



## Complaints Policy

<b>Purpose:</b>	The purpose of this policy is to ensure that complaints and/or concerns of students, the parents or registered carer's of students, employees and other stakeholders are considered and dealt with in a professional, ethical, responsive, efficient and effective way.	
<b>Scope:</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Students</b> – including students enrolled at Girl Academy and their dependents (where applicable)</li> <li>• <b>Staff</b> – including full-time, part-time, permanent, fixed-term and casual employees, as well as office bearers, contractors, volunteers and people undertaking work experience or vocational placements with or on behalf of CYGA.</li> <li>• <b>Parents</b> – including the parents, carers and/or other registered carers of Students, as well as other family members involved in the care of a Student.</li> </ul>	
<b>Status:</b>	Draft	<b>Supersedes:</b> CYGA Dispute Resolution Policy INTERIM
<b>Authorised by:</b>	Board	<b>Date of Authorisation:</b>
<b>References:</b>	<p><b>Relevant Legislation</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Education (General Provisions) Act 2010 (Qld)</li> <li>• Education (Accreditation of Non-State Schools) Regulations 2001 (Qld)</li> <li>• Australian Education Act 2013 (Cth)</li> <li>• Australian Education Regulations 2013 (Cth)</li> <li>• Fair Work Act 2009 (Cth)</li> <li>• Work Health and Safety Act 2011 (Qld)</li> <li>• Privacy Act 1988 (Cth)</li> <li>• Anti-Discrimination Act 1991 (Qld)</li> <li>• Australian Human Rights Commission Act 1986 (Cth)</li> <li>• Sex Discrimination Act 1984 (Cth)</li> <li>• Age Discrimination Act 2004 (Cth)</li> <li>• Disability Discrimination Act 1992 (Cth)</li> <li>• Racial Discrimination Act 1975 (Cth)</li> </ul> <p><b>Additional References</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Cape York Girl Academy Code of Conduct</li> <li>• Cape York Girl Academy Child Protection Policy</li> <li>• Cape York Girl Academy Enrolment and Retention Policy</li> <li>• Cape York Girl Academy Workplace Health, Safety and Environment Policy</li> <li>• Cape York Girl Academy Anti-Discrimination Policy</li> <li>• Cape York Girl Academy Privacy Policy</li> <li>• Cape York Girl Academy Acceptable use of ICT Policy</li> </ul>	
<b>Review Date:</b>	Annually	<b>Next Review Date:</b> TBA
<b>Policy Owner:</b>	Principal	

## **Policy Statement**

Cape York Girl Academy (CYGA) is committed to ensuring that Student, Parent, Staff and related stakeholder complaints are considered and dealt with in a professional, ethical, responsive, efficient and effective way.

CYGA views complaints as part of an important feedback and accountability process. CYGA acknowledges the right of Students, Parents, Staff and related stakeholders to complain when dissatisfied with an action, inaction or decision of CYGA or a person within its jurisdiction, and encourages such feedback. CYGA recognises that time spent on handling complaints can be an investment in better service to Students and Parents and provides a more professional and supportive workplace for Staff.

### **Types of complaints that may be resolved under this policy**

CYGA encourages Students, Parents, Staff and related stakeholders to promptly lodge concerns regarding breaches (or suspected breaches) of its *Code of Conduct*, other policies and/or non-compliance with child protection processes, as well as more general complaints that include areas such as:

- The inappropriate and/or unfair conduct of Staff or Students;
- Failure of CYGA to fulfill obligations or commitments it has made to another party;
- Learning programs, assessment and reporting of student learning;
- Communication with Students (and their dependents), Parents or Staff;
- 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 of this policy**

This policy is intended to cover the vast majority of scenarios where a complaint may be appropriate. However, some matters require more specific procedures and may fall outside of the scope of this policy. Examples include:

- Child protection concerns or risks of harm to children should be dealt with in accordance with the law and any requirements of CYGA's *Child Protection Policy* if inconsistent with this policy.
- Student bullying complaints should be dealt with under CYGA's *Positive Student Behaviour Policy* if inconsistent with this policy.

The Principal (or their delegate) will confirm to the complainant if their complaint is being managed under an alternate policy or procedure.

## **Responsibilities**

### **1. CYGA will:**

- Develop the '*CYGA Complaints Procedure*' for the management of complaints, whereby:
  - Complaints will be taken seriously.
  - Anonymous complaints will be treated on their merits like any other dispute when possible.
  - Procedural fairness will be ensured wherever practicable.
  - Natural justice principles will be observed wherever practicable.

- Confidentiality and privacy will be maintained as much as possible.
- Informal resolution is an optional alternative to investigation (where it is legal to do so).
- Complainants, respondents and people associated with them will not be victimised as a result of lodging the dispute nor will they suffer any other reprisals.
- Appropriately communicate this policy and the *Complaints Procedure* to Students, Parents and Staff and have a copy available for viewing by any other party upon request.
- Upon receipt of a complaint, investigate the complaint in accordance with the *CYGA Complaints Procedure*.
- Take appropriate action to prevent the victimisation or action in reprisal against the complainant, respondent or any person associated with them.
- Where a dispute arises, ensure that appropriate support is provided to all parties to implement remedies.
- Appropriately train relevant employees involved in the investigation and management of complaints and disputes.
- Keep appropriate and confidential records.
- Monitor and report on disputes.
- Ensure any disciplinary action is in accordance with CYGA policy and the law.

## **2. All parties to a complaint will:**

- Apply and comply with CYGA's *Complaint Policy* and *Complaints Procedure*.
- Lodge complaints promptly as soon as possible after the issue occurs or as otherwise appropriate.
- Provide complete and factual information in a timely manner and avoid providing frivolous or vexatious complaints or deliberately false or misleading information.
- Expect that the complaint will be dealt with fairly and objectively; in a timely manner; with procedural fairness wherever practicable; that natural justice principles will be observed wherever practicable; that confidentiality and privacy will be maintained as much as possible.
- Where a dispute resolution process is enacted by CYGA to resolve the complaint:
  - Act in good faith and in a calm, courteous and non-threatening manner.
  - Show respect and understanding of each other's point of view and value difference, rather than judge and blame.
  - Agree 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.

## **3. All Staff will:**

- Support any person seeking to make a complaint, by:

- Referring them to the Principal to clarify requirements for a complaint under the *Complaints Procedure*; OR
- If the complainant indicates the complaint is in relation to the Principal, provide a printed copy of the *Complaints Procedure*.
- In any event, continue to act in accordance with CYGA policy and procedures if aware of an active or pending complaint. This includes, but is not limited to:
  - Maintaining confidentiality requirements;
  - Respecting procedural fairness requirements of the *Complaints Procedure* and not offering opinion or speculation on a possible outcome.
  - Not victimise or act in reprisal against a potential complainant or any party to a complaint.

### **Implementation**

Any breach of this policy will be managed via:

- For Staff and Parents – CYGA’s *Code of Conduct*.
- For Students – CYGA’s *Positive Student Behaviour Policy*.