

## Complaints Handling Procedure Year 11 and Year 12

### 1. Purpose

At Challenge Trade and Business College, we are committed to providing a positive learning experience for all our students. However, we understand that issues and concerns may arise from time to time. We have established a structured complaints handling procedure to address and resolve such matters promptly and effectively.

This procedure outlines the steps to follow when raising a complaint:

### 2. Scope

These procedures are articulated concerning parents and carers, family members, students, and community members. There is a separate procedures document for staff complaints.

### 3. Policy Statement

These procedures are articulated concerning parents and carers, family members, students, and community members. There is a separate procedures document for staff complaints.

### 4. Definitions, Term. Acronyms

CEO	Challenge Employment and Training Chief Executive Officer
CTBC	Challenge Trade and Business College

### 5. Guidelines/Procedure/Process

#### 5.1 Four-Stage Complaints Management Process

Unless additional action is described in section 2.2, all complaints concerning an action, behaviour, omission or decision by a School staff member or volunteer will be managed per the following four-stage complaints management process.

Refer to section 5.2.2 for information about complaints in relation to visitors to the College.

#### 5.1.1 Stage 1 - Discuss the matter with the relevant staff member or volunteer

Wherever possible, the complainant is encouraged, in the first instance, to discuss their complaint with the staff member or volunteer whose action, behaviour, omission or decision is in question. When resolving complaints at this stage:

1. The complainant is asked to speak with the staff member or volunteer and request a time to discuss their concern regarding the staff member or volunteer's action, behaviour, omission or decision;
2. The complainant and the staff member or volunteer may speak with the

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School Lead about obtaining support during the complaints management process, as outlined herein;

3. The staff member or volunteer must speak with the School Lead should any of the specific case management requirements apply, as per section 2.2 of the Procedures;
4. If the School Lead is not involved in the discussion, the staff member or volunteer is to:
  - a. Inform the complainant about these Procedures and the Complaints Management Policy and
  - b. offer to inform the School Lead of the complaint raised and the outcome of the discussion;
5. If the School Lead is made aware of the complaint, they will:
  - a. Ensure the complaint is documented; including the names of all parties involved, the nature of the concerns, the date and time of any discussion, the agreed outcomes and any required actions;
  - b. Consider if any other policies, procedures or protocols are to be applied, particularly those referenced in the Complaints Handling Policy regarding student protection and the conduct of staff and volunteers;
  - c. Consider if it is appropriate to ensure the document outlining the management of the complaint is filed in the staff member or volunteer's personnel file and any agreed actions are completed;
  - d. Consider whether the staff member or volunteer requires any additional training or support in relation to their role or whether any other action is required and
  - e. Identify any issues or strategies to be incorporated into the College's continuous improvement planning.

When the complainant determines that it is inappropriate to discuss the complaint with the staff member or volunteer, or in doing so, they do not believe their complaint has been addressed to their satisfaction; they are asked to proceed to Stage 2 of the complaints management process.

### **5.1.2 Stage 2 – Make a complaint to the relevant member.**

When escalating a complaint to this stage, the complainant may raise their complaint with the School Lead in writing or verbally. When resolving a complaint at this stage:

1. The complainant is asked to inform the School Lead of their complaint - including the names of all parties involved, the nature of the concerns, any specific dates and times when incidents occurred, the complainant's feedback about their discussion with the staff member or volunteer, and the reason why the complaint remains unresolved;
2. The relevant member will:
  - a. Consider if any of the specific complaints management requirements (as per section 2.2 of the Procedures) or other policies, procedures or protocols (particularly those referenced in the Complaints Handling Policy regarding student protection and the conduct of staff and volunteers), are to be applied;

