

# Complaints Handling Policy

Author	Date	ED Approval	Board Adoption
EJT	September 2023	September 2023	September 2023

**MIT'S Purpose:** Supporting Indigenous students to achieve their educational aspirations in Melbourne

**MIT'S Vision:** Empowered Indigenous students inspiring strong communities

**MIT'S Values:** Respect Courage Culture Care

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## 1 Introduction

Melbourne Indigenous Transition School (MITS) recognises the importance of fostering supportive and respectful relationships with parents and families and developing strong partnerships within MITS's various stakeholder communities. It recognises there may be times when there are disagreements and issues of concern that may need to be resolved in a positive and professional way. MITS is committed to resolving complaints fairly and promptly and in accordance with relevant legislation.

This policy sets out the principles, guidelines and procedures governing MITS's approach to the management and resolution of complaints based on best practice - Guidelines for Complaint Management in Organisations (AS/NZS 10002:2014), which provides the best practice benchmarks for handling complaints.

The Policy is designed to be published on our public website as well as communicated through other mediums such as newsletters, our annual report and in induction and welcome packs for Board of Directors, staff and Volunteers.

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## 2 Commitment to child safety

MITS is committed to child safety. We want children to be safe, happy and empowered. We support and respect all children, as well as our staff and volunteers. Child safety is everyone's responsibility.

As a school for Indigenous students, we are committed to the cultural safety of Indigenous children, and to the cultural safety of children from culturally and/or linguistically diverse backgrounds. We are also committed to providing a safe environment for children with disabilities.

We have zero tolerance of child abuse, and all allegations and safety concerns will be treated very seriously and consistently with our robust policies and procedures and all external reporting obligations.

MITS is committed to preventing child abuse and identifying risks early, and removing and reducing these risks.

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## 3 Purpose

The policy applies to parents, contractors and other external members of MITS community as well as staff, volunteers and students who may be dissatisfied or have a concern or complaint in relation to a decision taken or an action or activity for which MITS is responsible. MITS encourages such concerns

to be identified and resolved speedily and informally and the formal process is only required when the complaint proves more difficult.

For complaints of a serious misconduct, such as sexual offences, criminal charges, serious incidents or matters related to mandatory reporting and reportable conduct, please also refer to MITS's Child Safety Policy, the Reportable Conduct Policy and seek guidance from the Executive or MITS's Child Safety Officers for further details.

## 4 Policy Principles

MITS recognises that the School community has a right to raise genuine issues of concern. It expects that the person raising the concern or complaint will:

- Raise matters promptly as soon as possible after the issue occurs
- Provide complete and factual information
- Maintain respect, privacy and confidentiality of everyone
- Act in good faith
- Acknowledge the common goal to achieve an acceptable and balanced outcome

MITS values the commitment of staff, parents and students to work closely together to provide the best educational opportunities for every child. The school is committed to the development of professional, trusting and cooperative relationships between MITS, parents and MITS community.

MITS is committed to resolving issues in the first instance through discussion and conciliation and encourages the aggrieved to speak directly with the relevant individual.

MITS will endeavour to resolve matters as quickly as possible however realises the timeframe for resolution may depend on the complexity, nature and scope of the complaint.

MITS is committed to child safety and has a zero tolerance of child abuse. In the context of this policy, the response to a complaint relating to child safety will be given the highest priority and attention.

MITS is committed to the sensitive handling of any complaints and understandings that confidentiality is important.

The complaints policy and procedures are intended to be conciliatory, non adversarial and non-legal.

<b>Visibility</b>	<p>Information about how and where to make a complaint, as well as how a complaint will be handled will be publicised within MITS community.</p> <p>The actions taken to respond to a complaint will be well documented and include the reasons underpinning any decisions made.</p>
<b>Accessibility</b>	<p>Information about how to make a complaint and the procedures when responding to a complaint will be readily accessible on MITS's intranet and website. The complaint handling process will be flexible and include the ability to make a complaint in person, by phone or in writing. Support will be provided to Complainants with special needs, including interpreting services, support persons and/or witnesses.</p>
<b>Culturally Safe</b>	<p>Acknowledging that MITS's students, families and staff are culturally diverse, coming from around Australia and beyond, and representative of many different Indigenous communities, MITS will use all endeavours to ensure that each complaint is dealt with in as culturally safe a manner as possible for both Complainant and Respondent. This will involve, at a minimum, doing our best to understand at the outset any cultural sensitivities of the parties to the complaint, and of the complaint itself, and if necessary seeking advice in relation to the safest way to manage those sensitivities from MITS's stakeholders.</p>

