



Atlantis Beach Baptist College

CONCERNS AND COMPLAINTS (FAMILIES)

Adopted By: Principal

Date: 20.05.2021

Scheduled Review Date: 20.05.2022

POLICY CONTROL HISTORY:

Date	Reviewed by:	Amendments/Reviews:
20.05.2021	Principal – L Potgieter Principal –	Combined Policy (Primary and Secondary).
20.05.2021	Principal	Added information about Appeals to the Board and Independent Arbiter

OVERVIEW

Atlantis Beach Baptist College is committed to providing an environment where students' safety, education and wellbeing is supported through our policies and processes.

We are a community and as such, there will be times when members of the community may wish to provide feedback, raise a concern, or make a complaint. The College accepts feedback from current and past members of the College community. Members of the community refers to students, staff, parents, and people of the wider community.

The College encourages members of the community to either provide feedback, raise a concern, or make a complaint especially when there is a situation that impacts the safety, education, or wellbeing of our students. These situations are advised to be raised immediately to implement supports required promptly or resolve matters swiftly, always with the aim of providing an environment where students' safety, education and wellbeing is protected.

The College understands that if feedback, a concern, or a complaint is raised, that there is a genuine level of support required, or dissatisfaction in an experience with members of the community. We aim to consider all matters brought to our attention objectively, actively work together with all parties involved to determine a suitable resolution and always maintain confidentially.

While we will be actively working to support students and their families through a concern or a complaint, the staff of the College also have the right to a safe working environment and as such, verbal or physical aggression towards staff will not be tolerated.

Atlantis Beach Baptist College wishes to ensure that parents, students (past and present) and members of the community have a developed understanding of:

- How to provide feedback, raise a concern or make a complaint, should the need or situation arise
- The expectations of the College's response to feedback, a concern being raised, or a complaint being made
- Processes of appeal where there is an unsatisfactory resolution for the concern/complaint raised

NATIONAL PRINCIPLES FOR CHILD SAFETY

The following principles are supported by this policy:

- Principle 6 – Processes to respond to concerns and complaints are child focused.
- Principle 9 – Implementation of the national child safe principles is regularly reviewed and improved.

REVIEW OF POLICY

This policy is reviewed on an annual basis and is endorsed by the College Board.

Any changes to the policy will be communicated through:

- Newsletters to families
- Staff development sessions
- Updating the website

PROVIDING FEEDBACK

Members of the community are encouraged to provide feedback. This provides an opportunity to the College to evaluate our processes and policies.

Feedback can be provided through:

- Talking with a member of staff
- Submitting feedback via the website
- Completing satisfaction surveys

Feedback can be given anonymously where no response is expected. If the member of the community wishes to have a response, we ask that the name and best contact details of the person providing the feedback is supplied.

RAISING A CONCERN OR A COMPLAINT

Raising a concern or complaint can be done simply through contacting the College and speaking to a staff member. It is always helpful to firstly consider what the concern/complaint refers to so we can direct your concern/complaint to the most appropriate staff member. Writing down

what you wish to discuss can also be beneficial so that when discussing your concern/complaint the matters are fully addressed with the relevant staff member.

How to raise a concern/complaint

Parents/carers can raise a concern or complaint:

1. In person – talk to one of our staff members (see the chart below)
2. By phone – contact the College and request to speak with one of our staff members
3. In writing – via email: admin@abbc.wa.edu.au; or through written correspondence which can be delivered to the College reception.

Staff to raise the concern/complaint with

Below is a guide of who you can contact to raise a concern/complaint guided by the nature of the concern or complaint:

Chart 1: Initial person of referral specific to the nature of a concern/complaint

Pastoral Care	Academic	Staff Member	Principal/ College
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Class Teacher (Primary)• Form Teacher (Secondary)• Year Coordinator (Primary/Secondary)	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Class Teacher• Subject Teacher	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Dean of Students• Principal	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Principal

Levels of concerns/complaints

All concerns/complaints will be taken seriously by the attending staff member no matter what the concern or complaint relates to.

Some frequently asked questions about raising concerns/complaints and their responses are below:

'I am not sure whether to raise a concern or not, yet something is bothering me'

We are all working towards the same goals; that is, the safety, education, and well-being of students. If you have a concern/complaint, we encourage you to speak to a staff member as soon as you feel there is an issue arising. Often matters are resolved swiftly and effectively by raising a concern/complaint before it becomes something more significant.

