



EMANUEL SCHOOL

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## **Complaints Handling Policy & Procedures**

Version 2025.01

## Version History

Version	Notes	Author	Date of Change
2024.01	Policy Review	Andrew Watt	29 February 2024
2025.01	Policy Review	Linda Emms	21 July 2025

## Review

This policy will be reviewed every 2 years from the approval date, or if the relevant regulatory frameworks change in a way that means this policy is no longer applicable.

# **1. Introduction**

## **1.1. Purpose and scope**

This procedure applies to Emanuel School in handling complaints made in respect of services provided by the school or against staff members, which includes employees, contractors and volunteers.

This procedure does not extend to personal grievances between parents, guardians or other members of the Emanuel School community.

## **1.2. Whistleblowing complaints**

This procedure does not extend to complaints which are whistleblowing disclosures. The procedure for processing whistleblowing complaints are dealt with in the School's whistleblowing policy.

In summary a whistleblowing disclosure is a disclosure which:

- is made by a Board member, staff member, a person who supplies goods or services to the School, including a volunteer, an employer of a supplier or a relative of any of these people;
- involves alleged misconduct, an improper state of affairs or circumstances, or illegal activity, and
- is made to a senior staff member, or officer of the school, the school's auditor or a person who the School has authorised to collect such disclosures.

## **1.3. Related policies**

Complaints about reportable conduct will be addressed in accordance with the school's Child Protection Policy.

Complaints regarding a grievance between staff members about work matters, including work relationships and decisions made by other staff members which impact on their work, and complaints regarding unlawful discrimination, harassment or bullying between staff, are addressed in accordance with the School's Grievance Policy for Staff.

## **1.4. Confidentiality**

All parties involved in complaints handling are required to maintain appropriate confidentiality, including in relation to handling and storing records.

## **2. Complaints**

A complaint or grievance is an expression of dissatisfaction made to the School about an educational and/or operational matter relating to services provided by the School or the behaviour or decisions of a staff member, contractor or volunteer, including misconduct.

If a parent/carer or student has a concern about the conduct of a staff member, they should raise their concern with the School in accordance with section 3. If a complaint that concerns the behaviour of a staff member may constitute reportable conduct, the matter will be addressed in accordance with the School's Child Protection Policy in accordance with section 6.3.1. Please refer to the school's Child Protection Policy for information about reportable conduct. Complainants are not required to assess whether their concern meets the threshold of reportable conduct before making a complaint. Any concern about a child's wellbeing may be reported under this policy.

Complaints may be made by a student or parent/carer. Staff complaints are covered in the Staff Grievance policy.

The School will seek to resolve complaints informally where possible but acknowledges that in some cases a person may wish to make a formal complaint.

## **3. Raising a complaint**

### **3.1. The complainant**

Complaints that are minor in nature may be raised by a complainant directly with the person involved. However, if the complainant does not feel comfortable doing so or the matter is one where it may not be appropriate to do so then the complaint should be raised with their line manager as detailed in Appendix 1: Parent Guide.

Complaints that are serious in nature should be raised directly with the Deputy Principal, Head of High School, Head of Primary School or Director of Kornmehl.

If a complaint concerns the inappropriate behaviour of a staff member or behaviour that may constitute reportable conduct this should be raised directly with the Principal via email: [principal@emanuelschool.nsw.edu.au](mailto:principal@emanuelschool.nsw.edu.au)

Should the matter not be resolved through the processes as detailed in this procedure, the complainant may raise the matter directly with the Principal. The complaint should be made in writing to the Principal, via email: [principal@emanuelschool.nsw.edu.au](mailto:principal@emanuelschool.nsw.edu.au)

Where a person wishes to make a complaint concerning the Principal the complaint should be made in writing to the President of the Board, via email: [gjoffe@emanuelschool.nsw.edu.au](mailto:gjoffe@emanuelschool.nsw.edu.au). In this situation, the references in this policy relating to the role of the Principal should be read as references to the President of the Board.

### **3.2. The School**

The Principal or their delegate will generally acknowledge receipt of a complaint in writing as soon as practicable.

## **4. Handling complaints**

### **4.1. Assessing a complaint**

The Principal or delegate will assess the complaint and determine:

- whether the complaint is one to be addressed under this policy or is a staff grievance or possible reportable conduct matter which are dealt with by the relevant policies, see section 1.3; and
- the priority of the complaint in accordance with the urgency and/or seriousness of the matter raised; and
- whether the School may be required to report the matter to the Office of Children's Guardian (OCG), Police, Family and Department of Communities and Justice (DCJ) or other relevant authorities should the complaint relate to possible unlawful conduct or other reportable matters.

