



**AUSTRALIAN
ISLAMIC COLLEGE**

COMPLAINTS RESOLUTION (PARENT CARER) POLICY & PROCEDURE

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1. Overview

Australian Islamic College (the College) is committed to ensuring a safe and healthy learning environment characterised by tolerance and support; and which also respects differing learning styles and celebrates student achievements. The College aims to create a harmonious and productive educational environment in which healthy relationships are nurtured and Allah is revered.

Part of this commitment involves ensuring the school community has access to processes that allow for grievances to be managed appropriately, promptly and fairly. The College is a working community and inevitably concerns, grievances, disputes or allegations of inappropriate behaviour may arise from time to time.

This policy provides clear and transparent information about how a parent, student or other member of the school community (other than a staff member) can raise grievances about the College, staff conduct, a student's education and/or student wellbeing, and about how such grievances will be managed and resolved.

The College takes all complaints and concerns received from staff, parents, students and other complaints from outside of the College, seriously. Our aim is to ensure that grievances are handled objectively and with sensitivity. In doing so, we will seek to identify both the specific and (where applicable) systemic issues raised by a grievance (thereby enabling future improvements to be identified and implemented).

The procedural steps outlined in this policy are intended to be practical, non-adversarial and non-legal. Steps will be implemented flexibly at the College's discretion, depending on the circumstances of each situation.

2. Role of the Director General, Department of Education

The Director General of the Department of Education is responsible for ensuring that the school observes the registration standards, including the standard about its complaints handling system. Any student, parent or community member is entitled to contact the Director General with concerns about how the school has dealt with a complaint. Information is available on the Department of Education website. While the Director General may consider whether the school has breached the registration standards, she does not have power to intervene in a complaint or override the schools decision.

3. Islamic guidelines

All parties involved in the resolution process are reminded to uphold the following Islamic injunctions to ensure a fair and just process is enforced.

يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا كُونُوا قَوَّامِينَ بِالْقِسْطِ شُهَدَاءَ لِلَّهِ وَلَوْ عَلَىٰ
أَنفُسِكُمْ أَوِ الْوَالِدَيْنِ وَالْأَقْرَبِينَ إِن يَكُنْ غَنِيًّا أَوْ فَقِيرًا فَاللَّهُ أَوْلَىٰ بِهِمَا
فَلَا تَتَّبِعُوا الْهَوَىٰ أَن تَعْدِلُوا وَإِن تَلْوُوا أَوْ تُعْرِضُوا فَإِنَّ اللَّهَ كَانَ
بِمَا تَعْمَلُونَ خَبِيرًا ﴿١٣٥﴾

O ye who believe! stand out firmly for justice, as witnesses to Allah, even as against yourselves, or your parents, or your kin, and whether it be (against) rich or poor: for Allah can best protect both. Follow not the lusts (of your hearts), lest ye swerve, and if ye distort (justice) or decline to do justice, verily Allah is well-acquainted with all that ye do.

يَتَأَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا كُونُوا قَوَّامِينَ لِلّٰهِ شُهَدَاءَ بِالْقِسْطِ وَلَا يَجْرِمَنَّكُمْ
شَتَانُ قَوْمٍ عَلَىٰ ءَلَّا تَعْدِلُوا ؕ اَعْدِلُوا هُوَ اَقْرَبُ لِلتَّقْوَىٰ وَاتَّقُوا اللّٰهَ اِنَّ اللّٰهَ
خَبِيرٌ بِمَا تَعْمَلُونَ ﴿٨﴾

O ye who believe! stand out firmly for Allah, as witnesses to fair dealing, and let not the hatred of others to you make you swerve to wrong and depart from justice. Be just: that is next to piety: and fear Allah. For Allah is well-acquainted with all that ye do. (5:8)

Making peace and resolving a complaint or dispute is an Islamic duty. A Muslim should be careful not to harm others and there is great reward for those who strive for peace and preserve brotherhood:

اِنَّمَا الْمُؤْمِنُونَ اِخْوَةٌ فَاصْلِحُوا بَيْنَ اَخَوَيْكُمْ وَاتَّقُوا اللّٰهَ
لَعَلَّكُمْ تُرْحَمُونَ ﴿١٠﴾

The believers are but a single Brotherhood, so make peace and reconciliation between your two contending brothers; and fear Allah that you may receive mercy (49:10)

