

LANGFORD ISLAMIC COLLEGE

COMPLAINTS AND DISPUTES POLICY

Commencement 2011
Category: Disputes and Complaints
Review : February 2013

RATIONALE

Langford Islamic College values the partnership between parents and the College community and accordingly, is committed to responding positively to concerns, queries and complaints. Parents, staff, students and the College community is assured that administrative staff will listen and respond to their needs and concerns in a confidential manner.

A complaint may be made by parents, staff, students or members of the community about the College as a whole, about a specific section in the College or about an individual member of staff, the Principal, Deputy Principal or the Chairman of the College Board.

The College is committed to resolving all complaints expeditiously and takes every complaint seriously. The Langford Islamic College complaints and disputes policy endeavours to solidify the three-way partnership of parents/community, staff, and students with the aim of creating a harmonious and productive educational environment in which healthy relationships are nurtured and Allah (SWT) is revered. In order to achieve this, the College has established this complaints and disputes policy and clear processes for resolution.

Complaints may also be lodged outside the College with agencies such as the State Ombudsman, Equal Opportunity Commission, the Western Australian Police Service and the Crime and Corruption Commission.

The procedure for complaints is accessible to all aggrieved parties and is underpinned by a commitment to cooperation by administrative staff. Procedural fairness is assured to all parties and resolution at the local level is preferred, if appropriate to do so.

Confidentiality is maintained (in accordance with legislative requirements), complaints are monitored and their management evaluated to minimise recurring problems.

In all matters, the educational well-being of students is a first priority and complainants are able to make enquiries, raise concerns or lodge complaints about the provision of education or the conduct of the college staff and to have the complaint dealt with efficiently, fairly and promptly. The processes are straight forward and information regarding concerns or complaints is available to parents, staff, students and members of the College community, on the College's website.

SCOPE

This policy applies to all parents, staff, students and community members who wish to lodge a complaint.

PURPOSE

The purpose of the Complaints and Disputes Policy and Procedure is to enable complaints and disputes to be resolved as quickly as possible and to deal with complaints and disputes in a sensitive, impartial and confidential manner.

POLICY STATEMENT

All complaints that emanate from parents, staff, students and members of the community are accepted, recorded and resolved in a sensitive, impartial and confidential manner using appropriate resolution processes. If a resolution is not achieved, the College will source an external independent arbiter at the final stage of the complaints and disputes process, in an effort to attain a resolution.

Related Policies

Anti-Racism, 2001

Sexual Harassment Resolution for Employees and Students, 2002

Staff Conduct

Equal Employment Opportunity Diversity Policy, 2001

Managing Unsatisfactory and Sub-Standard Performance of Teaching Staff and

School Administrators – Policy and Procedures, 2000

Employee Complaints 2003

Australian Standard - [Complaints Handling](#), (AS 4269-1995)

Western Australian Public Sector Code of Ethics

Relevant Legislation/Authority

The Director General has responsibility for monitoring standards of educational instruction and care provided to students. The Director General is authorised to investigate, conciliate, refer matters for investigation or action by another party, make recommendations, issue findings, issue instructions and exercise any other powers necessary to deal with disputes and complaints of the kind covered by the Scheme for Dealing with Disputes and Complaints and consistent with the authority conferred under the Act.

School Education Act 1999, sections 61, 63 and 118

School Education Regulations 2000, regulations 54, 55, 56, 57

Scheme for Dealing with Disputes and Complaints, published in the Government Gazette

Public Sector Management Act 1994

Equal Opportunity Act 1984

Public Interest Disclosure Act 2003
Racial Discrimination Act 1975 (Cwlth)
Human Rights and Equal Opportunity Commission Act 1986 (Cwlth)

AUTHORISATION

This policy is approved and authorised for implementation by the College Board.

RESPONSIBILITY

It is the responsibility of the Principal to ensure that this policy and administrative procedures are implemented.

IMPLEMENTATION

The Principal, Deputy Principal and coordinators will implement the policy and administrative procedures in resolving complaints.

