



# Kutta Mulla Gorinna Inc

## COMPLAINTS HANDLING POLICY

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# Kutta Mulla Gorinna Inc

## *POLICIES AND PROCEDURES HANDBOOK*

Section:	1 - Student Learning and Welfare	Pages:
Item:	Policy – Complaints Handling Policy	Item No:
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### **PURPOSE**

The purpose of this policy is to ensure that student, parent and employee complaints and disputes are dealt with in a responsive, efficient, effective and fair way.

### **SCOPE**

This policy covers students, parents and employees, including fulltime, parttime, permanent, fixed-term and casual employees as well as contractors, volunteers and people undertaking work experience or vocational placements.

### **REFERENCES**

- Education (Accreditation of Non-State Schools) Regulations 2017
- Australian Education Regulations 2013
- Fair Work Act 2009
- Work Health and Safety Act 2011 (Qld)
- Privacy Act 1988 (Cth)
- Anti-Discrimination Act 1991 (Qld)
- Australian Human Rights Commission Act 1986 (Cth)
- Sex Discrimination Act 1984 (Cth)
- Age Discrimination Act 2004 (Cth)
- Disability Discrimination Act 1992 (Cth)
- Racial Discrimination Act 1975 (Cth)
- Kutta Mulla Gorinna School Complaints Handling Procedure
- Kutta Mulla Gorinna School Work Health and Safety Policy
- Kutta Mulla Gorinna School Anti-Discrimination Policy
- Kutta Mulla Gorinna School Sexual Harassment Policy

- [Kutta Mulla Gorinna School Disability Policy](#)
- [Kutta Mulla Gorinna School Workplace Bullying Policy](#)
- [Kutta Mulla Gorinna School Privacy Policy](#)

## **POLICY STATEMENT**

Kutta Mulla Gorinna School is committed to ensuring that student, parent and employee complaints are dealt with in a responsive, efficient and effective and fair way.

Kutta Mulla Gorinna School views complaints as part of an important feedback and accountability process.

Kutta Mulla Gorinna School acknowledges that the right of students, parents and employees to complain when dissatisfied with an action, inaction or decision of the school and the school encourages constructive criticism and complaints.

Kutta Mulla Gorinna School recognises that time spent on handling complaints can be an investment in better service to students, parents and employees.

### **COMPLAINTS THAT MAY BE RESOLVED UNDER THIS POLICY**

Kutta Mulla Gorinna School encourages students, parents and employees to lodge promptly any concerns regarding sexual harassment, child protection, discrimination, workplace bullying and privacy breaches as well as more general complaints that include areas such as:

- The school, its employees or students having done something wrong.
- The school, its employees or students having failed to do something they should have done.
- The school, its employees or students having acted unfairly or impolitely.
- Issues related to learning programs, assessment and reporting of student learning.
- Issues related to communication with students or parents or between employees.
- Issues related to school fees and payments.
- General administrative issues.

Student complaints may be brought by students or by parents on behalf of their children, as appropriate in the circumstances.

### **ISSUES OUTSIDE THIS POLICY**

The following matters are outside the scope of this policy and should be managed as follows:

- Child protection concerns or risks of harm to children should be dealt with in accordance with the law and the schools child protection policy.
- Student bullying complaints should be dealt with under the Student Bullying Policy or Positive Behaviour Management Policy.
- Student discipline matters, including matters involving suspension or expulsion, should be dealt with under the Discipline Policy.
- Employee complaints related to their employment should be directed to their supervisor.
- Student or employee violence or criminal matters should be directed to the Executive School Director who will involve the Police as appropriate.
- Formal legal proceedings.

