



Bacchus Marsh
Grammar

School POLICY

GOVERNANCE

GOV – Complaints Handling Policy

Approved by the School Board 28 May 2025

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Complaints Handling Policy

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1 Introduction

- 1.1.1 Bacchus Marsh Grammar (the School) welcomes feedback from all members of the School community and takes all complaints or concerns that may be raised seriously.

2 Purpose

- 2.1.1 This Complaints Handling Policy is designed to assist you to understand how to make a complaint and inform you about how the School responds to different kinds of complaints.

3 Scope

- 3.1.1 This Policy and its Procedures apply to all staff, volunteers and contractors at the school.

4 Child Safe Related Complaints

- 4.1.1 The School has a different procedure for handling complaints about or allegations of:
- breaches of our Child Safe Codes of Conduct
 - abuse, grooming or other harm of a current or former student by:
 - current or former staff members
 - current or former students
 - other people on School premises or at School events
 - "Reportable Conduct" as defined in the Child Wellbeing and Safety Act 2005 (Vic); and
 - other child safety and wellbeing-related staff misconduct.

Refer to the "Complaints About Child Safety Incidents or Concerns Involving the School or its Staff Members" subsection at the end of this Policy and Procedures.

5 What is a Complaint?

- 5.1.1 A complaint is an expression of dissatisfaction made to the School, related to its services or operations, or the complaints handling process itself, where a response or resolution is explicitly or implicitly expected.
- 5.1.2 Complaints about child abuse, grooming or other harm, or other breaches of our Child Safe Codes of Conduct, relating to conduct by:
- Current of former staff members
 - Current or former students
 - Other people on the School premises or at School events

are managed differently from other complaints.

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

6 The School's Commitment

- 6.1.1 The School is committed to handling complaints effectively and efficiently. To manage complaints effectively, the School has 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 "Complaint 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 organisations).
 - The Australian / New Zealand complaints handling standard (AS/NZS 10002:2014 Guidelines for complaint management in organisations).
 - The Australian Privacy Principles (APP).

- 6.1.2 The School's Complaints Handling Program includes the establishment of an online complaints management system which allows the School to effectively capture, manage and report on complaints.
- 6.1.3 The School regularly analyses complaints received and their outcomes. When this analysis identifies deficiencies, the School takes corrective action as part of School's commitment.

7 Making a Complaint

- 7.1.1 There is no fee associated with making a complaint.
- 7.1.2 Complaints may be made anonymously or using a pseudonym. However, If you make an anonymous complaint, the School will be unable to provide you with feedback on the progress and outcome of your complaint. It may also limit the School's ability to fully investigate the complaint if the School is unable to contact you to obtain further details.
- 7.1.3 The School will support and provide practical assistance to complainants to make a complaint and throughout the complaints process.
- 7.1.4 The School insist on all complainants being respectful to and cooperating with staff as a prerequisite to the management of their complaint.

8 Confidentiality and Privacy

- 8.1.1 The School is committed to maintaining the confidentiality of information throughout the complaints process. This includes maintaining the privacy of information relating to the person making the complaint and any person named in the complaint.

9 Procedures

9.1 Informal Complaints Resolution

- 9.1.1 Most issues causing concern in schools can be handled quickly and in an informal manner. The School therefore asks that, where appropriate, you first raise your concern directly with the relevant staff member.
- 9.1.2 Even if the issue is resolved informally, all staff are required to log issues through the School's complaints management system so that the School is able to identify any systemic issues arising and take appropriate rectification action.

9.2 How Do I Make a Formal Complaint?

- 9.2.1 If you have been unable to resolve a matter informally, or simply wish to make a formal complaint you can do so in the following ways:
 - 1. Sending an email to complaints@bmg.vic.edu.au.
 - 2. Writing a letter to the School addressed to "The Complaints Manager".
 - 3. Telephoning the School and asking to speak to your child's Head of Year
- 9.2.2 All formal complaints will be logged into the School's online complaints management system and managed in accordance with the following process.

