

COMPLAINTS POLICY & PROCEDURE

POLICY

Staff, students, parents/ guardians or members of the wider community have the right to submit a complaint if they wish to express discontent against another person or make a complaint about an Indie School process or system. In order to ensure that complaints are dealt with in a timely manner, we have implemented a complaints process that is based on procedural fairness. If you are unhappy with the outcome of a complaint you will be afforded a right of review.

Definition: ‘an expression of discontent, regret, pain, censure, resentment, or grief; against another person or against the systems set by the Indie School’.

This policy and procedure is relevant to all complaints/grievances arising in but not limited to the following situations:

- Student wishes to raise a complaint against another Student
- Student wishes to raise a complaint against the Indie School
- Student wishes to raise a complaint about a Third Party
- Indie School staff wishes to raise complaint about a Third Party
- Staff wishes to raise a complaint about another Staff member or a Student
- Parent or Guardian wishes to raise a complaint against the Indie School
- Member of the Community/Public wishes to raise a complaint against the Indie School

What matters are not dealt with under this policy?

There are specific complaint procedures in place for the following matters:

- Child protection issues (i.e. if the complaint is about alleged inappropriate physical contact, sexual misconduct, neglect, or psychologically harmful conduct by an adult towards any child or young person. All such complaints should be made directly to the Head of School or Executive Principal.

POLICY FRAMEWORK

Through this policy the Indie School will:

- Endeavour to increase the level of satisfaction and improve the relationship between the Independent School, parents, guardians and the wider community.
- Improve the level of parent satisfaction with the Indie School, and the relationship of parents, guardians and families with the school and teachers.
- Respect and recognise the innate dignity of each person in any way involved with the School.
- Recognise the rights of a person who is the subject of a complaint (the respondent).
- Protect the confidentiality of both you and the respondent.
- Recognise and protect your right to comment and complain.
- Provide an efficient, fair and accessible mechanism for prompt investigation and resolution of complaints in accordance with the principles of natural justice.
- Ensure, so far as is reasonably practicable, information is available on the complaints handling process.
- Enable the nature of complaints to be monitored to improve the quality of services by identifying and rectifying practices that may be impeding the quality of services.
- Ensure, as far as is reasonably practicable, that the complaint handling process is transparent and comprehensive.

COMPLAINTS PROCESS

We expect that complaints may be resolved wherever possible at the lowest level of management necessary for their proper resolution. The Principal, therefore, will not be directly involved in the resolution of those complaints which are more appropriately handled by others in the Indie School (Head of School and/or Executive Principal).

- If you are a parent with a complaint about a student other than your own child you should raise it with the Head of School.
- If you are a student or parent with a complaint about a member of staff, the issue should first be discussed with the relevant teacher or the Head of School.
- If you are a student with a complaint about another student you should raise the issue with the Teacher, Welfare Officer or the Head of School.
- Complaints around Indie School policies and procedures should be raised with the Head of School in the first instance.
- Complaints about the Head of School should be raised with the Executive Principal.
- Complaints about the Executive Principal should be raised with the Principal/CEO.
- If a student, parent or guardian or staff member is experiencing any difficulties, they are encouraged to discuss their concerns with the Head of School. Teachers, Welfare Officers or administrative staff will make themselves available at a mutually convenient time.
- If you wish to make a formal complaint you are required to complete a Complaints and Appeals Form, which may be accessed via the Indie School administration office or Indie School website. Once the form has been completed, the form should be submitted to the Head of School (or Executive Principal/Principal) for actioning.
- You may ask for assistance to put your complaint in writing.
- If required, you have the right to have a third party assist you through the Complaints Process, this may be due to language barriers or simply at the request of the complainant.

