

### **Purpose**

Firbank Grammar School recognises the importance of fostering positive relationships with parents and families and developing strong school community partnerships. However, it also recognises that in all partnerships there will be times when there are disagreements and issues of concern that will need to be resolved.

This policy provides the overarching principles by which complaints from parents, students, members of the School community and external stakeholders will be dealt with.

### **Scope**

This policy applies to all students, staff, and members of the Firbank Grammar School community.

Separate complaints and concerns policies apply to instances relating to child safety and wellbeing, employee workplace grievances, privacy and the protection of students and staff and does not apply to matters where there are existing rights and processes for review and appeal, such as matters relating to serious employee misconduct, student critical incidents and criminal activities, fraud and corruption, legal claims, expulsions, etc.

### **Policy Outline**

Firbank is committed to resolving complaints fairly, efficiently, promptly and in accordance with relevant legislation. All complaints and disputes are conducted using the schools Relationship Reparation framework to set the tone for respectful and meaningful resolutions of issues raised.

Firbank will:

- always consider their duty of care to the student or staff involved in the complaint
- ensure staff are advised about the complaint where appropriate
- develop and publish a complaints policy and procedure for their school which explains the processes at the school for raising concerns or complaints.
- respond and acknowledge complaints in a timely manner and maintain communication
- detail how to raise a concern or complaint at the school
- detail actions upon receipt of a complaint
- communicate timeframes for investigation and resolution of a complaint
- outline potential outcomes
- publish escalation process if mutually agreed resolution is not reached



- keep a written record of serious, substantial or unusual complaints that require resolution actions and document all steps taken to achieve agreement
- train school staff on the school's complaint-handling procedures and provide development opportunities on complaint management

Firbank expects the person raising the concern or complaint to;

- Do so promptly, as soon as possible after the issue occurs
- Provide complete and factual information
- Maintain respect and privacy and confidentiality of all parties
- Act in good faith and in a calm and courteous manner
- Acknowledge the common goal is to achieve an outcome acceptable to all parties recognise that all parties have rights and responsibilities which must be balanced.
- Must not demonstrate unreasonable complainant conduct.
- The complainant is entitled to have a support person to assist at any time in the complaint process.

Outcomes of raising a complaint with the school:

- Complaint resolution outcomes are any actions consistent with Firbank Grammar School values, policies and relevant legislation that are intended to support students, staff, families and school relationship, engagement, and participation in the school community.
- Firbank Grammar School must provide complainants with an explanation as to the steps taken to resolve the matters raised.
- Complaints are resolved following the Complaints Resolution process, in conjunction with the Relationship Reparation Framework.
- Review or appeal of resolved complaints are to be directed to the Principal for final decision.

## Definitions

**Complaint:** A 'complaint' is an expression of dissatisfaction, either written or verbal, with an action taken, decision made or service provided, or the failure to provide a service, take action or make a decision at a school.

**Complainant:** A 'complainant' is the party making the complaint.

**Unreasonable Complainant Conduct:** 'Unreasonable complainant conduct' is behaviour that:

- is vexatious (a complaint brought without merit, often to cause annoyance to another person)
- is oriented towards conflict
- is clearly and significantly outside the expectation of confidentiality, co-operation, courtesy and respect
- Calls for staff resources and time unjustified by the nature or significance of the complaint

**Complaint Record:** Firbank will a record of all complaints made with the following information:

- The date the complaint was made.
- A brief description of the complaint.



## Roles and Responsibilities

### The Principal or Head Of Campus:

- ensure effective systems are in place to manage complaints consistently, effectively, and to ensure procedural fairness.
- Ensure policies and procedures are provided to staff to ensure they know and can implement the complaints processes.

### All Firbank Grammar Teaching Staff:

- Required to understand the complaints process.
- Required to consider the duty of care owed to students involved in a complaint.
- Provide all necessary information to assist in any complaints process.
- Implement the escalation process as relevant to the circumstance.
- Conduct their behaviour in line with this policy

### Students and Parents/Guardians:

- Complaints are to be raised with the school in line with this policy

### Support Person

A support person can be a family member, a friend, a community member or a person provided through a support or advocacy agency. Their role is to:

- Help articulate difficulties the complainant may experience in relation to the complaint.
- Help to maintain a good working relationship between parties.
- Assist the complainant to understand policies and guidelines and the resolution being proposed.

## Relevant Legislation

[Education and Training Reform Act 2006 \(Vic.\)](#)

[Education and Training Reform Regulations \(2017\)](#)

[Charter of Human Rights and Responsibilities Act 2006](#)

## Related Policies

Complaints Procedure

Child Safety and Wellbeing Policy

Student Behaviour Policy



**Approval**

Policy Issue date	February 2025
Policy Owner	Principal and Heads of Campus
Document updated by	Risk and Compliance
Document reviewed by	Principal
Document approved/endorsed by	Principal and Board
Next Review date	February 2027



Help for non-English speakers.  
If you need help to understand this policy,  
please contact us at  
enquiries@firbank.vic.edu.au

The school community may provide feedback on this  
document by emailing: [communications@firbank.vic.edu.au](mailto:communications@firbank.vic.edu.au)