<b>Responsiveness</b>	<p>MITs will acknowledge, investigate and respond to complaints within an appropriate and timely manner. Complainants will be kept informed of the progress of their complaint. When the matter is complex and additional time is required to bring the matter to resolution, Complainants will be advised accordingly.</p>
<b>Objectivity</b>	<p>MITs welcomes diverse views and opinions and acknowledges that the expression and exploration of alternate views are elements of a safe, open, healthy and dynamic environment.</p>
<b>Cost</b>	<p>There will be no cost to the Complainant to access the internal complaint-handling process of MITs.</p>
<b>Investigator</b>	<p>The investigator will be a member of the MITs Executive Team or a Child Safety Officer with sufficient skill and experience and not previously involved in the matter. An investigator may be an external advisor appointed by the Executive Director or their delegate.</p>
<b>Protection of Privacy</b>	<p>Complainants will not be victimised or discriminated against.</p> <p>Personally identifiable information concerning the Complainant will be protected from disclosure except where needed in relation to the complaint. This means that the complaint will only be discussed with those directly involved in the complaint-handling process.</p>
<b>Student-focused</b>	<p>MITs will be open and receptive to complaints and committed to resolving them with the educational wellbeing of students as the first priority.</p> <p>MITs is committed to child safety and has a zero tolerance of child abuse. The response to a complaint relating to child safety will be given the highest priority and attention.</p>
<b>Accountability</b>	<p>Complaints will be handled in accordance with procedural fairness, respect and in good faith. The school will be accountable, both internally and externally, for its decision making and complaint-handling performance. The school will provide explanations and reasons for its decisions.</p>
<b>Continual improvement</b>	<p>Complaint-handling procedures will be regularly reviewed for improvement. Complaint data and feedback will be used to identify recurrent themes and to implement improvement measures where a need is identified to improve the care and service provided.</p>

## 5 Key Responsibilities

The Board is responsible for determining this policy, reviewing it on an annual basis, and responding to any appeals referred to by the Executive Director.

The Chair of Board is responsible for receiving and managing complaints against a member of the Executive Team, the Principal or a member of Board.

The Executive Director holds overall accountability for ensuring that the system for managing complaints is effective and communicated.

The People and Capability Manager is responsible for all complaints regarding staffing and employment.

## Definitions

<b>Complaint</b>	An expression of dissatisfaction with an action taken, decision made, or service provided, or the failure to provide a service, take action or make a decision.
<b>Grievance</b>	A dispute or disagreement between two parties. A grievance is also a complaint one party has against another party for some alleged wrong committed by the second party.
<b>Complainant</b>	The party that brings a complaint against another
<b>Respondent</b>	The person against whom the complaint is made
<b>Support Person</b>	Has the role of providing moral support but cannot interfere with procedures and should refrain from interrupting and adding their personal opinion. This person cannot be someone who will be interviewed as part of the investigation.
<b>Resolved</b>	A complaint is considered to be 'resolved' when an acceptable outcome is reached between both the complainant and respondent
<b>Finalised</b>	A complaint is considered to be 'finalised' when the Executive Director has made a final determination on the matter after exhausting the processes set out in this policy
<b>Unresolved</b>	A complaint is considered to be 'unresolved' when agreement cannot be reached on a course of action and/or a remedy, or if the remedy cannot be implemented.

## 6 Types of Complaints

MITS is committed to considering all complaints.

### Legitimate Complaints

Legitimate complaints and genuine factual expressions of dissatisfaction warrant response and resolution. MITS is committed to providing the best quality educational services to Indigenous students and child safety. MITS will act upon feedback to ensure utmost safety and continuous improvement.

### Anonymous Complaints

Anonymous complaints raise natural justice issues for Respondents, who have a right to know particulars of allegations made against them. However, it should be recognised that MITS may not be able to fully consider a complaint if it cannot effectively liaise with a Complainant.

In consultation with relevant MITS staff, the People and Capability Manager and Executive Director will determine the extent to which an anonymous complaint will be investigated. The school will always act when anonymous concerns about child safety are raised.