Following is the process for managing complaints:

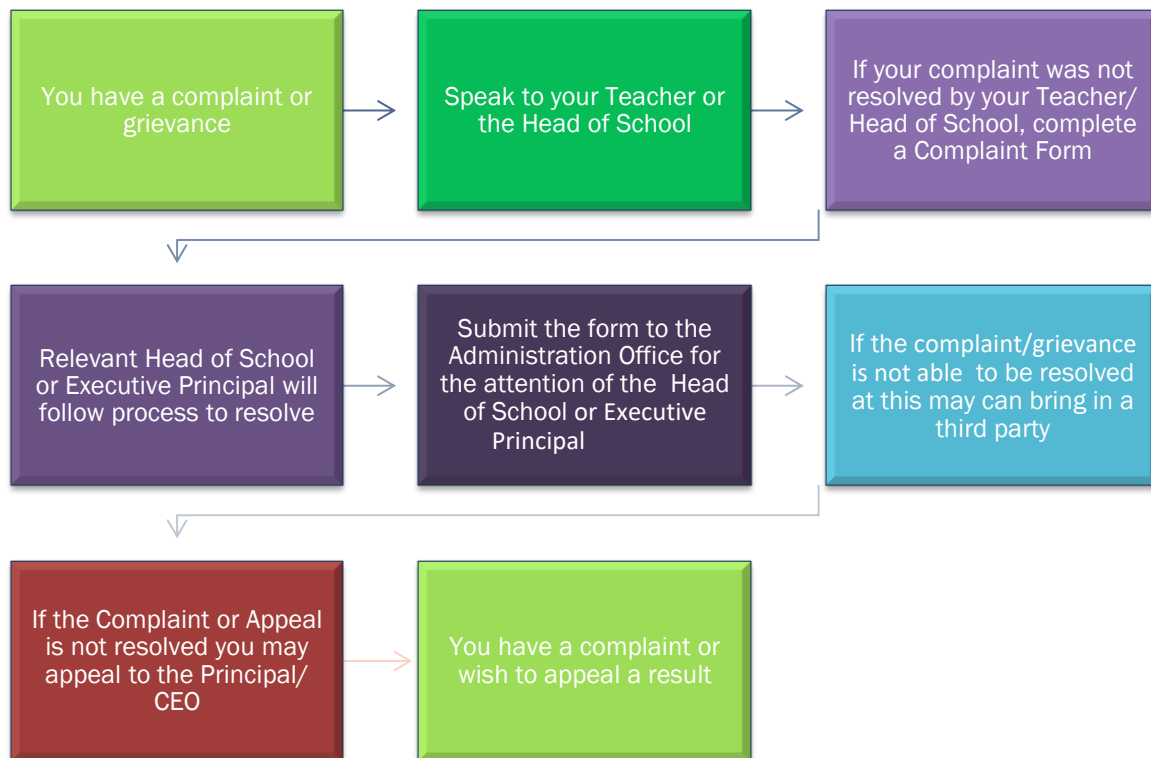
- Formal complaint is received from the complainant to the Indie School.
- If not already submitted with the complaint, a Complaints and Appeals Form is completed and submitted to the relevant Head of School, Executive Principal or Principal.
- A written acknowledgement of receipt of the Complaints and Appeals Form will be forwarded to the complainant following receipt by the relevant Head of School, Executive Principal or Principal.
- The complaint is discussed with all parties involved in the issue, in order to find a solution agreeable to all parties.
- Complaints will be kept confidential, in order to protect the complainants.
- All Complaints and Appeals Form are to be tabled by the Head of School or Executive Principal and reviewed at the monthly Quality and Compliance Meetings. Details of complaints of a sensitive nature are not disclosed.
- The relevant Head of School or Executive Principal is to follow the process on the Complaints and Appeals Form for the process under 'Recommended Action Required for Improvement'.
 - An initial meeting should be held within 7 days.
 - If further investigation is required, this should be completed within 60 calendar days.

