

Lowther Hall

ANGLICAN GRAMMAR SCHOOL

All about the girl

Complaints Resolution Policy (Students)

Date of last review:
Review cycle:
Review and approval responsibility:
Category:
VRQA required:
Locations:

2025
Triennial
Executive to School Council
Students
Yes
O Drive, LowtherLink, Website, BoardPro



COMPLAINTS RESOLUTION POLICY – STUDENTS

1. DEFINITIONS

Advocate

A person (e.g. family member, or other adult) who supports assists you to express your concerns during the complaints process.

Complaint

An expression of dissatisfaction about the School's operations, services, staff, students, or decision-making processes, where a response or resolution is explicitly or implicitly expected.

Concern

A minor complaint often about a specific situation or incident which would usually be resolved through discussion or clarification using the "Self-Management" procedure.

School Council (also called School Board)

The governing body of Lowther Hall Anglican Grammar School.

Student Representative Council (SRC)

An elected group of students who represent and advocate for their peers.

Support Person

An individual who provides emotional or practical support during the complaints process.

2. WHY WE HAVE THIS POLICY

- 2.1 The School wants to be a place where everyone can support each other and support a positive learning environment. Therefore, if something is going wrong, it is important that students let us know so that we can openly work together to fix it.
- 2.2 Students have the right to make a complaint or raise a concern and the School will try to respond to it and resolve the situation if possible.
- 2.3 Complaints are sometimes helpful because if we see a pattern of complaints about the same thing, we can work to improve things.
- 2.4 If you have a complaint, it is important to raise it as soon as you can. The School will make sure that you don't get into trouble for making a complaint and that people don't act badly towards you because you have raised a problem.
- 2.5 If you have a disability or if English is not your first language or if you are a First Nations student, we will work especially hard to support you in a complaints process so that you can get the help you need. Also, if your complaint is about child abuse or safety, this will be a top priority.
- 2.6 If your complaint is about a member of staff, we also have a responsibility to look after them. We have ways of making sure they are supported too. This should not stop you from making a complaint.
- 2.7 There are many laws that state that you have a right to make a complaint. This Policy has been written to make sure it follows these laws. The most important of these is Child Safe Standards Ministerial Order 1359
- 2.8 Because Lowther Hall is an Independent School, we handle our own complaints. The Education Department only deals with government schools. This means that your complaints will be dealt with by school staff.

3. WHAT THIS POLICY IS FOR

The purposes of this policy are:

- to explain how students can make a complaint.

- to make sure that students know how their complaint is managed.
- to make sure that the School responds to complaints and concerns in a fair, effective and efficient manner.

4. WHO AND WHAT IS COVERED BY THIS POLICY

4.1 This Policy applies to:

- students enrolled at Lowther Hall Anglican Grammar School.
- Students visiting Lowther Hall Anglican Grammar School as part of an exchange program.

4.2 Issues that might be considered under this policy could include, for example:

4.2.1 A complaint about how someone has treated you.

4.2.2 A complaint about a process.

4.2.3 A complaint about a decision.

5. ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES CONNECTED TO THIS POLICY

5.1 The Lowther Hall School Council is responsible for making sure we have this policy

5.2 The Principal is responsible for making sure we follow the policy.

5.3 Members of staff are responsible for following the policy in the ways set out in Appendix A.

6. GUIDING PRINCIPLES IN RESPONDING TO COMPLAINTS

6.1 Generally, we will try to make sure that:

- 6.1.1 Students know how to make a complaint
- 6.1.2 The procedures are straightforward and easy to access.
- 6.1.3 Complaints are addressed as quickly as possible.
- 6.1.4 Each complaint is treated in an impartial, equitable, objective and unbiased manner.
- 6.1.5 Complaints are resolved with the learning and wellbeing of students as the priority.

6.2 We can't usually respond to anonymous complaints, but we will always do our best to follow up if the complaint is about child safety.

6.3 We will make sure that we consider the wellbeing of all students involved in a complaint.

6.4 The School is committed to natural justice. That means that we will ensure that all those involved in the complaints procedure will be able to put forward their point of view and will be treated with dignity and respect.

6.5 We will try to keep complaints as confidential as possible by only sharing information with people who really need to know it. We would expect that students show the same respect for the process by also keeping matters confidential.

6.6 Students can have a support person or advocate to assist at any time in the complaint process. This can include an interpreter or translator if a student's first language is not English.

7. HOW TO MAKE A COMPLAINT

Students can raise complaints with the SRC who will provide feedback to Senior staff for their information and action. Students are also able to raise concerns with their teachers and these will be taken seriously and dealt with.

For a student in Kindergarten to Year 6

Sometimes things may go wrong at school, or you may have a problem that is making you unhappy. Instead of worrying about it, talk to your teacher so they can help you and find an answer.

For a student in Years 7 to 12

From time to time, you may have a concern, a suggestion or a complaint. It is important for us as a school to hear and understand these matters to enable staff to address your concerns and improve what we do and how we behave. We will do our best to remedy problems promptly and deal with each matter fairly.

You can make a suggestion or complaint by taking the matter to the SRC, speaking with us or by writing to us. If you speak to us about your suggestion or complaint, you may need to put it in writing later. We can help you to do this if necessary.

Where possible, you should raise your concern or make your suggestion to the SRC, your teacher or your Year Level Coordinator. However, if the complaint is about these people, then it can be made to the Deputy Principal, Head of Senior School.

Where possible, we would recommend that you give your name and sign the suggestion or complaint. This is because anonymous complaints can be acted on only in certain circumstances.

Types of issues that you may have a concern about could include:

- sometimes you just need help straight away and so the best thing to do is to ask for that assistance
- your concern may be about a policy, a process or a decision
- you may need to talk to someone about bullying or harassment
- you may need assistance in managing your studies
- you may just be unhappy.

All suggestions and complaints are reviewed to assess the type of issues being raised and the seriousness of those issues. If a suggestion or complaint is not anonymous, we will let you know that we have received the suggestion or complaint and provide you with an estimation of how long we think it will take for us to deal with it.

Initially your concern will be handled in confidence, although sometimes the member of staff to whom you speak, as the responsible adult, will need to tell someone else about the issue. If that is necessary, you will be informed before any confidential information is passed on.

8. RESOLVING YOUR COMPLAINT OR CONCERN

8.1 There are a variety of ways a complaint might be resolved or responded to:

- An apology
- A conversation between people to put things right
- A change of behaviour
- A change to the situation being complained about
- Disciplinary action (getting into trouble)

8.2 If another student or a staff member gets into trouble because of a complaint, we may not be able to share all of the details of this with the person who made the complaint.

8.3 If you are not happy with the outcome after you have raised your complaint, you can:

- Let the Deputy Principal – Head of Senior School know
- Let the Principal know
- Let a parent or caregiver know so that they can follow up on your behalf.

9. RELATED DOCUMENTS

Bullying Prevention and Intervention Policy
Discipline Policy
Keeping Children Safe and Mandatory Reporting Policy
Privacy Policy
Record Management Policy
Student Welfare Policy

10. COMMUNICATION OF THE POLICY

The School will communicate this Policy to students via assemblies or as needed.

The Policy will be available to students on LowtherLink and in the Student Policy Booklet or Planner.

11. POLICY REVIEW

The School Executive and the School Council will review this policy every 3 years.

Responding to concerns and complaints from students – Guidelines for staff

- Staff must be familiar with the Complaints Policy (Students)
- Staff are encouraged to resolve issues as quickly and as simply as possible without resorting to unnecessary process and bureaucracy:
 - if possible, the member of staff who receives the concern or complaint can deal with it themselves although they can escalate it to a more senior member of staff if they need advice or support or the matter is outside their authority to resolve.
 - some matters, however, must be escalated and require a swift response. Such matters may include:
 - ✓ anything to do with child safe standards that must be dealt with under the School's Child Safe Standards Policy
 - ✓ Matters that allege misconduct or illegal behaviour
 - ✓ Issues that have a wider school or systemic implication.
- Most complaints should be written up and be retained as part of the School's records.
 - complaints that must be recorded might include those concerning:
 - i. the effectiveness of the teaching
 - ii. bullying, racial or sexual harassment
 - iii. a child's persistent unhappiness
 - iv. discrimination.
 - complaints that the School may decide don't need to be recorded might include those concerning:
 - i. school work or homework
 - ii. lost belongings (unless, for example, there is a concern it may be theft)
 - iii. friendships/relationship challenges between students.