



# MAKING A CUSTOMER COMPLAINT

## Information for Parents and Carers

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| <b>Purpose:</b>       | The purpose of this procedure document is to provide written processes about an express dissatisfaction with the service or action of the School or its staff, including decisions made or actions taken in a School.   |   |
| <b>Scope:</b>         | Parents and carers  |   |
| <b>Status:</b>        | Approved  | <b>Supersedes:</b> NA                                   |
| <b>Authorised by:</b> | Principal   | <b>Date of Authorisation:</b> 4 <sup>th</sup> July 2023 |
| <b>References:</b>    | <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• <i>Child Protection Act 1999 (Qld)</i></li><li>• Good Shepherd Christian School Limited Complaints Handling Policy</li><li>• Good Shepherd Christian School Limited Child Risk Management Strategy (for the <i>Working with Children (Risk Management and Screening) Act 2000 (Qld)</i>)</li><li>• Good Shepherd Christian School Limited Work Health and Safety Policy (for the <i>Work Health and Safety Act 2011 (Qld)</i>)</li><li>• Good Shepherd Christian School Limited Whistleblower Policy</li><li>• Good Shepherd Christian School Limited Child Protection Reporting Form</li></ul> |   |
| <b>Review Date:</b>   | Annual  | <b>Next Review Date:</b> June 2025                      |
| <b>Policy Owner:</b>  | School Governing Body   |   |



### **What is a customer complaint?**

As a parent or carer, you can express dissatisfaction with the service or action of the School or its staff, including decisions made or actions taken in a School.

### **How does the School manage my customer complaint?**

The School is committed to responding to customer complaints in an accountable, transparent, timely and fair way that is compatible with human rights. For information about how the School manages customer complaints, you should refer to the Complaints Handling Policy which is available on the website or can be requested from the School office.

For customer complaints about School matters, you are encouraged to use the following three-step approach:

1. **Early resolution:** The best place to raise any concerns is at the point where the problem or issue arose. You can lodge your complaint by telephone, in person, by email, or in writing.
2. **Dissatisfaction with the outcome:** If, after taking the early resolution step, you are dissatisfied with the outcome of your complaint or how the complaint was handled, you can ask the Principal to investigate the matter. Where the Principal is the subject of the complaint you may raise your concern with the School Board Chair.
3. **Request a review:** If you are dissatisfied with the outcome of your complaint or how the complaint was handled, you can ask the School Board to conduct a review. You need to submit a written request to the School Board within 28 days of receiving the complaint outcome.

Some matters need to be handled in a different way to School matters and will be referred to other areas in the School. These include:

- issues about harm, or risk of harm, to a student attending the School, which must be managed in accordance with the Child Protection Policy
- complaints about corrupt conduct, public interest disclosures; or certain decisions made under legislation.

You can make an anonymous complaint and the matter will be investigated. Please understand that an anonymous complaint may limit how your complaint can be assessed and resolved. If no contact information is provided, the School cannot reply or communicate an outcome.

### **What are my responsibilities when lodging a customer complaint?**

You have a right to make a complaint to the School, however, you also have responsibilities as a complainant:

- be respectful and understand that unreasonable conduct will not be tolerated by the School,
- clearly outline what the problem is, what you are unhappy about and your desired outcome,



- provide all relevant information when making a customer complaint and inform the School of any changes impacting your complaint,
- understand that if the complaint is complex, it can take time to assess, manage and resolve.

### **What happens after I make my complaint?**

If your complaint is not resolved during your initial contact, we will aim to resolve your complaint as quickly as possible, taking into consideration the complexity and timing of your complaint. As a general guide, complaints requiring inquiry, or some investigation may take longer to resolve.

Once your customer complaint has been resolved, you will be contacted and informed of the outcome of your complaint, any recommendations, and any review options available to you.

For information privacy reasons, the School is unable to provide you with information about other people involved in your complaint.

### **What is not a customer complaint?**

Our customers contact us for many reasons and most of the time our customers do not have a complaint.

It is not a complaint when our customers:

- request more information
- request a change in services or request a new service
- make a suggestion for improving our services
- express a concern about a situation
- provide feedback on the School's performance
- are not directly affected by the decision or action of the School
- provide information (e.g. reporting an incident).

## **Complaints Process**

### **1. Receiving a Complaint**

#### **Receive complaints and record in the register.**

- The complainant will raise an issue with the School, either in writing, over the phone, or in person.
- The Principal or the Principal's representative will decide if the issue is a customer complaint.
  - It will be a customer complaint if the complainant is dissatisfied with the service or action of the School or its staff, the complainant is directly affected by the service or action, and some outcome is sought.
  - It will not be a customer complaint if the customer is:
    - requesting more information
    - requesting a change in services or requesting a new service



- making a suggestion for improving the School’s services
- expressing concern about a situation
- providing feedback on the School’s performance
- not directly affected by the decision or action of the School
- providing information (for example, reporting an incident).
- If the issue is a customer complaint, the Principal or Principal’s representative will record the customer complaint in the register. Protected information will not be entered into the register.
- If the issue is not a customer complaint, it will still be actioned, but it will be dealt with as standard correspondence.
- The Principal or Principal’s representative will provide acknowledgement to the complainant that their customer complaint has been received. Acknowledgement can be provided in writing or verbally.
- The Principal or Principal’s representative will consider if any health, safety, well-being or resourcing issues are raised by the complaint or the complainant’s conduct, and if they are concerned they will escalate to a manager to determine any action to take.

