



2022/23

Compliments, complaints and suggestions

Reference guide

Overview - Students

Students help make our school a great place for everyone to learn.
We want students to give us feedback.

When you give feedback, you tell us what our school can do better to help you and others.
It's okay to give feedback. You won't be in trouble.



Your feedback can be a **compliment**. When you give a compliment, you tell the school what they are doing well.



Your feedback can be a **suggestion**. When you make a suggestion, you tell the school what they can do better.



Your feedback can be a **complaint**. When you make a complaint, you tell the school:

- you're not happy about something
- something isn't working well.

Making a complaint - Students

What can you make a complaint about?

You can make a complaint about our services.

You can make a complaint about:

- things that happened to you at school
- any part of your learning

You can make a complaint about what someone did at school.

You can make a complaint about a policy.

A policy is a plan for how we should do things.

Policies are where rules come from.

What should you think about?

There are things you should think about before you make a complaint.

You should think about:

- what happened
- who was there
- what are you not happy about
- what you would like the school to do when the school looks at your complaint

How can you make a complaint?

To make a complaint, you can talk to someone at the school.

For example, you might talk to a:

- teacher
- pastoral care teacher – a teacher who looks after students in a school year
- head of pastoral care – a senior teacher who looks after all students at school
- head of school – a senior teacher who looks after all children and teachers at school
- principal

You can talk to them:

- in person
- on the phone
- by sending an email

You can ask to make a time to meet to talk about what is happening. If the issue cannot be resolved straight away, they will let you know what will happen next.

You can also go to [our website](#) to:

- make a complaint
- give us feedback

In most situations, the information that you provide will be given to the relevant department, as they know the situation and can work with you and your parents and carers to resolve issues. We will let you know what will happen next.

If you need help to make a complaint, you can ask someone to assist you. You can also bring a support person or advocate to meetings. This might be a parent or a friend.

At the end of this document is a useful **Tips and Advice for Effective Complaining** containing information about what you can do to help us to understand your concerns.

You can make a complaint anonymously. However, if you do not provide your contact details, it can be hard to resolve the complaint and we cannot give you information about any action taken in response.

Making a complaint

- Parents and Carers

Parents and Carers can make a complaint about the services that we provide. It is best to let someone know about any problems or concerns as early as possible. Most problems can be solved by talking to the people who know the situation.

We encourage Parents and Carers to raise any concerns about their child's experiences at school with us.

In secondary school, the **teacher** or **Pastoral Care teacher** is often the best place to start.

In primary school, this will be the **classroom teacher**.

Alternatively, you may contact the **Head of Pastoral Care** or **Head of School**.

You may email or call, or you can ask to make a time to meet to talk about what is happening. If the issue cannot be resolved straight away, they will let you know what will happen next.

You can also make a complaint through the College's [online complaint form](#). In most situations, the information that you provide will be given to the relevant department, as they know the situation and can work with students and their parents and carers to resolve issues. We will let you know what will happen next.

If you need help to make a complaint, you can ask someone to assist you. You can also bring a support person or advocate to meetings. The following **Tips and Advice for Effective Complaining** has useful information about what you can do to help us to understand your concerns.

You can make a complaint anonymously. However, if you do not provide your contact details, it can be hard to resolve the complaint and we cannot give you information about any action taken in response.

Tips and Advice for effective Complaining

Introduction

The best education happens when families and schools work together. Southern Christian College aims to work in partnership with parents, carers, students and families to create positive learning environments.

There will be times when you want to ask a question, raise an issue or make a complaint about our school. We encourage you to raise any concerns with us early, so that prompt action can be taken. If you aren't satisfied with our response, you can make a complaint.

The complaints process can be time-consuming and emotionally demanding for everyone. We commit to treating you fairly and respectfully during this process. It helps us to understand your concerns and take action if you provide the information we need clearly and promptly. Here are some helpful tips on what to consider and the steps you can take when making a complaint.

Be clear

When contacting the College it is useful to be brief and focus on the facts relevant to your issue. Although you may feel strongly about the issue, it helps to communicate reasonably, rather than emotionally.

Be polite

When you speak to the person handling your issue with respect, they are more likely to respond respectfully. Avoid sarcasm as it can make your complaint appear less clear. Using rude or abusive language may lead to the complaint manager terminating the conversation. Even though you may be angry, speaking with a harsh tone can distract from the message you are trying to convey.

Be honest

The person handling your issue will often make further inquiries to the appropriate people. It's always best to tell the truth and stick to the facts. If you can support your information with records, it helps improve your credibility.

Be realistic

Think about what you would like to have happen and whether the school can reasonably do what you are asking. As schools can be busy places, it might take some time for things to happen - be realistic about your expectations and the timeframe for the school to respond.

Be informed

It is useful to read the related policies and other information on the College's website. If there is something you don't understand, ask questions.

Be cooperative

Help the person handling the issue by providing all the information necessary early on. If you have new information, keep them updated. If you do not wish to continue the matter, let them know.

We encourage you to approach teachers early, but keep in mind that teachers are often dealing with many issues at once. At first, they may only have time to talk briefly. In this case, you can arrange a time to speak with the teacher later.