



## CONCERNS AND COMPLAINTS POLICY

### Rationale

Cranbourne East Secondary College believes that concerns and complaints by students, parents and guardians, teachers, principals and education support staff are best addressed through working in partnership. The College will endeavour to address all concerns and complaints in a courteous, efficient, fair and timely manner.

### Objectives

Parent and guardian concerns and complaints most commonly relate to the educational or other progress of their child, to the management of an incident between students or the implementation of school policy. Where appropriate, the confidentiality of all parties involved will be maintained and steps will be taken by the College to achieve an outcome that is acceptable to all parties as part of the resolution.

A 'concern' refers to an issue that is raised informally in order to improve or change a situation.

A 'complaint' is an expression of a grievance where the complainant is seeking justice.

### Guidelines

#### 1. College Expectations And Responsibilities Of The Parent Or Guardian With The Concern or Complaint.

- 1.1. The College expects the person raising a concern or complaint to:
  - Register the concern as soon as possible after an issue occurs
  - Provide complete and factual information
  - Maintain and respect the privacy and confidentiality of all parties
  - Acknowledge the importance of achieving an outcome acceptable to all parties
  - Act in a calm and courteous manner
  - Show respect and understanding of different points of views
  - Recognise that all parties have rights and responsibilities, which must be balanced.
- 1.2 In response to a concern raised or complaint, the College will address parents in a courteous, efficient, fair and prompt manner and in accordance with the Department of Education's regulatory frameworks.

## 2. Procedure For Raising Concerns Or Complaints With The College

- 2.1** If a parent/guardian or student has a concern or complaint it is best raised with the College in the first instance, before seeking advice from the Department Of Education. It is strongly recommended that the parent or guardian calls the College and that the most appropriate staff member be asked for in regard to the concern or complaint so it may be addressed. Where the appropriate staff member cannot be reached at the time of call, they will attempt to return the telephone call as soon as possible. Parent or guardians may elect to write an email to the College via Compass or a letter may be dropped off to the school. If the concern cannot be readily or appropriately settled over the phone, an appointment time will be scheduled.
- 2.2** All parent or guardians are required to ring ahead to make appointments. This planned Approach will avoid delays and frustrations, bearing in mind that more than 1000 students attend the College and pre-arranged appointments are a more effective manner of dealing with concerns or complaints.
- 2.3** Upon receiving the complaint, the appropriate staff member will provide a timeframe for investigation of the complaint. The College will make every attempt to resolve the matter as quickly as possible. In some instances, complaints or concerns may be complex and involve many people being interviewed and many statements taken; in these situations the College may require more time to investigate and resolve the matter. In some instances, the College may seek advice from the Department of Education's regional office.

## 3. Resolutions

- 3.1** In the situation where the College is able to substantiate, in whole or part, a concern or complaint, it will offer an appropriate resolution. This may take the form of:
- an explanation about the issue
  - mediation, counselling or other support
  - an apology or expression of regret
  - changing a previously made decision
  - reviewing a school policy or practice
  - refunding a fee
  - engaging in restorative practices to repair any harm caused by the incident.
- 3.2** In circumstances where both parties actively tried to resolve the issue and the matter remains unresolved, a parent/guardian may elect to contact the South Eastern Victoria Regional office of the Department Of Education on 8765 5600.

**Evaluation:** The effectiveness of this policy will be reviewed as part of the College's four-year review cycle.