## **COMPLAINTS HANDLING PRINCIPLES**

Kutta Mulla Gorinna School is committed to managing complaints according to the following principles:

- complaints will be resolved with as little formality and disruption as possible
- complaints will be taken seriously
- anonymous complaints will be treated on their merit's complaints will be dealt with fairly and objectively and in a timely manner
- Kutta Mulla Gorinna School will determine the appropriate person to deal with the complaint in the first instance. Complaints should be resolved with as little formality and disputation as possible
- mediation, negotiation and informal resolution are optional alternatives
- procedural fairness will be ensured wherever practicable, including the right of interested parties to the complaint to be heard
- confidentiality and privacy will be maintained as much as possible
- all parties to the complaints will be appropriately supported
- Kutta Mulla Gorinna School will give reasonable progress updates
- appropriate remedies will be offered and implemented
- provide a review pathway for parties to the complaint if warranted
- complainants, respondents and people associated with them will not be victimised as a result of lodging the complaints and they will not suffer any other reprisals
- the school will keep records of complaints
- the school's insurer will be informed if a complaint could be connected to an insured risk.

## **RESPONSIBILITIES**

### **SCHOOL**

The school has the following role and responsibilities:

- develop, implement, promote and act in accordance with the school's Complaints Handling Policy and procedures
- appropriately communicate the school's Complaints Handling Policy and procedures to students, parents and employees
- ensure that the Complaints Handling procedures are readily accessible by staff, students and parents
- upon receipt of a complaint, manage the complaint in accordance with the Complaints Handling procedures
- ensure that appropriate support is provided to all parties to a complaint
- take appropriate action to prevent victimisation or action in reprisal against the complainant, respondent or any person associated with them
- appropriately implement remedies
- appropriately train relevant employees
- keep records
- conduct a review/audit of the Complaints Register from time to time
- monitor and report to the governing body on complaints

- report to the school's insurer when that is relevant
- refer to the school's governing body immediately any claim for legal redress.

#### **EMPLOYEE**

At Kutta Mulla Gorinna Inc employees have a responsibility when administering to:

- Attend any training required by Kutta Mulla Gorinna to enable them to safely administer medication
- Administer medication in line with this Policy and administer of medication procedure

#### **ALL PARTIES TO A DISPUTE**

The complainant and respondent both have the following role and responsibilities:

- apply and comply with the school's Complaints Handling Policy and procedures
- lodge the complaint as soon as possible after the issue arises
- expect that the complaint will be dealt with fairly and objectively; in a timely manner; with procedural fairness wherever practicable; that confidentiality and privacy will be maintained as much as possible
- provide complete and factual information in a timely manner
- not provide deliberately false or misleading information
- not make frivolous or vexatious complaints
- act in good faith, and in a calm and courteous manner
- act in a non-threatening manner
- to be appropriately supported
- acknowledge that a common goal is to achieve an outcome acceptable to all parties
- recognise that all parties have rights and responsibilities which must be balanced
- maintain and respect the privacy and confidentiality of all parties
- not victimise or act in reprisal against any party to the dispute or any person associated with them.

#### **EMPLOYEES RECEIVING COMPLAINTS**

Employees receiving complaints have the following role and responsibilities:

- act in accordance with the school's Complaints Handling Policy and procedures
- inform the party lodging the complaint of how complaints can be lodged, when they should be lodged and what information is required
- provide the complainant with information about any support or assistance available to assist them in lodging their complaint
- provide the complainant with a copy of the school's Complaints Handling Policy and procedures
- maintain confidentiality
- keep appropriate records
- to forward complaints to more senior employees, including the Executive School Director, as appropriate
- not victimise or act in reprisal against the complainant, respondent or any person associated with them.

### **LOGGING A COMPLAINT**

A formal complaint must be lodged in writing or via email and can be discussed by contacting our Head Office or arranging an appointment with the Executive School Director. Please include detailed information relating to the complaint so further investigation can be carried out. It's best to include, names, times, location, people involved, specific concerns and also how the complaint may be resolved.

#### **Complaints can be sent to:**

Executive School Director  
Kutta Mulla Gorinna School  
PO Box 265  
Mackay QLD 4740

### **COMPLAINT REFERRAL**

The first point of contact for Complaint Handling will be the Executive School Director. If the complaint relates to the Executive School Director, this should be discussed in the initial contact and the complaint should be address to the Kutta Mulla Gorinna Inc Chairperson.

