



Document Name:

Complaints Handling  
Procedure

Approval Date:

April 2024

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# Complaints Handling Procedure

*Version: 4*

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## 1 Introduction

Enkindle School (Enkindle) aims to provide a fair, equitable, legal and ethical environment for all employees, families, and students. The aim of this policy is to ensure there is a transparent and consistent process to resolve issues as quickly and fairly, as possible.

Complaints come to Principals and other school staff in many forms. Complaints can be from parents/carers, community, employees, or students. All complaints are handled in a positive and open way.

## 2 Purpose and scope of the policy

This document outlines the procedures undertaken at this school to manage complaints. Complaints management at this school is also underpinned by section 46 of the Education (General-Provisions) Act 2006 (Qld).

It has been adapted from the Queensland Government's Department of Education and Training's complaints management template version 2.4 created 30/09/2016.

## 3 Definitions

Complaint	An expression of dissatisfaction made to or about the school, related to the school's services, staff or the handling of a complaint, where a response or resolution is explicitly or implicitly expected or legally required.
Informal Complaint	A complaint about a matter that is likely to be simple, straight forward, easily manageable, or minor, where a simple or quick resolution is appropriate such as discussion of the matter with a relevant staff member.
Formal Complaint	A complaint about a matter that is serious, complex or may pose a threat to the health and safety of any person. Examples include serious allegations or breaches of policy, complaints against a senior staff member, including the

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	principal or an informal complaint that could not be resolved informally. Assessment of the complaint is required by the TISAI Committee.
Complainant	The person, organisation or their representative making a complaint.
Respondent	The person who is referred to in a complaint by a complainant as the person responsible for their concerns or who can best respond to their concern.

## 4 Policy Details

### Documentation

Enkindle documents all complaints. Complaints are recorded and reported to the Principal as soon as practicable after receiving the complaint.

Complaints can be made directly to the Principal.

The record of the complaint:

- uses objective language clearly stating the facts,
- contains information in chronological order as practically possible,
- uses quotation marks, where appropriate and necessary,
- is neatly and legibly written in biro/pen or in print in clear unambiguous language,
- includes, where necessary, initialled and dated corrections,
- includes signature, designation of the author, and time and date of the incident/complaint.
- clarify how/what system is used to record complaints

If the complaint is not resolved at the first point of contact, the complaint is acknowledged within two working days by telephone, in person, by email, or in writing.

Documents related to the complaint are kept and stored in accordance with the relevant departmental policies and procedures. Please refer to Enkindle Information Management Policy.

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Complaint Management Process:

**1: Lodging a Complaint**

- a) Complaints can be lodged with the most appropriate staff member at the local level, for example, the initial contact point for many complaints is the student's relevant classroom teacher.
- b) Complaints can be lodged through various methods, including
  - i. Phone
  - ii. Email
  - iii. In-person (by appointment)
- c) If the complainant is unsure where to direct their complaint, they can contact the Principal for guidance.
- d) If the complainant is uncomfortable directing the complaint to the most appropriate member at the local level, or wants to make a formal complaint, they can submit a complaint by emailing the principal or TISAI Committee directly.
- e) Where an anonymous complaint is lodged, the school will follow the complaints handling policy, when there is sufficient information to do so.

**2: Acknowledgement, Assessment and Referral**

- a) The employee/committee member receiving the complaint will:
  - i. acknowledge the complaint within two (2) business days, outlining the next steps and where possible the estimated timeframes.
  - ii. assess the complaint, using the definitions of informal and formal complaints in the complaints handling policy.

**3: Registration and Support**

- a) The recipient of the complaint will promptly enter it onto the complaints register, regardless of whether it proceeds through the informal or formal process.
- b) The recipient of the complaint will offer support to the complainant as appropriate, which may include assistance with completing forms or understanding procedures.
- c) If a student is a complainant, respondent or victim, or the child of a complainant, respondent or victim of a matter being managed through the complaints handling policy, the school may offer the student support where appropriate e.g. discussing suitable adjustments with parents/caregivers.

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#### **4: Informal Complaints Handling Process**

- a) The informal process is designed to resolve issues promptly and collaboratively at the local level.
- b) It may involve constructive discussion and negotiation between the complainant and the relevant staff member(s).
- c) If the complaint cannot be resolved informally, it will be escalated to the formal process.

#### **5: Formal Complaints Handling Process**

- a) The formal process begins with the assessment of the complaint by the Principal, a designated member of the Leadership Team or where appropriate, a Committee Member.
- b) The Principal / Committee member may gather additional information through investigation, interviews, or evidence review
- c) The Principal / Committee member will determine appropriate action, which may include:
  - iii. Mediation
  - iv. Disciplinary measures
  - v. Implementation of policy changes
  - vi. Referral to external agencies (e.g., police)
  - vii. Provision of written updates to the complainant throughout the process
  - viii. Other actions the Principal /Committee member determine as appropriate in the circumstances.

#### **6: Complaint Closure**

- a) The complaint register will be updated with the date the complaint is closed and a brief summary of the outcome.
- b) The complainant will receive written notification of the outcome and any actions taken where appropriate.

#### **7: Appeals Process**

- a) Complainants may appeal the outcome of a complaint by writing to:
  - i. the principal (for complaints not previously managed by the principal)
  - ii. the board chair (for complaints previously managed by the principal).

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The Governing body of Enkindle Village School, The Townsville Independent School Association can be contacted with a complaint through: [committee@tisai.com.au](mailto:committee@tisai.com.au)

The Non-State School Accreditation Board (NSSAB) can be contacted if a complainant is not satisfied with an outcome.

NSSAB's responsibilities under the Education (Accreditation of Non-State Schools) Act 2017 (the 'Act') include, but are not limited to, monitoring whether non-State schools continue to comply with the requirements for accreditation, and if relevant, eligibility for government funding, under the Act. NSSAB also receives and deals with complaints relating to its own performance and its statutory functions. They welcome feedback as an effective and valuable tool in staff and business development enabling it to continually work to improve service delivery. NSSAB prefers written submission of compliance concerns and complaints but will also accept verbal communication. Submissions can be lodged online, by email, post or telephone and may be made anonymously. Reasonable assistance will be provided to concerned parties and complainants if required. This assistance may include help with writing a compliance concern or complaint or by providing services for people with hearing or speech impairments.

For more details about the NSSAB's compliance concern and complaint management processes, please see the following: <https://nssab.qld.edu.au/Complaints/index.php>

## 5 Supporting Documents

- Enkindle Village School Complaints Handling Policy
- Enkindle Village School Complaints Handling Process – Flowchart
- Enkindle Village School Work Health and Safety Policy
- Enkindle Village School Anti-Discrimination Policy
- Enkindle Village School Sexual Harassment Policy
- Enkindle Village School Disability Policy
- Enkindle Village School Workplace Bullying Policy
- Enkindle Village School Privacy Policy

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## 6 Approval Details

Policy Delegate	Business Manager
Approval Authority	TISAI Committee
Version Number	4
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## 7 Review History

Version	Date	Reviewed by	Modifications
3	April 2024	Head of Curriculum & TISAI Committee	New template /format General spelling/grammatical errors Terminology “parents” to “families” Complaint Management Process

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