❖ وَسَارِعُوا إِلَىٰ مَغْفِرَةٍ مِّن رَّبِّكُمْ وَجَنَّةٍ عَرْضُهَا السَّمٰوٰتُ وَالْاَرْضُ
اُعِدَّتْ لِلْمُتَّقِينَ ﴿١٣٣﴾ الَّذِينَ يُنْفِقُونَ فِي السَّرَّاءِ وَالضَّرَّاءِ وَالْكٰظِمِينَ
الْغَيْظَ وَالْعَافِينَ عَنِ النَّاسِ وَاللّٰهُ يُحِبُّ الْمُحْسِنِينَ ﴿١٣٤﴾

Be quick (speed up, rush, compete) in the race for forgiveness from the Creator of heaven and earth and for Paradise whose width is that (of the whole) of the heavens and of the earth prepared for the Pious people. Those who spend (freely), whether in prosperity, or in adversity; who restrain anger, and pardon (all) mankind; for Allah loves those who do good (3: 133, 134)

4. Scope

This policy applies to all College Board members, staff, contractors, volunteers, visitors, parents/carers, students and other members of the school community.

This policy does not apply to:

- Staff grievances, which should be raised in accordance with the College's Complaints Resolution (Staff) Policy.
- Student grievances, which should be raised in accordance with the College's Complaint Resolution (Student) Policy.
- Concerns about child abuse, reportable conduct and student safety, which will be addressed in accordance with the Child Protection Policy.

- Legal matters, including requests for compensation, payment and redress.

To the extent that there are any inconsistencies between this policy and the College's other grievance policies and appendices, other than the Child Protection Policy, this policy shall prevail.

5. Definitions

College: Australian Islamic College

Community: Parent or other member of the school community (other than a staff member)

6. Alignment with National Principles for Child Safe Organisations

The College is committed to upholding the *National Principles for Child Safe Organisations*. Our student complaints resolution framework is a key mechanism in supporting the safety and wellbeing of children and young people. In particular, the policy aligns with the following National Principles:

- **Principle 1:** Child safety and wellbeing are embedded in our leadership, governance and culture. Our commitment to listening to and acting on student concerns reflects our values-driven approach to child safeguarding.
- **Principle 2:** Students are informed of their rights, encouraged to participate in decisions that affect them, and are taken seriously when raising grievances. The College promotes an environment where students feel empowered and supported in voicing concerns, with assurance of confidentiality and non-retaliation.
- **Principle 3:** Families and communities are valued partners. By involving relevant stakeholders in the grievance process, we foster transparency and collaboration in ensuring child safety.
- **Principle 6:** The College's complaints handling processes are child-focused. They are designed to be accessible, developmentally appropriate, culturally sensitive and ensure timely and respectful resolution of concerns.
- **Principle 10:** Our Complaints Resolution (Students) Policy and Procedure clearly documents how complaints from students are addressed in a manner that prioritises safety and wellbeing. These procedures are regularly reviewed and improved as part of our commitment to continuous quality improvement.

Through these measures, the College actively promotes a culture where children and young people are safe, informed, respected and included.

7. Guiding Principles

When raising a grievance with the College, a member of the school community can expect to:

- Be treated with respect and courtesy.
- Have their grievance taken seriously, considered impartially (with consideration of any power imbalances), and dealt with on the merits.
- Have their grievance dealt with in a confidential and timely manner.
- Have access to appropriate and easily understandable information regarding the grievance resolution process being followed by the College (including this policy).
- Be supported by the College during the grievance handling process, with a focus on maintaining the emotional wellbeing of any students involved.
- Be kept informed of the progress and outcome of the grievance.
- Not be victimised, or subjected to reprisal, for raising grievances in good faith.

In return, the College expects that a member of the College community who raises a grievance will:

- Treat others (including College staff, students and parents, both former and present) with respect and courtesy.
- Raise grievances in the appropriate forum, having regard to the below framework, and as soon as possible after the event giving rise to the grievance has occurred.
- Provide complete and factual information about the grievance.
- Ask for assistance or further information as needed.
- Act in good faith to achieve a reasonable outcome.

- Be understanding and accepting of any outcome reached, being mindful that the College must sometimes manage the interests of a number of students and other individuals when making decisions, and may be privy to confidential information not known to the person raising the grievance.

Our aim is for the prompt resolution of concerns, ideally without there being a need for a formal complaint to be made. As the Board appoints the Executive Principal to manage the day-to-day operations of the College, a review by the Chairman of the Board should be a last resort.

Timeframes listed in this policy are only a guide, and can vary due to the nature of the grievance and surrounding circumstances. Where timeframes set out in this policy cannot be met, the College will strive to communicate with the affected parties about the status of the grievance, and the steps taken (or to be taken) to progress a resolution.