### Vexatious Complaints

Inaccurate, misleading, malicious or false accusations have negative consequences for the person(s) concerned, interpersonal relationships and the morale of MITS community. Where it is found that a

complaint has been made in bad faith to cause distress to one or more people, or as practical joke, disciplinary measures will be taken.

**Unreasonable Complaint Conduct** is behaviour that:

- Is victimising (complaints cause further disadvantage or in response to retaliation or threats)
- Is vexatious (a complaint brought without merit, often to cause annoyance to another person)
- Is oriented towards conflict or defamation
- Is clearly and significantly outside the expectation of confidentiality, co-operation, courtesy and respect

MITS will not tolerate this conduct.

### **What issues are covered by this policy?**

Issues that might be considered under the complaints policy could include, for example:

- A breach of the obligations by MITS in relation to the democratic principles as set out in the Education and Reform Regulations (2017).
- Availability of information about MITS's performance.
- The right of a parent or student to access information about the student's achievement.
- Decisions, actions, or activities for which MITS is responsible and which are thought to go against the spirit of MITS's mission and values or which are alleged to be inequitable or procedurally unfair.
- Perceived personal concerns that impact school-related interpersonal relationships.

### **Raising a Concern or Complaint**

#### **For Parents**

Where possible, MITS encourages concerns to be identified and resolved speedily and informally with the member of staff most directly involved such as the Head of Teaching and Learning or the relevant Boarding House Manager.

If you have a concern about your child or feedback for MITS, in the first instance, please email the Head of Teaching and Learning or the relevant Boarding House Manager. They will endeavour to acknowledge your email within 24 hours and arrange a good time to discuss any concerns you or your child may have.

Where your concern has not been resolved to the satisfaction of those concerned, the matter should be raised as follows:

<b>Who</b>	<b>Matters Relating to</b>
The Principal	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• If the issue is teaching related</li></ul>
The Head of Boarding	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• If the issue is boarding related</li></ul>
The Head of Wellbeing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• If the issue relates to the wellbeing of your child</li></ul>
The Principal	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• About issues relating to complex student issues</li></ul>
The Executive Director or the People and Capability Manager	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Issues relating to a breach of any school policy, including but not limited to a breach of the Child Safety Policy, the Child Safety Code of Conduct, the Reportable Conduct of Staff, Volunteers or Others Policy, or any Mandatory Reporting obligations, school</li></ul>

	management, staff members or very complex student issues
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Refer to Appendix 1 for details on how to make a complaint.

### For Students

From time to time, you may have a concern, a suggestion or a complaint. It is important for us as a school to hear and understand these matters so staff can address your concerns and improve what we do and how we behave. We will do our best to remedy problems promptly and deal with each matter fairly.

Where possible, you should raise your concern or make your suggestion to the Head of Teaching and Learning or your Boarding House Manager. However, if the complaint is about these people, then it can be made by speaking to or writing to the Principal or the Head of Boarding.

Initially your concern will be handled in confidence, although sometimes the member of staff to whom you speak, as the responsible adult, will need to tell someone else about the issue. If that is necessary, you will be informed before any confidential information is passed on.

Who	Matters Relating to
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>the Head of Teaching and Learning or the relevant Boarding House Manager</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>General issues of staff and/or student behaviour that are contrary to MITS' Code of Conduct</li> <li>Incidents of bullying, harassment and/or victimisation in the classroom, school yard or a boarding house</li> <li>Academic matters such as teaching methods, curriculum, assessment and school reports</li> <li>Boarding matters such as accommodation, food or other boarding house policies and practices</li> <li>School or boarding practices, a breach of any school policy, including but not limited to a breach of the Child Safety Policy, the Child Safety Code of Conduct, the Reportable Conduct of Staff, Volunteers or Others Policy, or any Mandatory Reporting obligations or decisions made or ignored that are perceived to be unfair, unreasonable or inappropriate</li> </ul>

Refer to Appendix 2 for details on how to make a complaint.

### For Staff

Staff are encouraged to resolve issues as quickly and as simply as possible without resorting to unnecessary process and bureaucracy.

Where possible, the staff member who receives the concern or complaint should deal with it themselves rather than escalate the matter. We acknowledge that some matters, however, need to be escalated and require a swift response.