### **4.2. Managing a complaint**

The Principal or delegate will manage a complaint by:

- a) advising the complainant of the likely steps that will be undertaken by the School in relation to the complaint;
- b) if appropriate, advising the relevant parties of the complaint at the relevant time and providing them with an opportunity to respond;
- c) collecting any additional information that the School considers necessary to assess the complaint;
- d) making a decision about how the complaint will be resolved ("resolution decision"); and
- e) advising the complainant in writing, and any other relevant parties as appropriate, of the resolution decision of the Principal or Delegate and if appropriate, any proposed action to be taken.

There may be circumstances where some of the steps outlined above are not appropriate and the school will determine, on a case by case basis, the most appropriate method of handling the complaint.

A complainant and the relevant parties that the complaint is about may choose to have an appropriate support person present at any meeting with representatives of the School about the complaint. However, the School maintains the right to determine whether the person's preferred support person is appropriate and may not approve the attendance of a support person where they are determined by the School to be inappropriate.

## 5. Contact

If you have any queries about this procedure, you should contact Melissa Geer, HR Manager, for advice, on [mgeer@emanuelschool.nsw.edu.au](mailto:mgeer@emanuelschool.nsw.edu.au).

## 6. Appendix 1 - Parent Guide

### Whom to Contact if you have a Complaint or Issue

#### 6.1. Kornmehl parents

##### Step 1

If parents have an issue relating to their child's wellbeing or education, please approach your child's group teachers first.

##### Step 2

If the issue is not resolved, please speak to the Director of Kornmehl.

##### Step 3

If the matter remains unresolved, an appointment can be made with the Principal. If the matter that you wish to discuss is particularly sensitive or an emergency of some sort, you may wish to contact the PA of a senior leader in the first instance.

#### 6.2. K-6 parents

##### Step 1

For a welfare or academic issue please approach the class teacher.

##### Step 2

If the issue is not resolved with the class teacher, please approach the Deputy Head of Primary - Wellbeing for a wellbeing issue, or the Deputy Head of Primary - Teaching and Learning, if an academic matter.

##### Step 3 (unresolved problems)

Head of Primary

##### Step 4

If the problem is still unresolved after Step 3, please approach the Principal. If the matter that you wish to discuss is particularly sensitive or an emergency of some sort, you may wish to contact the PA of a senior leader in the first instance.

### **6.3. 7-12 parents**

#### **Step 1**

For a welfare issue please approach the House Tutor.

For a classroom/subject issue please approach the subject teacher.

#### **Step 2**

If the welfare situation is not resolved with the House Tutor, please approach the Head of House.

If the subject issue is not resolved with the teacher, please approach the Head of Department.

#### **Step 3 – (Unresolved problems)**

Director of Students - Student Welfare and Student Management matters

Director of Studies – Subject/Curriculum matters

#### **Step 4**

Head of High School

#### **Step 5**

If the problem is still unresolved after Step 4, please approach the Principal. If the matter that you wish to discuss is particularly sensitive or an emergency of some sort, you may wish to contact the PA of a senior leader in the first instance.

### **6.4. Jewish Life queries**

#### **Step 1**

For answers to questions about Emanuel's Jewish life, please approach the Director of Jewish Life or Head of Jewish Life Primary.

#### **Step 2 (Unresolved problems)**

Head of High School or Head of Primary

#### **Step 3**

Deputy Principal

#### **Step 4**

If the problem is still unresolved after Step 4, please approach the Principal. If the matter that you wish to discuss is particularly sensitive or an emergency of some sort, you may wish to contact the PA of a senior leader in the first instance.

### **6.5. Technology Issues**

#### **Step 1**

Approach the IT Helpdesk [helpdesk@emanuelschool.nsw.edu.au](mailto:helpdesk@emanuelschool.nsw.edu.au)

### Step 2 (Unresolved problems)

Director of ICT – Technology issues relating to My Portal, School App, Device Program and  
Head of Learning and Teaching – Issues relating to online coursework and digital learning technologies in the curriculum.

### Step 3

If the issue is not resolved, approach the Director of Finance and Operations.

### Step 4

If the problem is still unresolved after Step 3, please approach the Principal. If the matter that you wish to discuss is particularly sensitive or an emergency of some sort, you may wish to contact the PA of a senior leader in the first instance.

## **6.6. Fees, billings and payments**

Matters related to fees or other financial matters should be referred to the Director of Finance and Operations.

## **6.7. Board issues**

The School Board is the governing body of the School, responsible for governance and strategic directions. Any general matters relating to Board issues can be addressed directly to the President of the Board in writing, via the Board Secretary.