Please note the processes outlined in this policy are intended to be conciliatory, non-adversarial and non-legal.

8. Framework

The College's framework for dealing with grievances involves a three-step process, namely:

- Stage 1 - A concern is raised with the College.
- Stage 2 – A formal written complaint is made to the Principal.
- Stage 3 – A formal written complaint is escalated to the Executive Principal.
- Stage 4 - A review by the Chairman of the Board is requested.

Further details about these Stages are set out in Schedule 1.

Common considerations when the College is managing grievances are set out in Schedule 2.

9. Recommendations for initially raising concerns (Stage 1)

At first instance, you should raise your concerns directly with the College. The College must be aware of a concern and of its substance in order to address it.

The College believes that a concern is often best resolved closest to its source, and when a concern relates to a student, encourages concerns to be raised with the relevant classroom teacher in the first instance.

However, depending on the nature and severity of an issue, and whether the classroom teacher has a conflict of interest, concerns may instead be raised directly with the Principal.

The following considerations are relevant prior to, and when, raising a concern:

- Clearly identify the issue or problem prior to contacting the College.
- Decide whether the issue or problem is in the nature of a complaint, concern, enquiry or suggestion. This will help in finding a solution.
- Identify the party or parties involved.
- Consider the practical outcome you are trying to achieve (while being realistic and open to other outcomes and solutions).
- If there is more than one issue or problem, write a list so that you are adequately prepared and then decide which issue or problem matters most to you.
- Consider whether there are any interim measures you would like the College to consider whilst it makes enquiries about the issue or problem.
- Make an appointment to meet with the relevant staff member to discuss the concern - the best way to do this is to contact Reception of the campus your child attends to arrange a mutually convenient time for a telephone call or meeting. When contacting the relevant Reception, please identify yourself and the student concerned, the subject of your concern, identify the person you would like to speak with, and provide a brief description of the issue you wish to speak about (for example 'homework', 'enrolment decision (including appeals)', 'wellbeing' or 'grounds maintenance').

- Remain courteous and calm when conveying your concerns. The College is within its rights to terminate a conversation with the person raising the concern until such time that a courteous and calm conversation can continue.

10. Confidentiality

Appropriate confidentiality will be maintained by the College at all times when dealing with a grievance, with information only being provided to those who have a right or need to know.

11. Communication

This policy is available to parents, students and the school community via the College's website. This policy (or aspects thereof) will also feature in communications to parents via College, including through newsletters and bulletins as required.

12. Related Policies and Procedures

- Complaints Resolution (Staff) Policy
- Complaints Resolution (Students) Policy
- Child Protection Policy
- Whistleblower Policy

Last reviewed: [May 2025]
Approved by: [Executive Principal]
Board Sign off: [May 2025]
Next review: [April 2028]

SCHEDULE 1: Further details about the College's Complaints Resolution Procedure (Stage 1 to Stage 4)

	Details	Comment
Stage 1: Raise the Concern		
Step 1	Identify the concern	Clarify your concern: <i>"who, what, when, where, why, and how"</i> . Identify the outcome you are trying to achieve by raising your concern.
Step 2	Raise the concern	The College believes that a concern is often best resolved closest to its source and encourages concerns to be raised with the relevant classroom teacher in the first instance. However, depending on the nature and severity of an issue, and whether the teacher has a conflict of interest, concerns may instead be raised directly with the Principal. The Principal may decide to delegate responsibility for dealing with the concern to another appropriate leadership team member.
Step 3	Acknowledgement	Once a concern is raised, the College will record the details of the concern including your name and contact details in the school's Complaints Register. The College's focus will be on understanding the nature of the problem, the party or parties involved, and the nature of any agreeable solutions.
Step 4	Outcome	Where an agreeable solution is available, this will usually be communicated in writing to you (being usually within three (3) business days of the outcome being reached). Where a mutually agreed outcome between the College and the person raising the concern is not appropriate, or possible, the staff member handling the concern will make a decision that best aligns with the College's procedures and legal obligations. This decision will be communicated in writing to you (being usually within three (3) business days of the outcome being reached), the school's Complaints Register will be updated with the outcome, and communication kept in school records.