Such matters are likely to include:

- anything to do with child safe standards that must be dealt with under MITS's Child Safety Policy
- matters that allege misconduct, corruption or illegal behaviour
- complaints against the Principal, a member of the Executive Team or the Board
- privacy issues that must be dealt with under MITS's Privacy Policy
- legal issues and requests for compensation or payments
- issues that have a wider school or systemic implication

Who	Matters Relating to
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• the Head of Teaching and Learning or the relevant Boarding House Manager</li> <li>• Executive Director</li> <li>• Principal</li> <li>• Head of Boarding</li> <li>• People and Capability Manager</li> <li>• Respondent against whom the complaint is made</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• General issues of staff and/or student behaviour that are contrary to MITS code of conduct</li> <li>• Incidents of bullying, harassment and/or victimisation in the workplace</li> <li>• Occupational, Health and Safety matters</li> <li>• Workload and working conditions</li> <li>• General HR issues</li> <li>• School practices, a breach of any school policy, including but not limited to a breach of the Child Safety Policy, the Child Safety Code of Conduct, the Reportable Conduct of Staff, Volunteers or Others Policy, or any Mandatory Reporting obligations or decisions made or ignored that are perceived to be unfair, unreasonable or inappropriate</li> </ul>

Refer to Appendix 3 for details on how to make a complaint.

### Record Keeping

It is important that consistent, well-structured, concise and complete information is on file for current and future use.

The following documentation will form the record of the complaint and will be kept in the relevant student or staff file on Sentral or within the employee records system:

- the formal complaints form, whether completed by the parents or by MITS and confirmed by the parents
- a record of the complaints meeting
- a record of the resolution
- a record of the follow up meeting or email to the parents.

The management of these records will follow MITS's Record Management Policy. Except where dictated otherwise by law, MITS will retain all records of complaints for a minimum of one year after the family or student has left MITS and will then be destroyed. The records will be kept secured by the Executive Director or the Board (in the case of a complaint made against the Executive Director) as is appropriate.

### Breach of Policy

Any breach of this Policy will be handled by the Executive Director, or delegated by the Executive Director to an authorised representative, to handle on a case-by-case basis. The Executive Director may take

such action as considered appropriate in response to a breach of this policy and may include but is not limited to the following:

- Provision of a verbal or a written warning
- Withdrawal of certain privileges or opportunities
- Exclusion from future school events or functions
- Exclusion from MITS grounds and facilities
- Revocation of an enrolment

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## 7 Communication of the Policy

The school publishes its Complaints Management Policy on the School's website.

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## 8 Policy Implementation Documents

The Formal Complaint Form supports the implementation of this Policy.

### Other relevant Policies

- Child Safety Policy
- Child Safety Code of Conduct
- Reportable Conduct Policy
- Student Health and Wellbeing Policy
- Behaviour Management Policy
- Privacy Policy
- Records Management Policy

### Legislative Requirements

- Education and Training Reform Act 2006 (Vic)
- Education and Training Reform Regulations (2017)
- Privacy Act 1988 (Cth)

### Standards and Guidelines

- Victorian Registration and Qualifications Authority (VRQA) Minimum Standards
- Child Safe Standards Ministerial Order 1359

### Policy Review

MITS is committed to the continuous improvement of its Complaints Management Policy and procedures. Unless otherwise stated, this policy remains in place until it is superseded by an amended version. This policy will be reviewed every two years or more often as circumstances require. Next scheduled review date is April 2025.



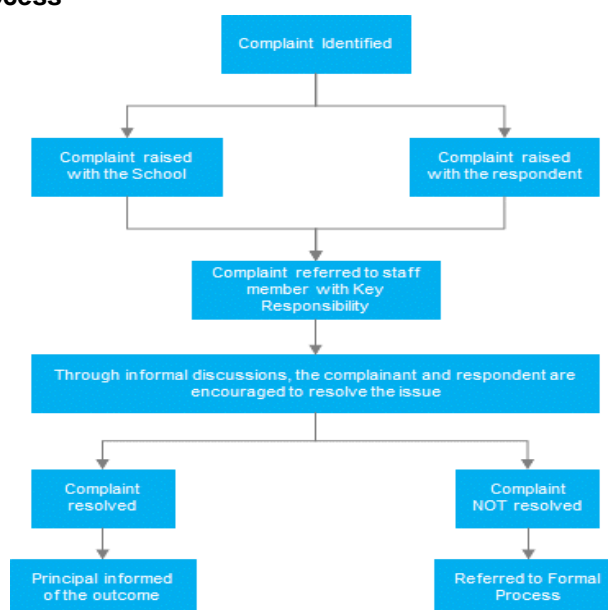
## Appendix 1: Parents who wish to raise a concern or a complaint

