response to, complaints received with a view to achieving just and respectful outcomes.

Rationale

This policy outlines the principles by which complaints are received, investigated and resolved by Sacred Heart College.

This policy must be read alongside Mercy Education Policy and Operational Instructions 1.06 as Sacred Heart College's governing authorities.

Definitions

Complaint: an expression of dissatisfaction with a real or perceived issue at a school where a response or resolution is expected.

Complainant: the individual raising the complaint.

Subject of the complaint: the individual(s), or organisation against which a complaint is made.

Whistleblower: An officer, employee or a contractor performing work or providing goods for Sacred Heart College Kyneton, Mercy Education Ltd., or an associate, relative or dependant of such an officer, employee or contractor, who makes a disclosure.

Policy Coverage

This policy is relevant to all Sacred Heart College Kyneton staff, contractors and significant bodies such as the SHCK Advisory Council.

This policy does not cover complaints that are of a child protection nature. These complaints must be addressed in accordance with child protection laws and reporting obligations.

This policy does not cover complaints about work or employment conditions at Mercy schools. Complainants should handle these matters in accordance with relevant internal school policies and processes, or industrial agreements.

This Policy does not cover whistleblower disclosures. These complaints or disclosures must be addressed in accordance with whistleblower legislation.

Policy Statement

- Sacred Heart College acknowledges that the nature of contemporary education and school communities will inevitably, at times, lead to a lack of harmony where some individuals or groups will consider that their rights or responsibilities are being eroded.
- Sacred Heart College Kyneton is owned and operated by Mercy Education Ltd and all complaints (Management and Resolution) are subject to Mercy Education Policy and Operational Instruction 1.06 (available through the College website www.shckyneton.catholic.edu.au).
- Complaints related to the performance, professional practice or behaviour of the Principal of a school governed by Mercy Education; the staff of Mercy Education Executive Office; the Chief Executive of Mercy Education; a Board Member of Mercy Education; or the Board Chair of Mercy Education will be managed by the appropriate line manager in accordance with this policy and the associated operational instructions

Sacred Heart College is committed to the following principles:

- Complaints will be responded to in a prompt, impartial and just manner, with the upmost respect for privacy and confidentiality
- The complaints register is held and maintained by the College Principal
- Conflict resolution processes will reflect the principles of participation, co-responsibility and subsidiarity
- Complaints will be initially responded to at the lowest possible level, considering the seriousness of the complaint and escalated if a satisfactory resolution is not obtained.
- Both the person raising complaint and the subject of the complaint will receive appropriate information, support and assistance in resolving the complaint
- No person will be victimised because they raise a complaint
- A non-judgemental and non-adversarial, restorative approach will be taken to resolving complaints. Parties will work together with respect and openness to reach fair and reasonable decisions.
- Procedural fairness will be followed in all aspects of complaint handling
- Complaints and their resolution will be fully documented by the College Principal and stored by Sacred Heart College or Mercy Education
- The College Principal is responsible for ensuring the complaints feedback loop is overseen and satisfactorily closed
- Complaints will be handled in a manner which is consistent with current Australian legislation and relevant industrial agreements
- Members of the Sacred Heart College community should not instigate complaints that are frivolous, vexatious or malicious. All individuals are expected to participate in the complaint resolution process in good faith.
- If a satisfactory outcome cannot be achieved, Sacred Heart College and/or Mercy Education will provide the complainant with options for having the decision reviewed or mediated by a third party or an external agency
- Appropriate levels of confidentiality will be adhered to at all times, and any personal information disclosed will be treated as confidential as per the Sacred Heart College Privacy Policy available at www.shckyneton.catholic.edu.au. However, complainants should be advised that for legal reasons absolute confidentiality may not always be possible.

The implementation and operation of the College’s Complaints Management Policy is detailed in the accompanying document, “Guidelines for Management of Complaints at Sacred Heart College Kyneton”.

Related Documents

- Guidelines for Management of Complaints at Sacred Heart College Kyneton
- Mercy Education Policy (1.06) – Complaints Management
- Mercy Education Operational Instructions (1.06) – Complaints Management
- Mercy Education Complaints Management Flow Chart
- Sacred Heart College Privacy Policy

Version	Comments	Date Released	Next Review	Author	Approved
1		May 2023	May 2025	Principal	
2	Approval given at CAC meeting 21/5/24	May 2024	May 2026	Principal	CAC