

POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

Complaints and Concerns Process for Student Use



Date **July 2022**

Review **July 2025**

1. Purpose

At Lauriston Girls School the Child Safety and Wellbeing Policy puts students' safety at the centre of everything we do.

All Lauriston students have the right to feel safe and be safe. Our programs, policies and practices help to ensure that every Lauriston student is protected from harm.

Sometimes students, parents or members of the wider community have complaints or concerns to raise. We welcome the reporting of concerns and we commit to respond to complaints promptly, thoroughly and fairly, and to take immediate action to protect any students at risk.

Students can make a complaint about any kind of harm, perpetrated at school or outside school, by an adult or by other children. Harm can occur through physical, sexual, emotional or psychological abuse or neglect at school or during school activities. Harm can include bullying or cyberbullying.

We aim to be fair to all people or groups involved in a complaint including you and the person or people who are the subject of your complaint. An adult's opinion is not more important than yours. Students are listened to without judgement and their views are taken seriously.

We commit to manage your complaint by:

1. Using language that is easy for you to understand
2. With Lauriston staff who have been trained to receive complaints, respond appropriately and empower you to speak up
3. Providing you with support during the process
4. Prioritising complaints and follow up as quickly as possible
5. Providing students with information about how the system works and who to speak to
6. Keeping the process simple
7. Providing you with options and encouraging your feedback
8. Protecting your safety and ensuring there are no negative ramifications for students who speak up.

2. How to make a complaint

Raise your concern with a trusted adult. That could be your parent, Year Level Coordinator, subject teacher, sport coach, music teacher, House Coordinator, Head of Junior School, Head of Howqua Campus, Deputy Principal-Head of Senior School or Principal.

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The information you provide is confidential. Your privacy and anonymity will be protected, subject to our reporting obligations. Sometimes, we are obliged to reveal a student's identity to external authorities in order to keep the student safe. If that is the case, you will be told in advance of us providing your details.

If your concern or complaint is relatively minor, then your trusted adult will explain to you that they will raise it with the most relevant member of staff, with a view to resolving it as quickly as possible. It might involve you having some say in the solution. You can bring a friend or your trusted adult to any meetings involving your complaint. Depending on your complaint and your age, you might also be supported to meet directly with the person about whom you are making the complaint, to help resolve your concern together.

For more serious issues, your Year Level Coordinator or Head of School/Campus will be involved in working out a resolution. You will be kept informed and given a timeframe. You will be asked to provide as much information as possible, to help resolve the issue.

We may need to carry out a formal investigation of the matter. This will require the alleged perpetrator, witnesses and you to be interviewed. You will be asked questions during the investigation and supported at all times by the appropriate support person. Your parents will also be involved in the process. At times, the Victoria Police may investigate the matter if it is one we need to disclose to them.

If your complaint means you are in immediate danger of physical, emotional or sexual harm, then this will be referred immediately to the Principal and we will do everything we can to remove you from the harmful situation.

You will be provided with a time period for the investigation. There will also be a report on the investigation and what the consequences are. We will explain possible outcomes to you as the complaint's procedure is undertaken.

We will also explain the final outcome to both you and the subject of the complaint, with reasons provided and any possible options for review.

For full details, please refer to our Complaints, Grievances and Concerns Policy on Schoolbox.

3. Related Lauriston policies and resources

1. Bullying Prevention and Intervention Policy.
2. Child Safety Code of Conduct.
3. Complaints, Grievances and Concerns Policy.
4. Child Safety and Wellbeing Policy.
5. Student Code of Conduct.
6. Code of Conduct for Staff, Contractors and Volunteers.