Feedback & Complaint Policy (Students & Parents)

Purpose: The Head of Barker College and the Council of Barker College are committed to the safety of all children and young people in a safe, loving and supportive learning environment. The purpose of this policy is to summarise the obligations on the School to open, constructive and responsive pathways for complaints and feedback from students and parents/guardians/caregivers.

Scope: This Policy applies to parents, guardians and caregivers of currently enrolled students at Barker College and the staff managing student conduct in *School environments* including both physical and online when students are using a Marri Mittigar supplied device under the Schools *Acceptable Use of ICT Agreement*.

Mandatory or specific requirements: This Policy may relate to Child Safety Procedures at Marri Mittigar which serves to guide students and parents on the restorative approach and disciplinary responses to student conduct. Employee, contractor or visitor complaints are referred to under the *Staff Complaints Procedure* and the *Whistleblower Policy*.

Responsibility: The Head of Barker College and Head of Marri Mittigar Campus.

POLICY STATEMENT

1. Marri Mittigar views complaints and feedback from our School community as a valuable source of information to continually learn and improve relationships, policy, practice and systems.

2. The School recognises the importance of having a process that fosters a culture of disclosure whereby concerns can be raised and then managed in a supportive, cooperative and respectful manner, with confidentiality and sensitivity applied.

3. The School recognises the Child Safety Standards including the need, when appropriate, to involve students in decisions that affect them and to provide a child-focused process that gives students a voice.

4. Parents are to uphold the Parent Charter and maintain a mutually respectful and beneficial relationship with the School as concerns and feedback are considered and are to uphold the enrolment agreement terms at all times.

5. The School will offer students and parents a voice to be heard and encourage cooperation between all parties to keep the resolution of a complaint issues student and future focused.

DEFINITIONS UNDER THE POLICY

6. Complaint is an expression of dissatisfaction made to or about the School related to its services, staff or the handling of a complaint, where a response or resolution is explicitly or implicitly expected or legally required (Adapted from AS/NZS Guidelines for Complaint Management in Organisations 10002:2014).
7. Complainant is a student or parent/guardian/caregiver of a currently enrolled student at Barker College.

8. Respondent is any person against whom a complaint/grievance is brought. If this is a staff member this may be referred under workplace procedures under the *Staff Code of Conduct or associated policies.*

9. **Procedural Fairness** also known as natural justice, are the principles developed to ensure as far as

practicable, that decision-making is fair and reasonable. It involves the Head of Barker College or a delegate decision-maker informing people of the case against them or their interests, giving them the right to be heard and not having a personal interest in the outcome and acting only on the basis of logically probative evidence.

10. **Whistleblower Disclosure** is a disclosure made by a board member, staff member, a person who supplies goods or services to the school, including a volunteer, an employer of a supplier or a relative of any of these people:

    10.1. involves alleged misconduct, an improper state of affairs or circumstances, or illegal activity, and
    10.2. is made to a senior staff member, or officer of the school, the school's auditor or a person who the school has authorised to collect such disclosures.
    10.3. Reference to the School's Whistleblower Policy for more information

RELATED POLICIES

11. Complaints about reportable conduct will be addressed in accordance with the school's Child Protection Policy.
12. Complaints regarding a grievance between students will be addressed in accordance with the school's Student Handbook & Promoting Positive Relationships Framework See 5. below.
13. Complaints regarding a grievance between staff members about work matters, including work relationships and decisions made by other staff members which impact on their work, will be addressed in accordance with the School's Staff Complaints Policy.
14. Complaints regarding unlawful discrimination, harassment or bullying between staff are generally addressed in accordance with the School's Respect@Barker Prevention of Sexual Harassment in the Workplace Policy and/or the Guide to Bullying and Harassment Prevention.
15. Complaints regarding teacher accreditation processes will be addressed in accordance with the School's Teacher Accreditation Procedures.

RAISING A COMPLAINT

16. 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 Head of Marri Mittigar Campus

17. Any complaint about the conduct of a staff member should be raised directly with the Deputy Head People & Culture in the first instance via the email hr@barker.nsw.edu.au

18. Should the matter not be resolved between the parties directly in the first instance, the complainant may raise the matter with the School. A complaint can be made in writing to the Office of the Head of Barker College via the email HoBC@barker.nsw.edu.au

19. Where a person wishes to make a complaint concerning the conduct of the Head of Barker College, the complaint should be made in writing to the Chair of the Council of Barker College. This pathway refers to complaints about bias in procedure, conflict of interest concerns, fraud and reportable conduct allegations in relation to the Head of Barker College. In this situation, the references in this Policy relating to the role of the Head of Barker College should be read as references to the Chair of the Council of Barker College.

Marri Mittigar

ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

20. Parents who have child safety or welfare complaint or concerns are directed to the Head of Marri Mittigar. **Community complaints can be reported the email marrimittigar@barker.nsw.edu.au**

21. The Child Safety Team includes the Head of Barker College and a dedicated senior team of professionals able to deal with reports and disclosures in a confidential and rigorous process informed by internal policies and procedures.

ASSESSING A COMPLAINT

22. The Head of Barker College or delegate, generally will assess the complaint and determine:

    22.1. whether the complaint is one to be addressed under this Policy or is a staff grievance or reportable conduct matter, or another matter identified in Section 2 which are dealt with by the relevant policies; and

    22.2. the priority of the complaint in accordance with the urgency and/or seriousness of the matter raised; and

    22.3. whether the School may be required to report the matter to the Office of the Children's Guardian, Police, Department of Communities and Justice or other relevant authorities should the complaint relate to possible unlawful conduct or other reportable matters.

MANAGING A COMPLAINT

23. The Head of Marri Mittigar generally will manage a complaint by advising the complainant of the likely steps that will be undertaken by the School in relation to the complaint;

    23.1. If appropriate, advising the relevant parties of the complaint at the relevant time and providing them with an opportunity to respond;
    23.2. Collecting any additional information the School considers necessary to assess the complaint;
    23.3. Making a decision about how the complaint will be resolved ("resolution decision"); and
    23.4. If appropriate, advising the complainant in writing, and any other relevant parties as appropriate, of the resolution decision of the Head of Barker College and if appropriate, any proposed action to be taken.
    23.5. 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.
    23.6. 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.

STUDENT CODE OF CONDUCT

24. By joining Marri Mittigar, students are committing themselves to be the best they can be. They are making a commitment to their parents, teachers and School that they will maximise opportunities, invest in their education and make a valuable contribution that upholds the mission, values and traditions of the School.

25. Additional tiers of support are available for students at risk, through to students with significant needs and are in place in recognition that at times, some students will require more frequent and intensive levels of support or intervention to address behaviour concerns.

COMPLAINT PROCEDURE AWARENESS

26. Information about the complaints process will be disseminated to the School through accessible and appropriate channels such as the website and Circle Time

27. This Policy is not intended to extend the responsibilities of the School beyond the law.

28. The School reserves the right to change or modify this Policy from time to time by notice on the school website

FAIRNESS AND REVIEW

29. Those who make decisions at Marri Mittigar in relation to serious or unresolved student disciplinary matters will aim to reach a fair decision by way of an objective decision-making process that involves an impartial investigation if required and the exclusion of real or perceived bias.

Next review:

Policy Owner	Date Reviewed	Comments
Deputy Head Student Experience	12/6/26	Director of Marri Mittigar School consultation Approved at Key Leaders

Next Review Date	Reviewed by:
12/629	Director Legal Risk & Compliance