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## 1. POLICY STATEMENT

Through implementing this Policy, Anglican Education & Care Services (ECS) provide an accessible, fair, transparent and efficient mechanism for addressing complaints by children, parents, staff, volunteers, visitors and members of the ECS community.

Complaints management processes support the rights of all children and young people, and consistent with their Statement of Commitment, reflect the ECS's responsibility for the safety, wellbeing and protection of children attending an Anglican ECS.

Anglican ECS will consistently seek to provide a safe and supportive living and learning environment for children, with staff, volunteers and visitors modelling and encouraging behaviours that uphold dignity, safety and wellbeing.

Anglican ECS will respond to all complaints in a timely and comprehensive manner. ECS will aim to create mutual understanding through dialogue and complaints management processes which will include clear communication with all parties.

Anglican ECS will not penalise, discriminate or take action against any person, who in good faith, acting honestly and reasonably, raises concerns or complaints.

## 2. COMPLAINTS MANAGEMENT PROCEDURES AND PROCESSES

The *Complaints Management in Anglican Education & Care Services Procedures* (the Procedures), support this Policy, and outline the roles, responsibilities and processes that will be used when actioning this Policy.

The Procedures also contain information on relevant definitions and key terms.

All complaints are to be responded to in a timely and transparent manner and managed in accordance with the complaints management processes outlined in the Procedures. This includes ensuring:

- reporting as required by legislation, including provision to the Approved Provider for reporting to Department of Education and Training (Early Childhood Education and Care) as Queensland's Regulatory Authority;
- all information disclosed or recorded as part of a complaints management process must be managed in accordance with privacy legislation and principles; and
- learnings from complaints processes form part of the ECS quality improvement planning.

## 3. SCOPE

This Policy, developed by the Anglican Schools Commission and approved by Diocesan Council, applies to all Anglican Education & Care Services, including Outside Hours Schools Care (OHSC) services, for which The Corporation of the Synod of the Diocese of Brisbane (the Diocese) is the Approved Provider.

Other Anglican ECS in Queensland have approval to use this Policy and associated Procedures.

This Policy and associated Procedures apply to all ECS staff, volunteers and visitors (including contractors) and relates to any child enrolled or seeking to be enrolled at the ECS.

This Policy and the Procedures, must be made available to all persons employed by and associated with the ECS, including staff, children, parents, guardians and visitors. The documents should be available on the ECS website and obtainable from the ECS administration/reception.

Throughout this Policy and the Procedures, unless otherwise indicated, references to ECS staff include the Nominated Supervisor, Director/Coordinator and all other employees.

## 4. GUIDING PRINCIPLES

This Policy and the Procedures are based on the following Principles:

- Respectful conduct, including seeking to achieve mutual understanding through dialogue.
- Accessibility, including the ability for any individual to make a complaint absent of penalty or discrimination.
- Procedural fairness, including the absence of victimisation, discrimination or retribution of any party.
- Clear and transparent communication: including the accessibility of the Policy and the Procedures generally, and the provision of information to all parties about processes and outcomes associated with a complaint.
- Timeliness and efficiency in the management of all complaints.

## 5. SUPPORTING DOCUMENTS

Alleged or suspected abuse or neglect of a child enrolled at the ECS, or inappropriate behaviours by a staff member or volunteer towards a child enrolled at the ECS, will be managed using the *Child Protection in Anglican Education & Care Services Policy and Procedures*.

The Brisbane Diocese's *Protocol for Dealing with Sexual Misconduct* will be used in the management of allegations of suspected sexual misconduct or harassment.

ECS policy or procedures, or in their absence, the Brisbane *Diocesan Bullying, Harassment and Discrimination Policy and Procedures* will be used in the management of alleged workplace bullying, discrimination, physical assault, harm or harassment.

ECS policy or procedures, or in their absence, the Brisbane *Diocesan Managing Unsatisfactory Performance and/or Behaviour Policy, Procedures and Guide for Managers* will be used in the management of workplace performance and behaviour.

The *Complaints Management Policy and Procedures* is consistent with *Policy and Procedures for Dealing with a Request for Review of Decision or Action of a Commission in the Diocese of Brisbane*.

## 6. SPECIFIC COMPLAINTS MANAGEMENT REQUIREMENTS

All complaints detailed in this section (6) and received by a staff member or volunteer of an ECS are to be provided to the Nominated Supervisor, or in their absence a Director/Coordinator, or in their absence, a Responsible Person for action, as detailed below. This action is required in addition to and alongside the management of the complaint.

### 6.1 Complaints in relation to the safety, health and wellbeing of a child

All complaints alleging:

- physical or sexual abuse of a child or children has occurred or is occurring while a child is being educated and cared for by the ECS
- a Serious Incident, as defined by regulation 12 of the Education and Care Services National Regulations

must be notified by the Approved Provider to the Regulatory Authority.

Consideration must also be given to managing this complaint as a reasonable suspicion of inappropriate behaviour by a staff member or volunteer, as per the Child Protection in Anglican Schools Policy and Procedures.

### 6.2 Complaints in relation to other non-compliance with legislation or regulations

All complaints alleging any other non-compliance with the Education and Care Service National Law or Regulations must be provided to the Approved Provider for determination regarding need to notify the Regulatory Authority.

## 6.3 Complaints relating to non compliance of Child Protection in Anglican Education & Care Services Policy and Procedures

If the complaint relates to the non-compliance of the Child Protection in Anglican Education & Care Services Policy and Procedures, and:

- relates to possible sexual abuse or likely sexual abuse of a child in an Anglican ECS, a complaint is to be made by writing to the Director of Professional Standards, Anglican Church Southern Queensland.
- does not relate to possible sexual abuse or likely sexual abuse of a child in an Anglican ECS:
  - for which The Corporation of the Synod of the Diocese of Brisbane (the Diocese) is the Approved Provider, a complaint is to be made by writing to the Executive Director of the Anglican Schools Commission (ASC), Anglican Church Southern Queensland.
  - for which the Diocese is not the Approved Provider, a complaint is to be made by writing to the Approved Provider of that ECS.

As such, complaints of this nature, received by an ECS are to be provided to the Director of Professional Standards, Executive Director of the ASC or the Approved Provider, as detailed above.

## 7. APPEALS

Any person who has made a complaint in accordance with this policy and is dissatisfied with the complaint management, may make an appeal to the Archbishop of the Diocese of Brisbane.

## 8. RELEVANT LEGISLATION, CANON AND RELATED DOCUMENTS

### Child Protection legislation

- *Child Protection Act 1999*

### Education and Care Services legislation

- *Education and Care Services National Law (Queensland) and Regulations*

### Canon

- *Diocesan Governance Canon (Brisbane Diocese)*
- *Professional Standards Canon (Anglican Church of Australia)*

### Related documents

- *2018 Records Retention Schedule for Anglican Schools in the Diocese of Brisbane*
- *Anglican Schools Commission Privacy Policy*
- *Complaints Management in Anglican Education & Care Services Procedures*
- *Diocesan Bullying, Harassment and Discrimination Policy and Procedures*
- *Diocesan Managing Unsatisfactory Performance and/or Behaviour Policy, Procedures and Guide for Managers*
- *Policy and Procedures for Dealing with a Request for Review of Decision or Action of a Commission in the Diocese of Brisbane*
- *Protocol for Dealing with Sexual Misconduct*
- *Child Protection in Anglican Education & Care Services Policy and Procedures*

## 9. POLICY REVIEW

The Anglican Schools Commission, in consultation with Education and Care Services, will review this Policy and Procedures biannually, or as required.