Each Appellant:

1. Has an opportunity to formally present his or her case.
2. Is given a written statement of the complaint outcomes, including reasons for the decision.
3. If a solution cannot be found the matter is brought before more senior management for resolution, agreeable to all parties.
4. If the Head of School is party to the grievance, they will not take part in any discussions or decisions made and the matter will be referred to the Executive Principal or Principal.
5. If a solution has not been reached to the benefit of all parties the complainant has the right to request a review by an independent party, who is not part of the Indie School.
6. The Indie School is responsible for acting upon the subject of any complaint found to be substantiated.
7. Complaints and Appeals Forms received are to be entered onto the Complaints and Appeals Register.
8. If the Indie School determines that the complaint process cannot be finalised within 60 calendar days the Indie School Head of School, Executive Principal or Principal will:
 - a. Confirm this in writing to the complainant, including reasons why more than 60 calendar days is required.
 - b. Will regularly update the complainant or appellant on the progress of the matter.

This procedure does not limit your right to use other available agencies and processes, such as the Privacy Commissioner, the Ombudsman, the workplace regulator or legal processes.

COMPLAINTS FLOWCHART



Complaints and Appeals Form

The *Complaints and Appeals Form* is accessible from the website or you can contact the Indie School Administration Office to obtain a copy of the form.

Complaints and Appeals Register

Records of complaints, interviews and other documentation relating to a complaint investigated at the school will be kept at the school in a restricted access file. These records must be kept permanently.

RELATED LEGISLATION, POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

- *Anti-Bullying Policy*
- *Child Safety Policy*
- *Enrolment Policy*
- *Pastoral Care Policy*
- *Work Health and Safety Policy*

POLICY REVIEW

The policy will be reviewed not less frequently than once every three years.

COMPLAINTS FORM

Complainant Name			TYPE OF COMPLAINT	
	Date Submitted			<input type="checkbox"/> Student to Student
	Type of Complainant (Please tick)			<input type="checkbox"/> Student to Staff
	<input type="checkbox"/> Staff	<input type="checkbox"/> Work placement Supervisor		<input type="checkbox"/> Staff to Student
	<input type="checkbox"/> Student	<input type="checkbox"/> Agency	<input type="checkbox"/> Staff to Staff	
	<input type="checkbox"/> Teacher/Trainer	<input type="checkbox"/> Member of the Public	<input type="checkbox"/> Student to work placement supervisor	
	<input type="checkbox"/> Parent/Guardian		<input type="checkbox"/> Parent/Guardian	
Form submitted to Other party/s involved			<input type="checkbox"/> Agency	
C&A Register No			<input type="checkbox"/> Public to Indie School	

Note to Students: Appeals must be lodged within 7 days of initial result being determined. Refer to the Complaints & Appeals Policy in the Student Handbook for procedure. **APPEALS:** Have you discussed this matter with your Head of School in an attempt to reach a decision? **Yes/No**

details of COMPLAINT/GREIVANCE/APPEAL

Please outline details of your complaint here: *(if you require more writing space please attach separate paperwork to this document)*

Signed By: _____

Date: _____

 Form submitted to Head of School or Executive Principal

Date: _____

RECOMMENDED ACTION REQUIRED FOR IMPROVEMENT

Initial Meeting: (within 7 days)

- Complaint raised**
- Initial meeting held to discuss with all parties involved in the complaint, in order to find a solution agreeable to all parties.**
- Solution found and remedied (Please continue to Appeal Outcomes section)**

Further investigation required: (within 60 calendar days)

- Referral to Executive Principal or nominated person.**
- Referred to a third party/panel**
- Referral to other services (i.e. counseling services)**
- Referral to government body (i.e. police, hospital)**
- Referral to funding body**

The Indie School is responsible for acting upon the subject of any complaint/appeal found to be substantiated.

appeal outcomes**Action/Response Taken By:**
Date:
feedback from complainant

- Satisfied with outcome
- Dissatisfied with outcome – Further action required
- Matter was dealt with within a reasonable timeframe Yes/No

Other comment:

Complainant Signature:
Date:

ACTION/MONITORING	Date	Action taken by
<input type="checkbox"/> Opportunity for Improvement implemented		
<input type="checkbox"/> Actioned at Quality & Compliance Meeting		
<input type="checkbox"/> Policies and procedures updated and implemented		
<input type="checkbox"/> Filed into Complaints Register		
<input type="checkbox"/> Cross-referenced with Database		

Please submit this form to the Head of School or Executive Principal