'I am not sure that the concern/complaint can be handled by a discussion over the telephone'

We encourage you to make an appointment to speak with the appropriate staff member at a mutually agreeable time. Often it is helpful to write down your concerns/complaint so that the matter can be addressed fully.

'I am concerned about the welfare of a student'

We encourage you to speak to the Deputy Principal immediately. If after hours, we advise that the Department of Communities and Child Protection Central Intake Team is contacted on 1800 273 889.

'The matter is of a confidential or sensitive nature'

All concerns/complaints are treated with the utmost respect of confidentiality. Only essential staff and those directly involved will be informed of the matter. Please discuss these concerns with the attending staff member.

'The concern/complaint needs urgent attention'

Contact the College and speak to the Deputy Principal.

'The concern/complaint refers to a situation that happened during classes'

We encourage you to speak directly with the supervising teacher of the class. As they were present during that time, they may be able to provide an immediate response.

'The concern/complaint refers to a curriculum query'

Please speak initially with the subject teacher. They can refer it to the Head of Department (Secondary) or Deputy Principal (Primary) if needed.

'The concern/complaint relates to academic progress of my child'

Please discuss your concerns with your child's class teacher. They will be able to assist you.

'My concern/complaint refers the operations of the College'

Please discuss your concern or complaint with the Principal.

Members of the community can arrange a meeting with the Principal or phone interview by contacting the Main Administration Office.

'My concern/complaint is about the Principal or the management of the College'

Where a concern or complaint relates to the Principal or the management of the College, members of the community may prefer to raise the concern or complaint with the Chair of the ABBC Board. This should be done in writing addressed to:

The Chair of ABBC Board

Alternatively, the written concern or complaint can be delivered to the Main Administration Office. This will be passed on to the Chair of the ABBC Board.

RESPONSE TO A CONCERN OR COMPLAINT

We aim to respond to concerns or complaints as soon as possible, however time demands may impact the immediacy of a response. If a concern or a complaint has not been initially responded to within 48 hours, please contact the College to notify our Administration Team. We will make it a matter of priority that someone contacts you before the end of the day.

Upon responding to a concern or complaint, the staff member may:

- a) Arrange to meet to discuss the concern/complaint in person together
- b) Commit to investigating further information provided and then following up on the concern/complaint
- c) Arrange a time to provide feedback on the concern/complaint

Concerns/complaints referred to or made in writing to the Principal (by email or correspondence) will be responded to within 5 business days acknowledging the receipt of the concern/complaint and will give an indication of the expected time frame for a response. Once the matter has been investigated, then a response is given in writing.

Confidentiality

All matters will be treated with the utmost respect of confidentiality. Only essential staff members are notified and those directly involved. For serious matters (relating to Child Protection Issues), the Chair of the Board or other external authorities may need to be notified.

Investigation

Some concerns/complaints may take some time to resolve where further investigation or deliberation is required. This will be communicated to parties involved and an expected timeframe for a final resolution.

Objectivity

All concerns/complaints are taken as a genuine expression of concern and will be listened to carefully and intently to identify the issues and possible resolutions. At times where there is not a clear resolution, further consultation may occur between essential staff (where the name of the person raising the concern/complaint is anonymous) to gain another objective viewpoint.

Retribution of students

Retribution of students by a staff member because of a concern or a complaint being raised is not acceptable and will be deemed by the College a breach of the Staff Code of Conduct. Staff aware of a concern/complaint are expected to always remain professional. The process is viewed as an expression of genuine concern for the safety, education, or wellbeing of a student

and as such, staff are required to work towards a suitable resolution for all parties involved in a supportive manner.

Resolution

In the event a concern or complaint is raised, the College staff will work closely with families to find the best solution moving forward. Feedback will be provided as available, and the agreed plan will be implemented and monitored.

APPEAL PROCESS

We hope that members of the community are completely satisfied with the resolution of any matter raised, however if a concern or complaint has an unsatisfactory outcome, parties involved may request that the matter be escalated to senior members of staff for review and consideration.

This process of appeal can be initiated by a referral by staff on behalf of the family raising the concern or complaint. Families or staff members can request this referral.

Should a family wish to appeal an outcome determined by the College, they may do so by referring the matter to the College Board for review. If this determination requires further appeal, families may request from the College Board to refer the matter to an Independent Arbiter for review.

The Independent Arbiter is not employed by the College or a member of the Board. They will review whether the College has decided in accordance with the policies of the College.

Please see Chart 2 for an outline of the referral process.

Chart 2: Referral Process of Appeal

Referral Process for Concerns/Complaints