### **REFERRAL TO THE CHAIRPERSON OF KUTTA MULLA GORINNA INC**

In most cases, the procedure will be that the Executive School Director refers the matter to the Chair of the Board and informs the parents that this stage has been reached. However, a situation may arise where the complaint seems to the parent to have been mishandled by the Senior Management. In those circumstances, the parent should be able to write direct to the Chair of the Board.

The Chair of the Board will discuss the matter fully with the Executive School Director and be provided with relevant documentation. If a briefing is required from a member of staff, this will occur in the presence of the Executive School Director.

The Chair will respond to the parents, notifying them that he/she is reviewing that matter, asking them if they wish to add anything further and providing a date by which they may expect a response.

The Chair may be able to offer a new approach to the matter, and this may satisfy the parents. The Chair's response will be clear and detailed and will offer a meeting if the parents remain troubled.

### **MEETING WITH THE CHAIR OF THE BOARD**

If a meeting is requested, the Chair of the Board will offer to meet the parents at a time convenient to them.

Those involved are:

- the Chair of the Board
- the Executive School Director and, at the most, one other member of staff
- the parents

Parents are encouraged to bring with them a support person who is not involved with the complaint. Legal representation is not appropriate at this stage.

### **REFERRAL TO A CONCILIATION COMMITTEE**

Kutta Mulla Gorinna School may establish a Conciliation Committee if resolution by the Executive School Director and the Chair of the Board has failed. The Conciliation Committee is composed of a convener,

independent of the school, and up to four other members, two of whom will be members of the Board (excluding the Chair).

The Chair of the Board, in consultation with the Executive School Director, decides when to refer a complaint to the Conciliation Committee, and invites the convener to call a meeting.

The Chair of the Board has no further involvement until the convener reports back at the end of the committee's deliberations.

#### Meeting with the Conciliation Committee

Those involved in the meeting are:

- up to five committee members, including the convener.
- the Executive School Director, and possibly a key member of staff; and
- the parent, who are invited to bring a support person, as for the meeting with the Chair of the Board.
- Enough time is committed to the meeting in case it is needed.
- The parents and the Executive School Director are asked in advance whether there are any papers they would like to have considered at the meeting, bearing in mind the need for all to keep proceedings confidential. The papers are copied and distributed before this meeting.
- The convener will emphasise that he or she is concerned to reach a positive conclusion and will invite first the parents, then the Executive School Director to speak. After this, the convener encourages questions and general discussion.
- The convener may find it helpful at some point to invite the Executive School Director, the parents, and their friend to withdraw from the discussion for a time, leaving the Committee alone.
- If more time is required, it may be necessary to convene a second meeting. If so, Committee members must commit themselves to attend, as continuity is essential.
- If a positive solution is reached, the convener will summarise the outcome and confirm the nature of the agreement before the meeting disperses. The agreement will be recorded, copied and circulated as soon as possible.
- At the end of the Committee's deliberations, the convener will make a full report to the Chair of the Board and inform the parents that this is being done. The Chair of the Board would be expected to endorse the Committee's decision.

#### **IMPLEMENTATION**

Kutta Mulla Gorinna School is committed to raising awareness of the process for resolving complaints at the school, including by the development and implementation of this policy and related procedures, and via the clear support and promotion of the policy and procedures.

Kutta Mulla Gorinna School is also committed to appropriately training relevant employees (especially senior staff) on how to resolve complaints in line with this policy and the related procedures.

Kutta Mulla Gorinna School will keep appropriate records of complaints, will monitor complaints and their resolution, and will report on a high-level basis to the school Board on complaint handling at the school.

Kutta Mulla Gorinna School will act to encourage students, parents, and employees to contribute to a healthy school culture where complaints are resolved with as little formality and disruption as possible.