POLICY REVIEW : February 2013

PROCEDURES

How to Make a Complaint

Anyone who wishes to make a complaint is requested to lodge their complaint using a 'Complaint Lodgment Form' available at the administration office or on the website (last page of the Complaints and Disputes policy). Complaints can also be made via telephone (9458 5206) or faxed to the College (fax no. 9258 5661). All complaints will be dealt with in a confidential and respectful manner by the College. The general principles for seeking resolution are listed below. If a resolution cannot be reached at Step 1, then an escalation to Step 2 will be initialised. Complaints made by parents should not reflect adversely on their children. Equally, that complaints raised by pupils should not rebound on them or on other pupils.

LIC members of staff will be told about any complaints that might be damaging to their reputation. Such complaints will be known only to themselves and to those who have to be consulted. The College will provide support for staff against which a complaint is made.

If there is a situation involving the Police, the Principal, or the designate of the Principal in his/her absence, must take responsibility for action in the school.

Any person who has a complaint or dispute should follow the procedure below to ensure that the appropriate people are approached. The complainant can seek legal advice at any stage of the process.

The procedure for complaints is accessible to all aggrieved parties and is underpinned by a commitment to cooperation by administrative staff. Procedural fairness is assured to all parties and resolution at the local level is preferred. If appropriate to do so, confidentiality is maintained (in accordance

with legislative requirements) and complaints are monitored and their management evaluated to minimise recurring problems. The subject of the complaint is informed of the substance of the complaint. The College strongly emphasises the right of the whole College community to be treated with respect and courtesy.

In all matters, the educational well being of students is a first priority and complainants are able to make enquiries, raise concerns or lodge complaints about the provision of education or the conduct of the college staff and to have the complaint dealt with efficiently, fairly and promptly. The processes are straight forward and information regarding concerns or complaints is available to parents, students and members of the local community.

Receiving/Recording Complaints

The LIC Complaint Intake Form will be used to record and process all complaints received.

Complaints received are to be acknowledged within one week.
the complainant will be informed as to what is happening to their concern or complaint and,
if a more detailed response is needed,
by what date it will be received.
the issue should be dealt with as quickly as possible.

The Principal or College Coordinators will keep a log of complaints and other parental concerns because:

- It may become the cause of legal action in the future;
 - Patterns in the record may indicate a need for action;
- The Principal should be able to check the log and report on it to the Board (if required).

The log will contain the following information:

- date when the issue was raised;
- name of parent;
- name of pupil;
- brief statement of issue;
- location of detailed file;
- member of staff handling the issue; and
- brief statement of outcome.

Confidential files on all complaints will be maintained and kept together, cross-referenced with other files as necessary. The files will contain simple but clear notes of all conversations with all parties involved about any source of dissatisfaction.

Should the parties be issued a report letter the following information will be included:

- the issues raised
- how the issues were considered

- the people consulted
- the action that is to be taken
- an apology, if appropriate.

Anonymous Complaints

Anonymous complaints may be where there is no indication of either name or address, or where the complainants say that they do not wish to be identified. They may come from members of the public, from parents or from pupils. Complaints from the public about the behaviour of a group of pupils will be dealt with on a general basis, with reminders to all about the College's expectations.

Parents and pupils will be encouraged to give their names and should be given reassurance on the issue of confidentiality. If they persist in wishing to remain anonymous, it is at the Principal's discretion as to what action, if any, should be taken, depending on the nature of the complaint.

Anonymous complaints should be recorded in the log.

Anonymous allegations about child welfare will instigate the Langford Child Protection Policy.

Complaint about a Parent by a Parent

Parents are encouraged to settle disputes between themselves by arranging a suitable time to discuss the issue. Meetings to discuss an issue should be private and not discussed with anyone else. The Deputy Principal or Principal are happy to meet with both parties and act as a mediator at a time convenient to all.

Disputes Between Staff Members

- All complaints or disputes a staff member has with a fellow staff member that cannot be resolved should be brought to the Deputy Principal. If necessary the Deputy Principal will involve the Principal to help resolve the complaint or dispute. The Principal will be the final school based arbiter.
- If the complaint or dispute concerns the Deputy Principal or a family member of the Deputy Principal, then the complaint or dispute should be taken to the Principal at the appropriate stage of the process. If the complainant is a family member of the College Principal, then they should contact the Chairman of the College Board if resolution cannot be reached.
- If the complaint or dispute concerns the Principal or any member of the Principal's family, then the Chairman of the College Board will be the final school based arbiter.
- If staff are not happy with the final decision of the Deputy Principal or the Principal having followed the process described in the corresponding

flowcharts, the staff member should contact the Chairman of the College Board, which may lead to an Independent External Arbiter.