## **2. Assess, Investigate and Resolve**

- The Principal or Principal’s representative will consider if the customer complaint is frivolous or vexatious.
  - If not frivolous or vexatious, proceed to assess and resolve the complaint.
  - If the complaint is frivolous or vexatious, the Principal or Principal’s representative will advise the complainant that the complaint will not be examined. This will be recorded in the register. The remainder of this procedure does not need to be followed and the complaint is closed.
- The Principal or Principal’s representative will also decide if the complaint engages, or limits human rights contained in Part 2 of the Human Rights Act 2019 (Qld) by considering the following questions:
  - Are any human rights engaged or impacted by the decision or action complained about?
  - If so, did the decision or action being complained about limit those human rights?
  - If so, was the limitation lawful, justified, and reasonable in the circumstances?
  - The Principal or Principal’s representative will document their assessment and decision-making process for human rights complaints.
- Customer complaints will be assessed and resolved at the point of receipt, where possible. The Principal or Principal’s representative will assess the customer complaint and determine the best way to resolve it by:
  - identifying each complaint issue



- identifying relevant benchmarks, standards, or criteria to assess the complaint against (for example, legislation, policies, or procedures)
  - gathering relevant information or documentation, including from the complainant.
  - The complainant will be contacted by the Principal or Principal's representative if additional information is required to confirm the complaint issues or the outcome sought, or to provide information about the customer complaints management process, such as timeframes and complainant responsibilities.
  - Subject to the complexity and nature of the customer complaint and when the complaint is received (for example, in School holidays), the Principal or Principal's representative will aim to resolve the customer complaint within the following framework timeframes:
    - simple complaint: up to 20 days
    - complaints requiring some inquiry: up to 45 days
    - complaints requiring investigation and referral: up to 90 days, or longer in some cases
    - complaints involving human rights issues: up to 45 business days.
  - The Principal or Principal's representative will keep the complainant informed of any changes or emergent issues that impact the resolution of their customer complaint.
  - Options for resolving the customer complaint that may apply include:
    - providing an explanation to the complainant about the decision, action, etc. and reasons if not previously provided
    - dismissing the customer complaint (for example, if the decision complies with legislation, or policies or procedures of the government or School)
    - concluding that the customer complaint has been substantially resolved
    - reaching a compromise solution
    - upholding the customer complaint and implementing specific action, such as overturning a decision, giving an apology or providing a service not previously provided
    - addressing or referring the issue for system improvement.
  - The Principal or Principal's representative will record appropriate notes in the register throughout the assessment and resolution phase.
  - Procedural fairness will be afforded to a person who is the subject of the customer complaint and the complainant.
- 3. Communicate outcome**
- The Principal or Principal's representative will advise the complainant of the outcome of the assessment and resolution process. This will include:
    - a clear explanation of the final decision



- any recommendations
- any review options available to the complainant, including internal or external review.
- The Principal or Principal's representative will ensure they keep appropriate records about the information provided to the complainant. This will be stored in the register.

#### **4. Close complaint**

- The Principal or Principal's representative will close the complaint and record information in the register about the complaint outcome and any further activities that need to occur.
- If further activities are recommended, the Principal or Principal's representative is responsible for implementing and monitoring the recommended action, or referring the matter to the responsible area for attention.

#### **5. Internal Review**

- If the complainant is dissatisfied with the outcome of their customer complaint and/or the way the customer complaint was handled by the School, the complainant can request an internal review. This request will be submitted to the School Board Chair within 28 days of receiving the complaint outcome.
  - The internal review will be completed in accordance with the Internal review procedure.

#### **6. External Review**

- If an internal review is completed, and the complainant remains dissatisfied, they can seek an external review.
- The Principal or Principal's representative will provide the complainant with details of external review agencies (such as the, Queensland Human Rights Commission) to assist the complainant to seek an external review.
- If an external review agency accepts the request and requests information from the School to enable an external review to be conducted, the complaints or internal review officer will record the external review request in the register.



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### Complaint Form

|                       |
|-----------------------|
| Date of incident:     |
| Time of incident:     |
| Location of incident: |



Description what happened: (attach addition pages if necessary)

What outcome are you expecting?

If we need more information, can we contact you?

- Yes, you can contact me  
 I don't want to provide anymore information

**Privacy and your personal information**

We will only use your information to process your request. We will manage your personal information in line with the [Information Privacy Act 2009](#)





**Lodging your complaint**

- Phone: Administration Office 07 32642655
- In person: Administration Office 185 Old Northern Road Albany Creek 4035
- Mail: 185 Old Northern Road Albany Creek 4035
- Email: [admin@gscs.edu.au](mailto:admin@gscs.edu.au)

**Contacts**

- Principal Friné Lupke: [frine.lupke@gscs.qld.edu.au](mailto:frine.lupke@gscs.qld.edu.au)
- Board Chair Hernan Hullana: [hhullana@gscs.qld.edu.au](mailto:hhullana@gscs.qld.edu.au)

I declare that the information provided is true and accurate to the best of my knowledge

Name:

Signature:

Date: