



- Make an appointment to talk with the teacher. If your concern is about the conduct of a teacher, make the effort to speak with the teacher concerned so they can reflect and respond. If it doesn't resolve, speak to their Line Manager and/or the relevant Head of School. If your concern relates to a non-teaching staff member, try speaking to the staff member first so they can have an opportunity to respond. If it's unresolved, you may prefer to discuss the matter with the non-teaching staff member's line manager.

## PURPOSE

A commitment to responding positively to complaints characterises South Coast Baptist College. In particular, the partnership between parents and the College is a strong and reliable feature of our college community. Parents and other school community members must be confident that staff will listen and respond to their needs and concerns.

We have an 'Open Door' policy at South Coast Baptist College, where parents are valued and involved with the school and are encouraged to voice their concerns. It is better to have a direct complaint to a member of staff than to have parents sharing their dissatisfaction with others.

This Policy sets out the process for students, parents, members of the community, volunteers and College staff to have enquiries, concerns, and complaints addressed by the staff, the management team, the Executive Team, and/or the Chairperson of The Board.

Resolution of complaints will be addressed by the teacher, management, the College's Executive Team, and/or the College Board. Complaints of various kinds may also be lodged outside the College with agencies such as the Equal Opportunity Commission, the Western Australian Police Service and the Crime & Corruption Commission.

The following principles apply to the management of all complaints:

- The process is accessible to all aggrieved parties and is underpinned by a commitment to co-operate on the part of South Coast Baptist College staff.
- Procedural fairness is afforded to all parties.
- The subject of the complaint is informed of the substance of the complaint.
- Vexatious, trivial or previously finalised issues are not pursued.
- Warranted investigation will be pursued

- In all matters, the educational wellbeing of students is the first priority and guiding imperative.
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# ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

Classroom teachers are responsible for:

- Maintaining confidentiality in dealing with each matter.
- Maintaining records of meetings and agreed outcomes.
- Resolving parent concerns and complaints where possible.
- Communicating outcomes of parent concerns and complaints to a member of the Management Team where appropriate.
- Referring parent enquiries, concerns and complaints to a member of the Management Team where appropriate.

The College's Executive Team are responsible for:

- Maintaining confidentiality and impartiality in dealing with each matter.
- Ensuring, wherever appropriate, that concerns and complaints are resolved at the school level.
- Developing and implementing a process for registering, responding to and managing parent enquiries, concerns and complaints.
- Ensuring the process for managing complaints includes recording and monitoring of complaints and their outcomes to enable improvements to be identified and implemented.
- Ensuring that enquiries, concerns, and complaint procedures are communicated clearly to parents and community members.
- Ensuring that school policies and procedures are modified, where necessary, to address areas of concern.
- Ensuring that complainants and respondents are aware that they can have a friend or adviser present during any discussion.
- Referring the complaint, where appropriate, to the Chairperson of the College Board for further resolution or management.

The College Board are responsible for:

- Providing advice and support to the College's Executive Team.
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The College will:

- Maintain confidentiality at all times.
- Assess the seriousness of the complaint.
- Acknowledge the enquiry, concern or complaint with a prompt written reply, even if a resolution is not available at this stage. As soon as possible, clarify your understanding of the problem, identify action and timelines in writing and include a name and contact number. Respond to all issues raised.
- Take action within agreed or appropriate timelines.
- Record the complaint, the action and the outcome.
- Review the situation and confirm with the student/parent/staff member that the matter has been resolved.

The primary focus of mediation is to reach a fair and workable agreement with the parties in conflict. It should be a voluntary process with parties agreeing to mediation and taking responsibility for making decisions throughout the process.

## Pre-Mediation

The process of pre-mediation involves:

- The mediator meets with each party individually and listens to their perspective on the situation.
- Checking the person's 'emotional readiness' to participate in mediation.
- Discussing and finalising the agenda for the mediation; what are the key concerns and what requests do they wish to make of the other party? How best might they phrase these concerns and requests to ensure the best possible outcome?
- Anticipating what the other party might raise and how the individual will respond.
- Discussing the ground rules for successful mediation.
- Seeking commitment to the mediation process.

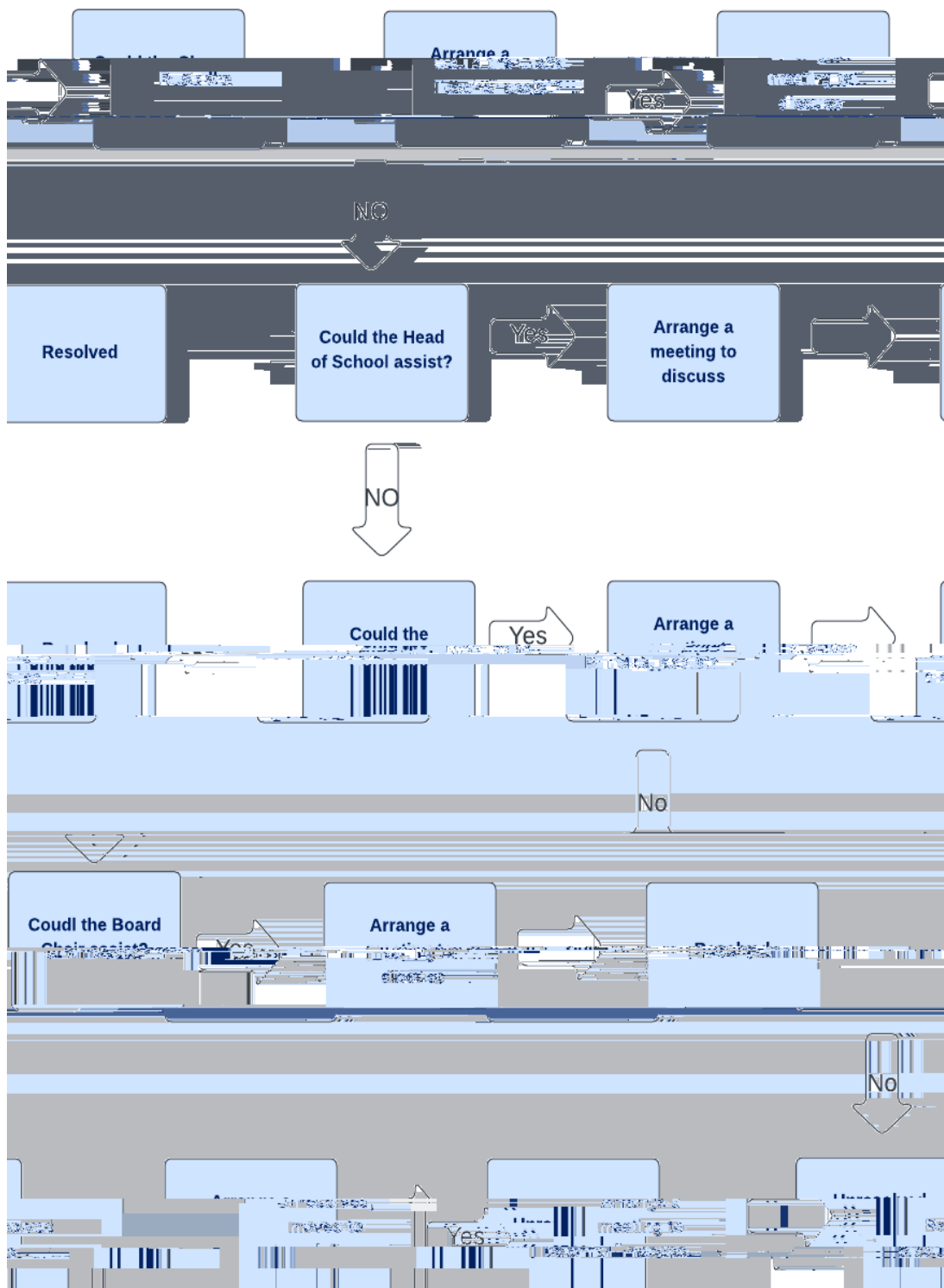
If parties are in agreement, then mediation proceeds. Only two people are generally involved in mediation. Therefore, with three parties, either two or three mediators will be required.

## Mediation

- Brief meetings are held with each party immediately prior to joint meeting to confirm the parties' readiness to proceed and that agenda is still appropriate.
- Mediator introduces the process to the parties.
- Ground rules developed and/or reinforced.
- Each party presents a statement or request from the agenda in turn and clarifies as necessary.
- Parties develop options to address/resolve the point being discussed (only move on to next point when some agreement or understanding is demonstrated).
- A written document is developed stating the outcome of the mediation, the agreement reached between the parties and recommendations for further action.
- A review period is agreed.

If appropriate, the line manager can be invited in at the end of the mediation meeting to be advised of the outcome, and discuss their role in monitoring the agreement to clarify any outstanding organisational issues.

Figure 1: Complaint Resolution Flow Chart – Specific to Classroom Matters

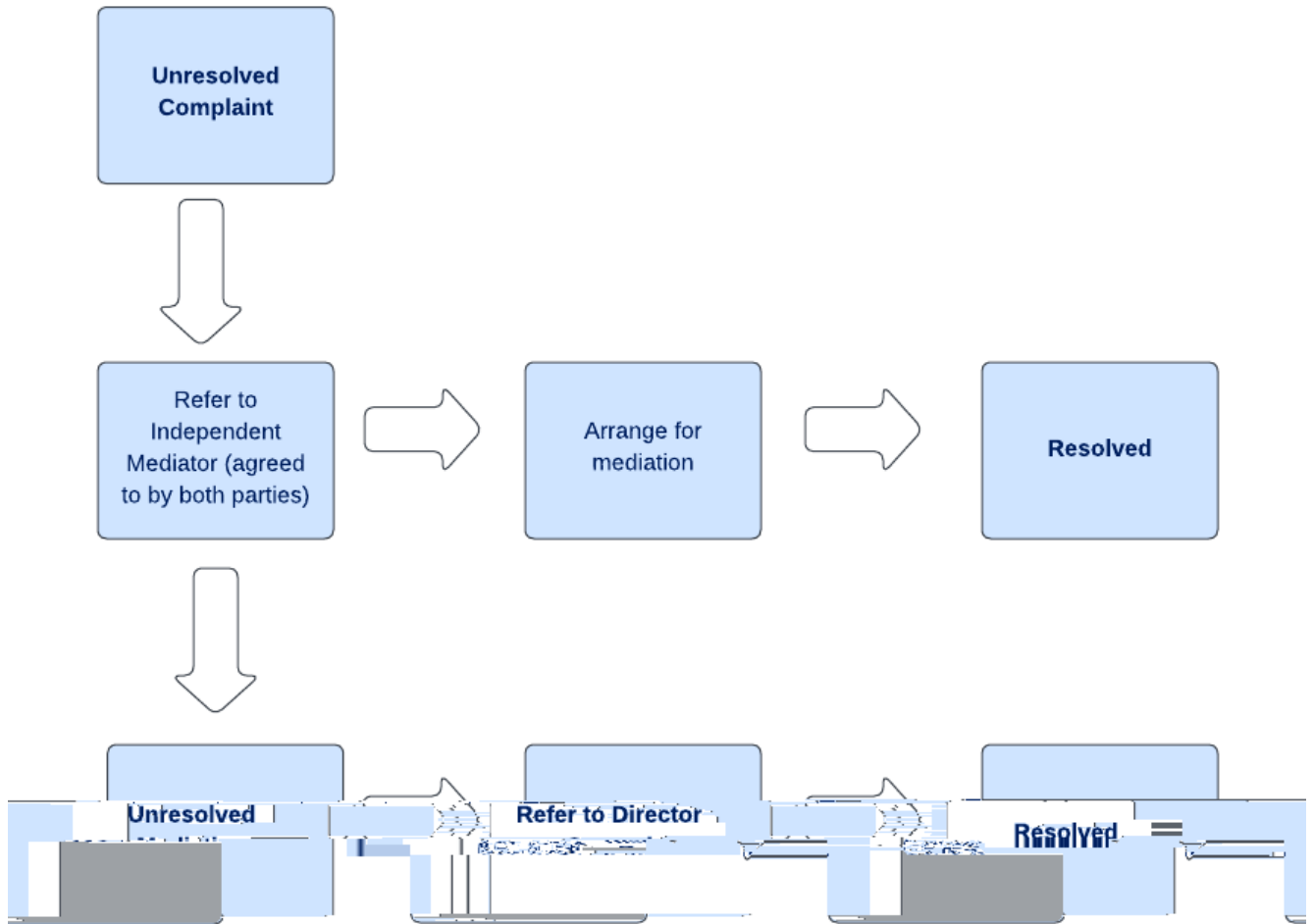


Note: If the complaint/grievance is between the Head of School and Principal or the complaint involves the Principal, the matter is to be placed in the hands of the Board Chairperson.



At times there may be a decision to refer a matter to the Equal Opportunity Commission, the Western Australian Police Service, Child Protection Agencies and the Crime & Corruption Commission. In such instances the Principal will be part of the decision making and action taken expediently.

Figure 2: Complaint Resolution Flow Chart – Specific to Unresolved Complaints



The Director General of the Department of Education is responsible for ensuring that the school observes the registration standards, including the standard of its complaints handling system. Any student, parent or community member is entitled to contact the Director General with concerns about how the school has dealt with a complaint. Information is available on the Department of Education website. While the Director General may consider whether the school has breached the registration standards, the Director General does not have power to intervene in a complaint or override the school's decision.

# IMPLEMENTATION

A person may complain verbally or in writing to a Teacher, Head of School, the Principal, or in writing to the Chairperson of the Board, PO Box 8465, Warnbro, WA 6169

A person lodging a complaint may choose to have a support person present.

A person making a written complaint must provide his or her name, address and details of the complaint. To submit a complaint, please use the following link: [Feedback & Complaints](#) or find the link on our College website.

Where the complaint involves possible criminal implications and child protection issues, the matter will be referred to the appropriate investigating body (Police, Child Protection Agencies).

A person who has made a complaint may withdraw the complaint at any time. A written complaint should preferably be withdrawn in writing. However, a signed and dated notation on the complaint by an employee that it has been withdrawn by the complainant will suffice. A verbal complaint may be withdrawn verbally and a notation made to that effect.

The staff member who received the complaint is to give notice in writing to any parties affected by the complaint that it has been withdrawn. Complaints that warrant investigation must be pursued even though the complaint has been withdrawn.

When a teacher, Head of School, and/or an Executive Team member receives a complaint, that officer will implement strategies to resolve the complaint, if appropriate to do so. An Executive Team member may provide advice to the complainant on possible strategies to resolve the matter.

Employees who are the subject of a complaint are to be informed of the substance of the complaint within three (3) business days. Complaints against employees should be sufficiently detailed so as to enable the

All written complaints lodged with an Executive Team member will be acknowledged in writing within five (5) business days and shall include what action is being taken to remedy or resolve the nature of the complaint. There after the complainant will be informed of subsequent actions should this not breach any other policy, law or endanger the welfare of others. A written report will be provided to the complainant signed by the Executive Team member.

An Executive Team member can reject a complaint that in their opinion is vexatious, trivial or without substance; or does not warrant further action taking into account the provisions of this Policy. Details of these complaints should be recorded in case there is a pattern of complaints that warrant consideration at a later date.

## SOURCE OF OBLIGATIONS

WA Registration Standards (Standard 9)

National Principles for Child Safe Organisation. (Principles 6 & 9)

## POLICY VERSION CONTROL

Version Number	Document Owner	Executive
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