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- b. Speak with the staff member or volunteer and obtain further information about their actions in relation to the complaint;
- c. Advise all parties involved about the support available to them during the complaints management process, as outlined herein;
- d. Delegate the investigation of the circumstances of the complaint to a senior leader in the organisation.
- e. Organise meeting/s with the complainant, or their advocate, and the staff member or volunteer as soon as practicable to gather further information about the ongoing complaint and develop a plan to resolve the complaint satisfactorily;
- f. Explain to the complainant or their advocate and the staff member or volunteer that they may have a support person present during any meeting;
- g. Avoid using email as the primary means of communication, although follow-up emails after meetings that clarify what was discussed are a helpful strategy;
- h. Ensure meetings and phone calls are documented, including the agreed outcomes and required actions;
- i. Consider whether the staff member or volunteer requires additional training or support in relation to their role or whether any other action is required;
- j. Ensure the complainant understands how the complaint will be investigated any further (if required) and how the decision about the 'on-balance' assessment of the complaint will be assessed;
- k. Ensure the records related to the complaint, e.g., meetings, reports, letters, etc., are filed on the staff member or volunteer's personnel file, and any agreed actions are completed and
- l. Incorporate relevant learnings into the College's quality improvement planning.

If the complaint is satisfactorily resolved, the School Lead will write to the complainant with the agreed outcomes and resolutions. It is inappropriate to divulge the nature of disciplinary action taken or not taken by the College against the staff member or volunteer in question.

When the complainant determines that it is inappropriate to discuss the complaint with the School Lead, or in doing so, they do not believe their complaint has been addressed to their satisfaction; they are asked to contact the CEO.

### 5.1.3 Stage 3 – Escalate the complaint to the CEO

Escalation to the CEO may be appropriate if (a) the complaint has not been satisfactorily resolved at Stage 2 or (b) the complaint is about the School Lead.

When escalating a complaint to this stage, the complainant may raise their complaint with the CEO in writing or at a meeting. When resolving a complaint at this stage:

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1. The complainant is asked to inform the CEO of their ongoing complaint, including their feedback on previous meetings with the College and the reason why the complaint remains unresolved;
2. The CEO will:
  - a. Consider if any of the specific complaints management requirements or other policies, procedures or protocols (particularly those referenced in the Complaints Handling Policy regarding student protection and the conduct of staff and volunteers) are to be applied;
  - b. Advise the School Lead and staff member or volunteer that the complaint has now been escalated and obtain further information about the matter and the College's responses to the complaint, including copies of relevant documents or complaints management plans;
  - c. Advise all parties involved about the support available to them during the complaints management process, as outlined herein;
  - d. Organise meeting/s with the complainant or their advocate, the School Lead and other relevant staff members and volunteers as soon as practicable to gather further information about the ongoing complaint and, if required, develop a complaints management plan to resolve the issues;
  - e. Explain to the complainant and the staff member or volunteer that they may have a support person present during any meeting;
  - f. Ensure meetings are documented, including the agreed outcomes and required actions;
  - g. Consider whether the staff member or volunteer requires additional training or support in relation to their role or whether any other action is required;
  - h. Ensure the complainant understands how the complaint will be investigated any further (if required) and how the decision about the 'on-balance' assessment of the complaint will be assessed;
  - i. Ensure the records relating to the complaint, e.g., meetings, reports, letters, etc., are filed on the staff member or volunteer's personnel file and any agreed actions are completed; and
  - j. Incorporate relevant learnings into the College's quality improvement planning.

If the complaint is satisfactorily resolved, the School Lead will write the agreed outcomes and resolutions to the complainant. It is inappropriate to divulge the nature of disciplinary action taken or not taken by the College against the staff member or volunteer in question.

### **5.1.4** Stage 4 – Escalate the complaint to the CTBC Board.

When escalating a complaint to this stage, the complainant may raise their complaint with the Chair of the Board in writing. A complaint would be lodged with the Board if either (a) the complainant believes there was not adequate consideration of the complaint by the CEO or (b) if the complaint is about the CEO.

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An escalation to the CTBC Board is the highest level of appeal available to a complainant, and there is no further right of appeal.