Details		Comment
Stage 2: Make a complaint to the relevant campus Principal		
Important Note: If Stage 1 was already dealt with by the Principal, Stage 2 is not relevant		
Step 1	Make a complaint	If you are not satisfied with the way your concern has been handled, you may choose to make a formal written complaint by submitting a Complaint Intake Form (Appendix 1) available through front office. Complaints should ordinarily be made within one (1) calendar month of the initial concern first being raised with the College. A formal complaint should at first instance be addressed to the campus Principal. If the complaint concerns a Principal, the complaint should be made to the Executive Principal (see Stage 3), in which case the Executive Principal will manage the process outlined below. You may lodge a formal written complaint to the relevant Principal by emailing info@aic.wa.edu.au (Perth) or info@aic.sa.edu.au (Adelaide). Your email should advise which school the complaint relates to. You may also telephone your school directly to request a meeting with the Principal. Please note that if phoning to arrange a meeting, Reception staff will take your details and pass them to the relevant staff member who will endeavour to confirm a meeting time as soon as it is practicable to do so.
Step 2	Acknowledge receipt	The relevant campus Principal will acknowledge receipt of the formal written complaint as soon as practicable (being usually within three (3) business days).
Step 3	Review of complaint	When dealing with a formal written complaint, the College's objective is to achieve a resolution by: ▪ Clarifying the substance of the complaint, and the steps taken by the College to address the initial concern. ▪ Identifying whether the complaint raises an issue regarding non-compliance with the College's procedures. ▪ Identifying whether the complaint raises an issue that would be more appropriately addressed under the College's Child Protection Policy ▪ Communicating with you and relevant parent(s), student(s) and staff, in an attempt to resolve the issue by agreement (where practicable). ▪ Failing agreement, investigating the complaint and deciding appropriate outcomes in accordance with procedural fairness and natural justice principles. The Principal may delegate parts of the complaint-management process (including to another member of the Leadership Team or staff), and seek the assistance of third parties, however any ultimate decision will still be made by the Principal.

	Details	Comment
		If the Principal or their delegate arranges to speak with you, you may request to have someone else present as a support person. The support person can be a relative or a friend, but please note that the role of a support person is to provide you with support and not to act as an advocate.
Step 4	Outcome	The Principal or delegate will aim to communicate the outcome of a formal written complaint in writing within fifteen (15) business days where practicable. The Principal will promptly report any formal written complaints, and relevant outcomes, to the Executive Principal. This is part of the cyclical review and risk management process at the College.

Details		Comment
Stage 3: Escalate the Complaint to the Executive Principal		
Step 1	Make a complaint	If you are not satisfied with the way your concern has been handled by a Principal, you may choose to escalate your complaint. Complaints should ordinarily be escalated within two (2) weeks of the matter being resolved by the relevant Principal. Formal escalation of the complaint should be addressed to the Executive Principal. If the escalation of the complaint concerns the Executive Principal, the complaint should be escalated to the Chairman of the Board (see Stage 4), in which case the Chairman of the Board will manage the process outlined below. If the escalation of the complaint concerns a matter which has not yet been resolved by the relevant school Principal, the Executive Principal will first consider whether the matter should be reverted back to the Principal to manage in accordance with College process. You may lodge a formal escalation to the Executive Principal at info@aic.wa.edu.au. Your email should identify the school where the original complaint was investigated to assist the Executive Principal. You may also telephone Head Office Reception on 08 9362 2100 and ask to speak with the Executive Principal's Personal Assistant to request a meeting. Please note that if phoning to arrange a meeting, the staff member taking the call will take your details and endeavour to confirm a meeting time as soon as it is practicable to do so.
Step 2	Acknowledge receipt	The Executive Principal will acknowledge receipt of the formal escalation as soon as practicable (being usually within three (3) business days).
Step 3	Review of complaint	When dealing with a formal escalation, the College's objective is to achieve a resolution by: ▪ Clarifying the substance of the complaint being escalated, and the steps taken by the College to address the initial concern. ▪ Identifying whether the escalated complaint raises an issue regarding non-compliance with the College's procedures. ▪ Identifying whether the escalated complaint raises an issue that would be more appropriately addressed under the College's Child Protection Policy. ▪ Communicating with you and relevant parent(s), student(s) and staff, in an attempt to resolve the issue by agreement (where practicable). ▪ Failing agreement, investigating the complaint and deciding appropriate outcomes in accordance with procedural fairness and natural justice principles.

	Details	Comment
		The Executive Principal may delegate parts of the complaint-management process (including to another member of the Executive Team or staff), and seek the assistance of third parties, however any ultimate decision will still be made by the Executive Principal. If the Executive Principal or delegate arranges to speak with you, you may request to have someone else present as a support person. The support person can be a relative or a friend, but please note that the role of a support person is to provide you with support and not to act as an advocate.
Step 4	Outcome	The Executive Principal or delegate will aim to communicate the outcome of a formal written complaint in writing within fifteen (15) business days where practicable. The Executive Principal will promptly report any formal written complaints, and relevant outcomes, to the Board via the Board Chair. This is part of the cyclical review and risk management process at the College.