Processes for Resolving Complaints

COMPLAINTS MAY EMANATE FROM PARENTS, STAFF, STUDENTS AND MEMBERS OF THE COMMUNITY. THE COMPLAINTS AND DISPUTES ARE TO BE RESOLVED USING ONE OF THE PROCESSES AS FOLLOWS:

1. PROCESS FOR RESOLVING GENERAL COMPLAINTS
2. PROCESS FOR RESOLVING PARENT COMPLAINT ABOUT A STAFF MEMBER
3. PROCESS FOR RESOLVING PARENT COMPLAINT ABOUT ANOTHER STUDENT
4. PROCESS FOR RESOLVING PARENT COMPLAINT ABOUT THE PRINCIPAL
5. PROCESS FOR RESOLVING COMPLAINT ABOUT A NON-TEACHING STAFF MEMBER
6. PROCESS FOR RESOLVING COMPLAINT BY A STAFF MEMBER ABOUT ANOTHER STAFF MEMBER
7. PROCESS FOR RESOLVING COMPLAINTS ABOUT THE DEPUTY PRINCIPAL
8. PROCESS FOR RESOLVING STAFF COMPLAINTS ABOUT THE PRINCIPAL

1. PROCESS FOR RESOLVING GENERAL COMPLAINTS

STEP 1

Meet with the other party at a mutually convenient time to discuss the matter amicably and efficiently.

STEP 2

If No Resolution Achieved in STEP 1.

Write to the Principal outlining the facts, as you know them.

Request an appointment to discuss the issue.

The Principal will arrange to meet with all parties either separately and/or together as they deem appropriate.

Detailed records, including agreements made, will be kept and signed by all parties and a future appointment made if need be to follow up on the agreements made.

STEP 3

If No Resolution Achieved in STEP 2:

Write to the College Board outlining all the facts requesting help in finding a resolution to the situation.

The College Board will determine the extent of their ability to resolve the situation.

The College Board is the FINAL school based arbitrator.

STEP 4

If No Resolution Achieved in STEP 3:

College to seek an external independent arbiter to resolve the matter.

2. PROCESS FOR RESOLVING PARENT COMPLAINTS ABOUT A STAFF MEMBER

STEP 1

Request to meet the staff member at a mutually convenient time.
If after meeting with the staff member a resolution is not reached the parent should make an appointment to see the Principal.
A letter containing all the facts should be sent to the Principal so that any necessary inquiries can be made before the meeting.
If the parent is not comfortable meeting with the staff member alone they should contact the Principal or Deputy Principal who will sit in on the meeting as an observer/mediator as is appropriate.

STEP 2

The Principal will establish the facts and discuss the issue with both parties to make sure that both parties understand them.
Recommendations and/or a decision will be shared with all in the spirit of amicable resolution.

STEP 3

If the matter remains unresolved:
If parents are not satisfied with the decision of the Principal they will write to the Chairman of the School Board outlining their complaint.
The Chairman, at his discretion, may call a meeting of all concerned and act as a mediator or he may take the issue to a School Board for further remediation.

STEP 4

No Resolution achieved in STEP 3

If the complainant is not satisfied with the board's decision, then through the Principal, a meeting with an external independent arbitrator needs to be arranged.

3. PROCESS FOR RESOLVING PARENT COMPLAINTS ABOUT ANOTHER STUDENT

STEP 1

Parents should make an appointment through the office to see the teacher of their child. If the complaint is established to be a bullying issue the L.I.C BULLYING POLICY will be initiated.

Parents should never approach or question another child about an issue.

STEP 2

If after meeting with the teacher a resolution is not reached, the parent should make an appointment to see the Principal / Deputy Principal.

STEP 3

The Principal or designate from the Student Support Team will establish the facts.

All necessary parties will be brought together to discuss the facts to make sure that both parties understand them.

A decision and recommendations will then be issued by the Principal.

STEP 4

If a resolution is not achieved:

If parents are not satisfied with the decision of the Principal they will write to the Chairman of the School Board outlining their complaint.

The Chairman, at his discretion, may call a meeting of all concerned and act as a mediator or he may take the issue to a School Board meeting or take some other appropriate course of action.

STEP 5

If a resolution is not achieved:

If the parent is not happy with the decision of the School Board then through the Principal, a meeting with the independent arbiter can be sought:

Ask for a meeting with the independent arbitrator.

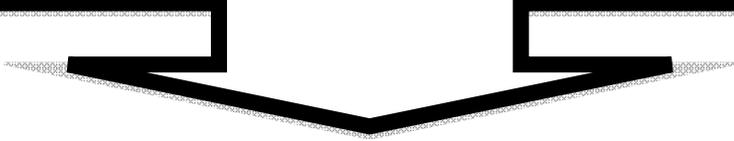
If the complainant is not satisfied with the board's decision then through the Principal, a meeting with an external independent arbitrator needs to be scheduled.

4. PROCESS FOR RESOLVING PARENT COMPLAINTS ABOUT THE PRINCIPAL

STEP 1

Parents who seek resolution and mediation should make an appointment, through the office, to see the Principal.

Both parties should have at least one witness present so that all relevant information is properly discussed and documented.



STEP 2

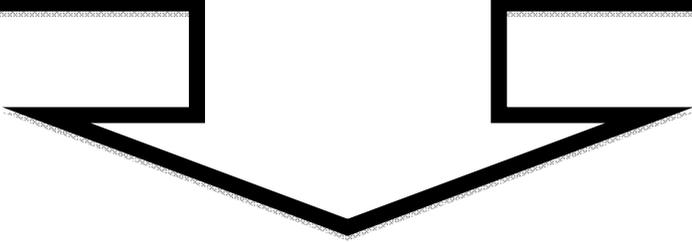
If Resolution is not achieved:

Parents should make a second appointment with the Principal and the Chairman of the School Board present.

Parents write to the Chairman of the School Board outlining their complaint. This may be done through the school office or posted to PO BOX 289 Thornlie WA 6988.

At this meeting both parties should have at least one witness present so that all relevant information is discussed and documented.

The Chairman, at his/her discretion, may call a meeting of all concerned and act as a mediator or he may take the issue to a School Board meeting or take some other reasonable course of action.



STEP 3

If Resolution is not achieved:

Parent may request, through the Chairman of the Board, a meeting with an external independent arbitrator in order to find a resolution and establish constructive mediation.

Legal advice can be sought thereafter and during all previous steps.

5. PROCESS FOR RESOLVING COMPLAINTS ABOUT A NON-TEACHING STAFF MEMBER

STEP 1

All complaints about non-teaching staff should be brought to the attention of the Principal.

Parents are requested to write to the Principal outlining their complaint.



STEP 2

If no resolution has been achieved:

An appointment should be made through the school office to meet the Principal. The Principal will be contacted and the facts of both parties will be presented and then the Principal will make a decision as to what each party should do.

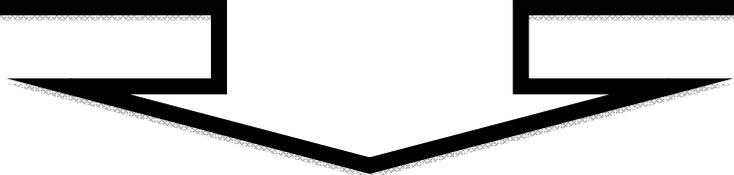


STEP 3

If no resolution has been achieved:

Parents should write to the Chairman of the School Board outlining their complaint. This may be done through the school office or posted to PO Box 289 Thornlie WA 6988.

The Chairman may call a meeting of all concerned and act as a mediator or he may take the issue to a School Board meeting or take some other reasonable course of action.



STEP 4

If no resolution has been achieved:

If the parent is not happy with the decision of the School Board, a meeting with an external independent arbiter can be sought through the Principal.

Legal advice can be sought thereafter and during all previous steps.

6. PROCESS FOR RESOLVING COMPLAINTS BY STAFF MEMBERS ABOUT ANOTHER STAFF MEMBER

STEP 1

The complainant should arrange to meet with the other staff member at a time and place convenient to both so that the issue can be openly discussed and resolved amicably.