When resolving a complaint at this stage:

- 1.** The complainant is asked to inform the Chair of the Board of their ongoing complaint, including their feedback on previous meetings with the School Lead and the reason why the complaint remains unresolved;
- 2.** The Chair of the Board will:
  - a.** Consider if any of the specific complaints management requirements (as per section 2.2 of the Procedures) or other policies, procedures or protocols (particularly those referenced in the Complaints Handling Policy regarding student protection and the conduct of staff and volunteers), are to be applied;
  - b.** Advise the School Lead that the complaint has now been escalated and obtain further information about the matter and the College's responses to the complaint, including copies of relevant investigation summaries, reports, interviews or complaints management plans;
  - c.** Advise all parties involved about the support available to them during the complaints management process, as outlined herein;
  - d.** Organise meeting/s with the complainant or their advocate, the School Lead (if appropriate) and other relevant staff members and volunteers as soon as practicable to gather further information about the ongoing complaint and, if required, develop a complaints management plan to resolve the issues. This meeting may occur remotely, e.g., via videoconference or phone call.
  - e.** Explain to the complainant and the staff member or volunteer that they may have a support person present during any meeting;
  - f.** Ensure meetings are documented, including the agreed outcomes and required actions;
  - g.** Consider whether the staff member or volunteer requires additional training or support in relation to their role or whether any other action is required;
  - h.** Ensure the complainant understands how the complaint will be investigated any further (if required) and how the decision about the 'on-balance' assessment of the complaint will be assessed;
  - i.** Make a final determination regarding the veracity of the complaint based on available evidence provided by the School Lead and respond in writing to the complainant;
  - j.** Ensure the records relating to the complaint, e.g., meetings, reports, letters, etc., are filed on the staff member or volunteer's personnel file and any agreed actions are completed; and
  - k.** Ensure relevant learnings are incorporated into the College's continuous improvement planning.

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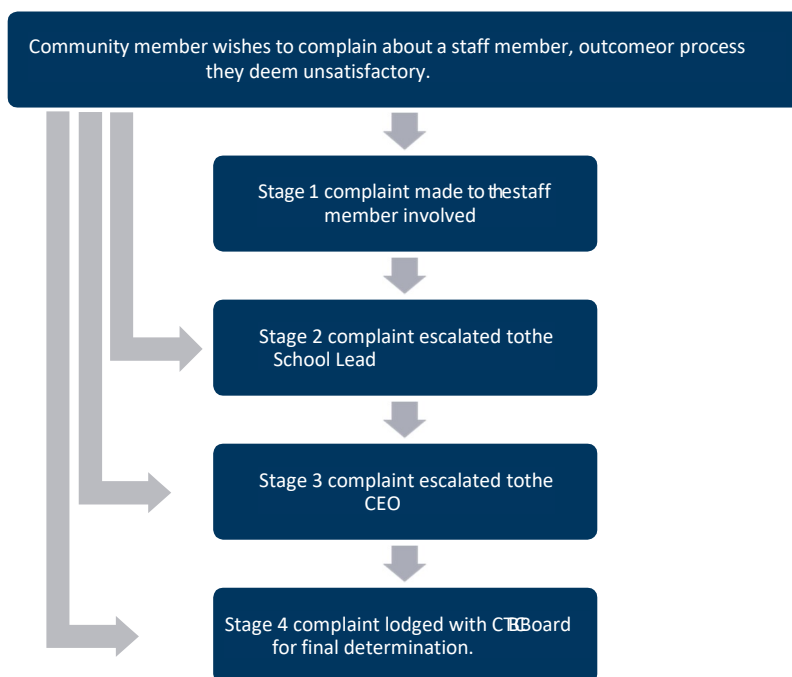


Figure 1: Complaints Handling Process Diagram

### 5.2 Specific Complaints Management Requirements

#### 5.2.1 Complaints about non-compliance with Child Protection Policy and Procedures

The Child Protection Policy and Procedures outlines the commitment to ensure students' safety and well-being and the College's obligation to respond appropriately to all suspected student protection concerns. This includes the College's obligations regarding child protection, concerns of sexual abuse or likely sexual abuse and the management of alleged inappropriate behaviour by a staff member or volunteer. The Student Protection Procedures outline the roles, responsibilities, processes and forms used when actioning the Policy and provide information on relevant definitions and key terms.

- a. As per the Complaints Handling Policy, if the complaint relates to the non-compliance of the Child Protection Policy and Procedures and relates to possible sexual abuse or likely sexual abuse of a student, a complaint is to be made by writing to the Chair of the College Board.
- b. As per the Complaints Handling Policy, if the complaint relates to non-compliance with the Child Protection Policy and Procedures and does not relate to possible sexual abuse or likely sexual abuse of a student, a complaint must be made by writing to the Chair of the College Board.

