



Sources of Authority

CECWA	Community
Executive Directives	Dispute and Complaint Resolution

AIM

St Marcellin Catholic College aims to serve as a model for all within Western Australia who seek to create genuine communities. Such communities are always founded upon shared commitment to the common good (Mandate, 6).

On occasions there may be a disagreement with a decision and a dispute or complaint may arise within the College. The interactions and protocols of St Marcellin Catholic College emphasise the sacredness of human life and the dignity of the individual.

St Marcellin Catholic College is committed to ensuring that disputes and complaints are dealt with fairly, objectively and in a timely manner, and that processes reflect the principles of participation, co-responsibility and subsidiarity.

The College is committed to providing a considered response to any informal or formal dispute / complaint between any parties, or their action, directly associated with the College.

SCOPE

These procedures apply to all members of the College community, including visitors, contractors and members of the wider community.

DEFINITIONS

Complaint means an expression of dissatisfaction with Catholic Education policies, procedures, decisions, omissions, quality of service, staff or student behaviour.

Dispute means a conflict regarding a right, claim, or demand on one side, met by contrary claims or allegations on the other.

Procedural Fairness means that a matter has been resolved to the satisfaction of Catholic Education in Western Australia with respect to the paramount importance of the student(s).

Students are defined as children and young people enrolled in schools and early learning and care services.



Procedures

All decisions are to reflect the paramount importance of the student(s).

1. Any person may complain orally or in writing about any matter arising from the operations of St Marcellin Catholic College
2. Complainants are personally responsible and liable for the content of their complaints.
3. It is preferable that the complaint is verifiable, however if a complaint or any other information of unknown origin (i.e. anonymous) provides information that would cause the Principal concern, it shall be considered by the Principal so that the appropriate course of action can be determined.
4. Disputes and complaints will be managed in accordance with the Principle of Subsidiarity, which requires that nothing should be done by a higher authority, agency or level that could be done as well or better by a lower one.
5. Disputes and complaints, and the resolution of such, contribute to continuous learning and improvement so that the potential and opportunity for incidents to be repeated are minimised.
6. Any review of a dispute or complaint will be based on procedural fairness.
7. Information in a complaint shall only be disclosed to those parties who have a need to know to investigate and resolve the complaint.
8. Once a decision has been made, parties may request a review of the decision in accordance with Procedures, including escalating the dispute or complaint to the Executive Director of Catholic Education in Western Australia.
9. Information about the process for dealing with disputes and complaints shall be made available via the College website.
10. A dispute or complaint can be made by any person regarding the provision of education or related matter. Depending on the nature and level of the complaint, it should be made in writing. Where an immediate party cannot be identified, such as if it is anonymous or from an unverifiable source, the information shall be assessed and duly considered.
11. Where there is an appropriate Catholic Education Commission of Western Australia (CECWA) policy statement that provides a specific mechanism for addressing the dispute or complaint, that policy statement shall be followed.
12. Where there is a binding legislative or regulatory mechanism (including an Enterprise Bargaining Agreement) that addresses the issue raised in the dispute or complaint, that legislative or regulatory mechanism shall be followed.
13. When a dispute or complaint arises, the immediate parties involved should attempt to resolve the issue in the first instance.
14. Parties may involve a support person(s) to assist them in resolving the dispute or complaint.



15. Should a complainant be dissatisfied with the resolution as a result of involvement of the immediate parties, or if there are unique circumstances, the matter can be referred to the next level by the complainant, for example, to the College Principal.
16. The Principal is responsible for the resolution of disputes or complaints within the school referred to them by the immediate parties, in accordance with procedural fairness.
17. Where a dispute or complaint is about the Principal and there is no likelihood that it can be resolved directly with the Principal, the immediate parties may refer the dispute or complaint to the Executive Director of Catholic Education.
18. A Principal shall be mindful of managing the wider effects that a dispute or complaint may have on the workplace beyond its resolution.
19. The Principal may request external assistance and expertise (including mediation), including the involvement of the CEWA Employment and Community Relations Team to assist in the resolution of a dispute or complaint.
20. The Principal shall inform the complainant and relevant parties of the outcome of their decision.
21. The Principal shall maintain appropriate records of the relevant particulars used to make a decision in response to any formal dispute or complaint. Where applicable this will include any statements made by the parties involved.
22. Any party may request a review of the Principal's decision, in writing, to the Executive Director of Catholic Education.
23. The dispute or complaint shall be acknowledged within three days.
24. The Executive Director of Catholic Education shall ensure a formal examination and investigation of the complaint and/or areas of disputation.
25. The parties to the dispute or complaint shall be notified of the finding(s) of the dispute or complaint, including the basis of the finding(s).
26. The Principal/CEWA shall maintain appropriate records of the relevant particulars used to make a decision in response to any formal dispute or complaint. Where applicable these will include any statements made by the parties involved.
27. An individual has the right to make an appeal to the Minister for Education regarding a dispute or complaint (*School Education Act 1999*). An appeal will only be heard on a breach in process and will not be a re-examination of the merits of the case. A person may make a complaint to an external body or tribunal at any time. The relevant person (i.e., the Principal) may choose to suspend addressing the complaint until the external body or tribunal rules on the complaint, or the external complaint is directed back to Catholic Education for resolution.

College Complaints Handling Procedure

2024.v1



St Marcellin
CATHOLIC COLLEGE

Authorised by	Anita O'Donohue	Signature	
Effective Date	2025	Date	19/12/2024
Next Review	2028		



- i. Before any enforcement proceedings are taken, such as a Property Seizure and Sale Order, Earnings Appropriation Order, or any other enforcement action, including the launching of a caveat on a property, the College Advisory Council shall obtain written approval from the Executive Director of Catholic Education.
- ii. The College shall keep comprehensive documentation of each attempt to resolve the problems of outstanding fees.
- iii. Under no circumstances will a child enrolled at St Marcellin Catholic College be refused on-going enrolment because their parents have not paid fees.

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