10 The School's Internal Complaints Handling Process

The following process is a guide only and may be varied by the School as circumstances require:

1. When a complaint that is not about the Principal or a member of Bacchus Marsh Grammar School Board is logged through our online complaints management system, it is screened by a Complaints Manager. Complaints about the Principal or a member of Bacchus Marsh Grammar School Board will be properly investigated but they may be dealt with by someone other than a Complaints Manager.
2. All complaints, except those made anonymously, are acknowledged in writing, as soon as practicable, and allocated a status, a priority and a target resolution date. It is our policy, where possible, to resolve all disputes within twenty-eight days. We will keep in regular contact with the complainant

prior to the target resolution date, advising of the status of the matter and each time confirming when the next communication should be expected.

3. The Complaints Manager (or if the complaint is about the Principal or a member of Bacchus Marsh Grammar School Board, the person responsible for investigating the complaint) will conduct an investigation into the issues raised, following principles of procedural fairness.

The investigation may involve:

- providing an opportunity for the complainant to fully communicate the complaint in detail
 - if the complaint is about a staff member, providing details of the complaint to them and seeking their response.
 - accessing any other relevant information in relation to the complaint.
4. Following the investigation, if appropriate, the Complaints Manager (or if the complaint is about the Principal or a member of Bacchus Marsh Grammar School Board, the person who has investigated the complaint) will formulate a resolution and, unless the complaint was anonymous, provide a written response to the complainant. If the complainant accepts this response, the matter is noted as “resolved” and closed.
 5. If the complainant does not accept the response, the matter will be reviewed internally by the Principal or the Principal’s delegate, who may seek additional information or submissions from the relevant parties. The Principal or their delegate seeks to resolve all disputes within twenty-eight days from the date that the review process is initiated. If the complainant accepts the Principal’s, or their delegate’s response, the matter is noted as “resolved” and closed. If the complaint was about the Principal, the School may engage external consultants to review the matter.
 6. All complaints received are entered into our Complaints Register and, where appropriate, corrective actions will be made to address any underlying processes which the complaints investigation revealed may require improvement.
 7. If the matter remains unresolved, and/or the complainant is not satisfied with the outcome or the way that the complaint has been managed, the complainant may pursue external resolution alternatives.

11 Complaints About Child Safety Incidents or Concerns Involving the School or its Staff Members

11.1.1 If a complaint, disclosure or allegation is about:

- a breach of the Child Safe Codes of Conduct
- abuse, grooming or other harm of a current or former student by:
 - a current or former staff member
 - a current or former student
 - another person, while on School premises or at a School event
- “Reportable Conduct” as defined in the Child Wellbeing and Safety Act 2005 (Vic)
- other child safety-related staff misconduct

the School does not follow the above procedures (although its handling of the matter may be informed by them). This is because:

- the School has legal obligations to report certain staff conduct to external authorities and to conduct investigations in a particular way; and
- there are additional confidentiality and privacy requirements involved in these kinds of matters.

The School refers to these kinds of complaints as child safe-related complaints.

11.1.2 The School’s Child Safe Program Quick Reference Guide, which is available on the School’s public website, explains how the School manages child safe-related complaints, as well as any child safety incidents or concerns that occur at the School or School events, or that involve Students, staff members, Visitors or other members of the School community.



12 Reporting to the School Board

- 12.1.1 It is critical that the School Board, Principal and Senior Management Team are notified of serious complaints as quickly as possible, and regularly informed as to the School's performance with respect to complaints handling.
- 12.1.2 It's the Complaints Manager's responsibility to report to the Senior Management Team who will escalate any serious complaints to the Principal.
- 12.1.3 Within 3 days, the Principal may determine that the seriousness of the matter warrants involvement of the School Board and the requisite notification will be made to the Board members within 5 days of the Principal's decision.

13 Authorisation

School Document Name	Complaints Handling Policy	
Approval Authority	Chair of the School Board	
Approval Signature	Cathy Jeffkins Chair of the School Board Bacchus Marsh Grammar	
Administrator	Company Secretary	Greg Gough
Approval Date	28 May 2025	
Date of Next Review	28 May 2027	To be reviewed every two years

14 History

Date	Amendment
27 May 2020	1. New policy
27 October 2021	2. Added sections 4 – 9 to provide more details.
30 November 2022	3. Added section 6 step 7 and section 10.
29 March 2023	4. Amended based on Complispace updates and recommendations following updates to the National Principles for Child Safe Organisations.
28 May 2025	5. Reviewed with minor changes, new format