When resolving a complaint relevant to section 2.2.1, the following process will be undertaken:

1. The complainant is asked to inform the Board Chair of their complaint; including the names of all parties involved, the nature of the complaint, any specific dates and times when incidents occurred, and their feedback on contact with the College;
2. The Board Chair will:

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- a. Advise the School Lead that a complaint has been made and obtain further information about the matter and the College's responses to the complaint, including copies of relevant documents;
- b. Where necessary, ensure that the College takes any action required to comply with the legal and Policy requirements detailed in Student Protection in Anglican Schools Policy and Procedures;
- c. Advise all parties involved about the support available to them during the complaints management process, as outlined herein;
- d. Organise meeting/s with the complainant, the School Lead, and other relevant staff members and volunteers as soon as practicable to gather further information about the matter and, if required, develop a plan to resolve the issues. This meeting may occur remotely, e.g., over the telephone;
- e. Explain to the complainant, the School Lead and other relevant staff members and volunteers that they may have a support person present during any meeting;
- f. Ensure meetings are documented, including the agreed outcomes and required actions;
- g. Consider whether the staff member or volunteer requires additional training or support in relation to their role or whether any other action is required;
- h. Ensure the complainant understands how the complaint will be investigated any further (if required) and how the decision about the 'on-balance' assessment of the complaint will be assessed;
- i. Ensure the record of the complaint, e.g., meetings, reports, letters, etc., are filed on the staff member or volunteer's personnel file and any agreed actions are completed; and
- j. Incorporate relevant learnings into the College's quality improvement planning.

### **5.2.2 Complaints about visitors to the College**

When a complaint is about a visitor to the College, the complainant is asked to inform the School Lead of their concerns, including, where known, the name of the visitor, the organisation that the visitor works for, the names of any children involved, if relevant, and any dates and times of particular incidents related to their complaint.

The School Lead will consider if any other policies, procedures or protocols are to be applied, particularly those referenced in the Complaints Handling Policy regarding student protection.

The School Lead will document the concerns and, unless the matter involves a criminal investigation, will forward the complaint to the organisation that employs the visitor who has been named in the complaint. If the matter does relate to a criminal investigation, direction will be sought from the Police.

The School Lead Executive Leadership Team member will also consider the nature of the complaint and determine whether this may impact any future visits to the College by the person named in the complaint.

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If the matter is being managed by another member of the Executive Leadership Team, this member will brief the School Lead as soon as practicable.

### 5.3 Providing Support

Appropriate support should be offered to all parties involved in a complaint handling process. Staff and volunteers may be referred to the Employee Assistance Service or like supports.

Children and parents may be referred to local counselling and support services, including the College Counsellor or Chaplain or other supports offered by the College.

### 5.4 Privacy and Confidentiality

All information disclosed or recorded as part of a complaints management process must be managed in accordance with privacy legislation and principles. Before sharing information, consent must be obtained from the relevant parties involved in the complaints management process unless otherwise allowed by law.

### 5.5 Managing Complaints Records

When recording information in relation to a complaints management process, ensure all records are factual and indicate the names of all parties to the complaint, the details of the concerns or complaint, the processes used to resolve the complaint, required actions and responsible officers.

#### Storing and accessing complaints records

The School Lead must ensure all information and documents in relation to the complaint are stored on the relevant staff member or volunteer's personnel file.

## 6. References

Challenge Trade and Business College. (2023). *Student Behaviour Management*. Policy

Challenge Trade and Business College (2023). *Child Protection*. Policy

Challenge Trade and Business College (2023). *Child Risk Management*. Policy

Challenge Trade and Business College. (2023). *Community Code of Conduct*. Policy

Challenge Trade and Business College (2023). *Complaints Handling* Policy

Challenge Trade and Business College. (2023). *Employee Code of Conduct*. Policy

<b>SECTION</b>	<b>1 – Student Learning and Welfare</b>
<b>ITEM</b>	<b>Procedure -</b> <b>ITEM NO: 1.70</b>
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