



# Complaints and Concerns Support Guide

## For Students, Families, Staff and Volunteers

### **At Siena, every concern matters.**

We are committed to ensuring that all students, families, staff and volunteers feel safe, respected, heard and supported when raising a concern or complaint. We welcome feedback and concerns because they help us strengthen relationships, improve our practices and maintain a safe and inclusive learning environment. The College follows Brisbane Catholic Education's child-focused complaints processes and safeguarding commitments.

## Our Commitment

When you raise a concern at Siena, we will:

- ✓ Listen respectfully and without judgement
- ✓ Take concerns seriously
- ✓ Respond in a timely and fair manner
- ✓ Keep information confidential where appropriate
- ✓ Explain what will happen next
- ✓ Support those involved throughout the process
- ✓ Ensure no person is disadvantaged for raising a concern
- ✓ Use feedback to improve our school community

## What is a Complaint?

A complaint is any concern, worry or expression of dissatisfaction about something that has happened at school or impacts a student's wellbeing, safety, learning, participation or experience. Complaints may be large or small.

Examples include:

- Student wellbeing concerns
- Bullying or friendship issues
- Learning and assessment concerns
- Communication concerns
- Safeguarding or child protection concerns
- Behaviour concerns
- Cultural safety concerns
- Discrimination, racism or exclusion
- Concerns relating to staff, students, volunteers or school processes

## If You Are a Student

You have the right to speak up if something doesn't feel right.

You can talk to:

- Any trusted teacher
- Homeclass Teacher
- Year Level Pastoral Leader
- Guidance Counsellor
- Student Wellbeing Team (including any Pastoral Leader)
- Executive Leadership Team
- Student Protection Contacts (SPCs)

We will:

- Listen to you
- Thank you for speaking up
- Explain what happens next
- Help you feel safe
- Check in with you during the process
- Involve support people if needed

## If You Are a Parent or Carer

Most concerns can be resolved quickly through respectful conversation.

### Step 1

Speak with the staff member closest to the issue.

This may be:

- Classroom Teacher
- Homeclass Teacher
- Year Level Pastoral Leader
- Executive Leadership Team

### Step 2

If the matter is not resolved, contact a member of the Leadership Team.

### Step 3

If the matter remains unresolved, contact the Principal.

### Step 4

If you are dissatisfied with how the complaint has been handled, a formal review may be requested through Brisbane Catholic Education's complaints process.

## **If You Are a Staff Member or Volunteer**

All staff and volunteers share responsibility for creating a safe environment where concerns are welcomed and acted upon.

If someone raises a concern:

### **Listen**

- Stay calm and respectful.
- Avoid becoming defensive.
- Thank the person for speaking up.

### **Respond**

- Clarify the concern.
- Record important information.
- Follow school procedures.
- Seek support from leaders when required.

### **Report**

- Immediately escalate any safeguarding or child safety concerns in line with BCE procedures.

### **Support**

- Ensure students, families and colleagues feel heard, respected and informed.

## **What Happens After a Complaint Is Raised?**

### **1. Receive and Assess**

We acknowledge the concern and gather the information needed to understand the situation.

### **2. Action and Respond**

We review the concern, speak with those involved where appropriate and gather relevant information.

### **3. Findings and Outcome**

We consider the information available and communicate the outcome, including any actions taken.

### **4. Close and Improve**

The matter is formally closed, and we consider any learnings that may improve our school practices.

## Culturally Safe Support at Siena

At Siena, cultural safety means every person is treated with dignity, respect and belonging. We recognise that children, families and staff come from diverse cultural backgrounds and experiences. Some people may require additional support to feel comfortable raising a concern.

When concerns or complaints are raised, we will:

### **Respect Identity**

- Respect cultural identity, language, beliefs and family structures.
- Recognise the importance of relationships, community and belonging.

### **Offer Choice and Support**

- Ask who the person would like involved.
- Offer access to a trusted support person.
- Consider Community and Cultural Liaison support where appropriate.
- Seek cultural advice when requested or needed.

## Support Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Students and Families

Where appropriate, we will:

- Seek First Nations-led advice and support.
- Involve trusted community members or cultural supports.
- Respect cultural protocols and community relationships.
- Ensure the student and family's voice remains central.

## Trauma-Informed Support

We understand that raising a concern can be difficult.

Our approach is trauma-informed, meaning we:

- Listen with empathy.
- Provide a safe space to tell your story.
- Do not rush conversations.
- Explain processes clearly.
- Offer breaks and follow-up meetings if needed.
- Allow a support person to attend meetings.
- Aim to avoid causing further distress during investigations or discussions.

## What You Can Expect From Us

At Siena, you can expect that:

- Concerns will be heard.
- Students will be believed and supported.
- Complaints will be managed fairly and consistently.
- Communication will be respectful.
- Updates will be provided throughout the process.
- Privacy will be respected.
- Safety and wellbeing will remain our priority.

## What We Ask of Our Community

To help us resolve concerns effectively, we ask community members to:

- Raise concerns early.
- Provide accurate information.
- Communicate respectfully, which includes maintaining confidentiality and sensitivity, upholding the dignity of all.
- Work collaboratively towards resolution.
- Understand that some matters take time to investigate thoroughly.

## Remember

### **If you have a concern, please speak up.**

At Siena Catholic College, every student, family member, staff member and volunteer has the right to be heard, respected and supported. Together we create a community where concerns are addressed with fairness, compassion, cultural safety and care.

### **Key Message for ALL Students:**

*"If something doesn't feel right, tell someone. We will listen, support you and help keep you safe."*