



SEAVIEW
CHRISTIAN COLLEGE

Educating for Eternity • Equipping for Life

Procedure for dealing with: Formal Complaints

At Seaview Christian College we have a strict procedure which is followed each time a formal written complaint is lodged with the school.

At Seaview Christian College, we believe it is our responsibility to do all we can within our power to run an excellent school. We also believe it is important that when a complaint is lodged (whether justified or not), it is our responsibility to look into the matter, make necessary judgments and put necessary change into effect.

This booklet forms part of our procedure for dealing with formal complaints. This booklet outlines the procedure which is followed at Seaview Christian College for investigating complaints and also a set of principles which are used to guide the process. The booklet also contains the formal complaint form which might help you in lodging a complaint.

It is always our aim to act as quickly, but also as fairly as possible within the constraints of the procedures outlined on the following pages.

We thank you in advance for working with us.

Yours in Christ

Jannie Basson

Principal

Seaview Christian College

Under what circumstances should I lodge a complaint?

Formal complaints can cover any aspect of our school operation. This may include (but is not limited to) complaints about:

- Workplace, Health and Safety matters
- Compliance with Government Laws
- Behaviour of College staff
- Behaviour of College students
- Concerns with College service
- Concerns with College policy
- Concerns regarding individual members of the school community
- Financial matters
- Etc

Who deals with complaints?

All formal complaints are directed firstly to the Principal for evaluation. The Principal then designates an appropriate person to handle the complaint. It is our general principle to solve matters in the simplest but most appropriate way possible. For this reason, your complaint may be referred to:

- A teacher
- A member of administration staff
- Head of Department
- Head of School
- Principal
- Chairman of the College Board

What is our approach to handling complaints at SCC?

Mathew 18:15 states: "If one of my followers sins against you, go and point out what was wrong. But do it in private, just between the two of you. If that person listens, you have won back a follower." For this reason, we believe it is important to firstly make sure you have attempted to deal with the complaint in the first instance in a simple and private way. Our goal in complaint handling is not to help people to seek revenge, but reconciliation and resolution. It is also our goal use the complaint process to change any procedures, which as a result of a complaint are shown to be needing improvement in our school.

When dealing with a complaint, we seek to investigate the following things:

- Has legislation been adhered to?
- Has school policy been adhered to?
- Have the interests of all students in our college been considered?
- Have the interests of the school and staff been considered?
- What options exist to resolve the complaint?
- What are the tangible realities surrounding the concern?
- How much evidence do we have to base any chosen action on?

What will be the outcome of my complaint?

The outcomes of complaint resolution could include:

- **Information:** Some complaints result from miscommunication. In such instances, we seek to give appropriate information to all parties.
- **Education:** Some concerns are solved by appropriately educating either the complainant, somebody else within our school community or both.
- **Change of Policy:** Sometimes a complaint raises an issue in school policy which needs to be addressed.
- **Change of Procedure:** Sometimes a complaint shows that a procedure in our school needs to be amended.
- **Redirection:** Sometimes a complaint is mistakenly made to the school about an area over which the school has no jurisdiction. In such cases, we give our best advice as to where to direct the complaint.
- **Discipline:** A complaint could cause the college to take disciplinary steps towards a member or members of the college community.
- **Remedial Action:** This is done if opportunity exists for the College to take action to remedy a situation which it believes it is responsible for.
- **No Action:** On some occasions, after investigation, there is insufficient evidence to take any action as a result of a complaint. However, such complaints aren't dismissed, but rather recorded for future reference.

All complaints are processed according to the following guidelines.

Complaint is lodged	The complaint can be lodged on the College's complaint form (attached) or by email or in some other written form.
Research/investigation phase	The details of the complaint are researched. This could involve: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Interviewing members of the school community• Seeking copies of appropriate records• Seeking further clarification from the complainant.• Researching government policies, acts or regulations.• Taking anecdotal or quantitative measurements• Seeking professional advice• Etc
Action Plan	After all research and discussions are done, a judgement will be made on the best information at hand and an action plan will be completed which seeks to address the issues.
Resolution	Once the actions in the action plan have been carried out, the complaint will be deemed to have been resolved.
Report	Once resolved, a brief report will be sent to the complainant detailing the actions taken.

If a complaint is regarding a situation which is urgent, the Principal may, at his discretion, choose to solve the situation in a manner deemed appropriate without following all steps outlined above.

Answers to Common Questions

Q: How do I know whether my complaint is urgent?

A: All complaints are very important. A complaint will be considered urgent if the consequences of any inaction are very extreme.

Q: How long will the investigation/research process take?

A: The investigation could take anywhere from a day to a couple of weeks, depending on its complexity and available time.

Q: What happens if I am complaining about a situation which happened outside of school?

A: This can sometimes be difficult. Depending on the nature of the concern, the school may not always have jurisdiction over the situation. In such situations we will inform you of the best way to approach the concern, or give you the details of outside agencies who will be able to address the concern for you.

Q: What should I do if I am not happy about the outcome of a complaint resolution?

A: If you are not happy with the outcome of a resolution, you should raise the issue with the complaint handler in the first instance.

Please note that in South Australia neither the Minister for Education nor the Department of Education has any power to directly intervene in any complaints relating to the operations of a non-government school.

Seaview Christian College Formal Complaint Form

Name	
Date	
Brief Summary of Complaint	
Phone number	
Email	

What category does your complaint fit into?

Tick a Category	Provide extra information (e.g. policy title, etc)
<input type="checkbox"/> Work Place Health and Safety	
<input type="checkbox"/> Compliance with Government Laws	
<input type="checkbox"/> Behaviour of College staff	
<input type="checkbox"/> Behaviour of College students	
<input type="checkbox"/> Concerns with College service	
<input type="checkbox"/> Concerns with College policy	
<input type="checkbox"/> Concerns regarding individual members of the school community.	
<input type="checkbox"/> Financial Matters	
<input type="checkbox"/> Other	

Main Thrust of Complaint - (As you write, please remember, this information may need to be shared with the person you are complaining about).

What do you see as a suitable resolution to the concern?

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If your complaint is against specific people, please list the names of those people.

Do you have any direct association with the matters or persons referred to in your complaint?
If not, what reason do you have to raise the complaint?

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What measures have you already taken to resolve the concern? List the names of people you have spoken to and action you have taken. Also list dates on which actions were taken.

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List the names of any other people who could verify the concern you are raising.

Name	Contact details

List the title of any documents you have attached to support your complaint.

OFFICE USE ONLY

Date complaint received: / /

Signature of Principal

Complaint referred to: