central coast montessori
EDUCATION FOR LIFE

POLICY	PROCEDURE
Policy Name	Complaints Handling Policy
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Policy Category	Staff (3.2) Safe and Supportive Environment (3.6) Policies and Procedures in place that Provide for Student Welfare (3.6.2)
Related Procedures	Complaints and Grievance Resolution Policy – Procedural Fairness Complaints and Grievance Handling Resolutions Procedure – Procedural Fairness Complaints or Allegations of Staff Misconduct Procedure Staff Code of Conduct
Date of Issue / Last Revision	*30 May 2020* *17 March 2022* *20 May 2025*
Date Set for Review	*May 2026*

Complaints Handling Policy and Procedure

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 contact details below. 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 1.2. 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.

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.

Procedure - Raising a Complaint

<u>The Complainant</u>
Informal complaints 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 a complaint can be made to the Principal. Any complaint about the conduct of a staff member should be raised directly with the Principal in the first instance.

Should the matter not be resolved through informal processes, the complainant may raise the matter formally with the School. A formal complaint can be made in writing to the Principal, via email principal@ccm.nsw.edu.au .

Complaints Handling Policy and Procedure (continued):

Where a person wishes to make a formal complaint concerning the Principal the complaint should be made in writing to the Chair of the Board, via the Board Secretary, email board@ccm.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 Chair of the Board.

The School

The Principal will generally acknowledge receipt of a formal complaint in writing as soon as practicable.

Handling Complaints

Assessing a Complaint

The Principal generally will assess the complaint and determine:

- whether the complaint is one to be addressed under this policy or is a staff grievance or reportable conduct matter which are dealt with by the relevant policies; 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 Ombudsman, Police, Family and Community Services or other relevant authorities should the complaint relate to possible unlawful conduct or other reportable matters.

Managing a Formal Complaint

The Principal generally will manage a formal 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 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 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.