	Details	Comment
Stage 4 – Request a Review		
Step 1	Request a review by the Chairman of the Board	If you are not satisfied that your formal written complaint has been adequately resolved by the Executive Principal, you may request a review by writing to the Chairman of the Board via email at chair@aic.wa.edu.au or by post at: Board Chair PO Box 252 CLOVERDALE , WA 6985 Members of the College community who raise grievances with other Board members will be directed to follow the procedures set out in this policy (eg. escalating a complaint to the Executive Principal or requesting a review by writing to the Board Chair). Requests for review must be made in writing within ten (10) business days of the date the Executive Principal communicated the outcome of your escalated complaint in writing. The grounds for the review, and in particular any concerns you have with the way the relevant complaint was dealt with, must be clearly identified in the request for review.
Step 2	Review	Please note that in accordance with good governance, the Board entrusts the Executive Principal with the day-to-day management of the College, and in particular its staff and students. The Executive Principal is afforded significant discretion regarding such matters. Accordingly, any review of the Executive Principal's decision under this policy will be confined to the Board Chair deciding whether there is evidence that the College's procedures have not been followed, in a way likely to have meaningfully influenced the Executive Principal's decision, or that the Executive Principal unreasonably exercised their discretion. The Board Chair may delegate parts of the review, or seek the assistance of third parties, however any ultimate decision will still be made by the Board Chair. For the avoidance of doubt, the Board Chair will not delegate to the Executive Principal a review of a decision they have already made. However, if the Board Chair is satisfied that a complaint has not been properly raised (or dealt) with by the Executive Principal (and the Executive Principal does not otherwise have a conflict of interest), the Board Chair may refer the matter to the Executive Principal to make an initial decision (noting that decision would then create a right to request a review).
Step 3	Outcome	The Board Chair will aim to communicate the outcome of a request for review in writing within forty-five (45) business days where practicable. The Board Chair will promptly report any requests for review, and relevant outcomes, to the Board.

SCHEDULE 2: Relevant Considerations

1 Withdrawal of a Complaint

A complaint can be withdrawn at any stage during the processes outlined in this policy. A complaint can only be withdrawn by the person who made the complaint to the College.

Ideally, all complaints should be retracted in writing, however a dated notation on the College's systems, stating the complaint has been withdrawn verbally by the appropriate person can be made by a staff member at the College responsible for managing the complaint.

The College will notify affected parties if a complaint is withdrawn, where considered appropriate.

Regardless of a person's wish to withdraw a complaint, complaints that have disciplinary implications for a member of staff may still be followed up by the College.

2 Anonymous Complaints

The College is committed to dealing with complaints in accordance with the processes outlined in this policy. The College respects in some cases, complainants would prefer to remain anonymous and not put a name to their complaint.

The College treats complaints about the College, a staff member, a student's education, enrolment and/or a student's wellbeing with the utmost importance, and will investigate such complaints raised to the fullest extent practicable. However, anonymity can make it difficult for the College to effectively resolve complaints (particularly where the College is being asked to accept an anonymous source's version of events) and are accordingly discouraged.

3 Previously Addressed, Stale or Vexatious Grievances

Grievances that have been previously addressed by the College or externally, or which were not raised with the College within a reasonable period of time (having regard to the nature of the relevant complaint), will not be considered in the absence of highly relevant new information and/or evidence coming to light. The College does not tolerate vexatious complaints.

4 External Complaints and Redress

The College acknowledges that complaints relating to the College can also be made to an external body, or be the subject of legal action. However, the College encourages its community to raise any complaints, and work to resolve such matters, in accordance with the procedures outlined in this policy.

If a complaint is elevated to an external mediator or independent arbiter, the costs are to be paid by the party or parties who requested the appointment of the external mediator or independent arbiter, unless otherwise negotiated or ordered.

APPENDIX 1 – COMPLAINT INTAKE FORM

COMPLAINT INTAKE FORM - CONFIDENTIAL

Date:		Phone:		In Person:	
Email:		Letter:		Other:	

Person making complaint:	
Contact:	
Nature of Complaint:	
Person concerned in the matter:	
Information received by:	
Matter referred to:	
Date referred:	
Assessment Notes:	
Follow-up Notes:	