STEP 2

If no resolution is agreed to:

1. An appointment can be made with the relevant Head or Deputy Principal
2. A reconciliatory spirit seeking resolution through advice and arbitration for both parties can commence.

STEP 3

If no resolution is agreed to:

1. The Principal will be contacted and the facts of both parties will be presented
2. The Principal will make a decision as to matter after meeting with both parties.
3. If the matter is not resolved the Chairman of the Board will be contacted.

STEP 4

If no resolution is agreed to:

1. The Staff members are to write to the Chairman of the School Board outlining their complaint. This may be done through the school office.
2. The Chairman, at his/her discretion, may call a meeting of all concerned and act as a mediator or he may take the issue to a School Board meeting or take some other reasonable course of action
3. A decision by the School Board will be the schools final decision.

STEP 5

If no resolution is agreed to:

If the staff member is not satisfied with the School Board's decision, then through the Principal, a meeting with an external independent arbiter needs to be arranged.

7. PROCESS FOR RESOLVING COMPLAINTS ABOUT THE DEPUTY PRINCIPAL

STEP 1

1. The complainant should arrange to meet with the Deputy Principal at a time and place convenient to both so that the issue can be openly discussed and resolved amicably.

STEP 2

If no resolution is agreed to:

Teacher arranges another meeting with the Deputy Principal and invite a witness.

A reconciliatory spirit seeking resolution through advice and arbitration for both parties can commence.

STEP 3

If no resolution is agreed to:

Arrange a further meeting with the Principal to suggest a way forward.

STEP 4

If no resolution is agreed to:

The complainant is to write to the Chairman of the School Board outlining their complaint. This may be done through the school office.

The Chairman, at his/her discretion, may call a meeting with all concerned and act as a mediator or he may take the issue to a School Board meeting or take some other reasonable course of action.

A decision by the School Board will be the schools final decision.

STEP 5

If no resolution is agreed to:

If the staff member is not satisfied with the School Board's decision, then through the Principal, a meeting with an external independent arbiter should be arranged.

8. PROCESS FOR RESOLVING STAFF COMPLAINTS ABOUT THE PRINCIPAL

STEP 1

The staff member is to address their concern to the Principal. They are encouraged to be open and frank about any issue and have a reconciliatory spirit that seeks expedient resolution.

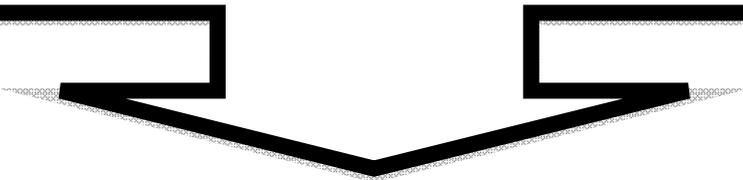


STEP 2

If no resolution is agreed to:

The staff member may write to the Chairman of the School Board outlining their complaint.

The Chairman, at his discretion, may call a meeting of all concerned and act as a mediator or he may take the issue to a School Board meeting or take some other reasonable course of action.



STEP 3

If no resolution is agreed to:

If the staff member is not satisfied with the School Board's decision, then the Board Chairman is to source an external independent arbiter to assist with a resolution.

Langford Islamic College

COMPLAINT INTAKE FORM

STRICTLY CONFIDENTIAL

Date: _____

VIA: Phone Fax Email Letter
Other _____

Person making the Complaint:

Contact
details: _____

Nature of the Matter/Complaint:

Persons concerned in the matter:

Information received by:

Matter referred to: _____
Date: _____

Assessment
Notes:

Follow Up Notes: _____

For further advice and guidance about the College's Complaints and Disputes Policy please contact the Main Office on 9458 5206.

Langford Islamic College

COMPLAINT LODGEMENT FORM

STRICTLY CONFIDENTIAL

Date: _____

Person making the Complaint (no need to write your name if you wish to remain anonymous).

Contact details: _____

Nature of the Matter/Complaint:

Persons concerned in the matter:

Your proposal for resolution (if any):

Other relevant information or evidence to support your complaint :

For further advice and guidance about lodging a complaint, please contact the Main Office on 9458 5206.