In the first instance a concern or complaint should be made directly to MITS and to the first point of contact listed below. We encourage you to telephone, write to or email the following to attempt to resolve the issue:

First Point of Contact/Staff member with key responsibility	Matters Relating to
The Principal	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>If the issue is teaching related</li> </ul>
The Head of Boarding	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>If the issue is boarding related</li> </ul>
The Head of Wellbeing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>If the issue relates to the wellbeing of your child</li> </ul>
The Principal	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>About issues relating to complex student issues</li> </ul>
The Executive Director or the People and Capability Manager	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Issues relating to a breach of any school policy, including but not limited to a breach of the Child Safety Policy, the Child Safety Code of Conduct, the Reportable Conduct of Staff, Volunteers or Others Policy, or any Mandatory Reporting obligations, school management, staff members or very complex student issues</li> </ul>

If a complainant is unsure who to contact in the first instance or is unsuccessful in initial contact, please contact the Principal, the Head of Boarding or the People and Capability Manager.

### Informal Complaint Process



If the complaint is made directly to the Respondent, the Respondent must inform the appropriate staff member with Key Responsibility to respond to the complaint. A resolution will be encouraged through informal discussion between the complainant and respondent. All meetings, discussions, telephone calls or emails will be recorded and documented by the staff member with Key Responsibility on the complaints register.

The Executive Director, the Principal, the Head of Boarding or the People and Capability Manager (as appropriate) will be briefed about the complaint and the outcome of the process.

If the matter is not resolved informally following reasonable attempts, the Complainant will be advised to submit a formal written complaint to the Executive Director using the Formal Complaints Form attached at the end of this document (Appendix 4).

### **Formal resolution process – all complainants**

Before an investigation to a formal complaint is commenced, the Complainant must have made reasonable attempts to resolve the complaint informally with the Respondent in the first instance.

#### *Step 1: Written complaint*

If the concern or complaint is not resolved to the satisfaction of parents through the informal process, a formal complaint should be made in writing using the Formal Complaint Form at the end of this policy (Appendix 4). The nature of the complaint should be clearly identifiable. If there is more than one problem, parents are advised to list the issues concisely and clearly note any steps taken to resolve the complaint, noting key facts such as what, where, when, how and any supporting evidence she/he may have, including witnesses, emails, photographs and texts.

All formal complaints are to be lodged with the Executive Director. If the complaint is in relation to the Executive Director, the complaint should be made in writing using the formal complaints form and should be addressed to the Chair of the Board of Directors.

All formal complaints received will be noted and acted on promptly by the Executive Director who receives the complaint. MITS will acknowledge the complaint and provide a timeline for investigation. MITS will make every effort to resolve a concern or complaint as quickly as possible however, if a complaint involves many students and/or a range of issues, MITS may need more time to investigate and resolve it.

Upon receipt and depending on the nature of the complaint, the Executive Director may initiate the investigation process by delegating the complaint to an appropriate member of staff who has Key Responsibility.

Parents will be invited to meet with the Executive Director or a member of the Executive Team to discuss the matter. Parents may choose to have someone support them at the meeting and this could be a relative or a friend however it is not appropriate for that person to be a legal representative.

Parents will be invited to review the completed form to confirm that the complaint has been accurately recorded.

If more than one parent or a set of parents raises the same or a substantially similar problem, each complaint will be managed separately.

Parents will also be asked to indicate, if legal, possible and practicable, how they would want the complaint to be resolved.

Conversations should be respectful and constructive. If the conversation becomes no longer conciliatory, either party may ask for the conversation to be temporarily halted and rescheduled for another time.

#### *Step 2: Investigation*

Some complaints can be resolved through discussion but others require that the problem or allegation be investigated before coming to a resolution.

The investigator will be a Child Safety Officer with sufficient skill and experience, not previously involved in the matter. If it is thought advisable and necessary, the Executive Director may appoint an external advisor as investigator.

In carrying out an investigation, MITS will be mindful of the need for confidentiality. The parents will be informed in advance of any decision to speak to others during the course of the investigation.

The investigator will meet with the Complainant and outline the principles that apply to the procedure to be followed.

The meeting will discuss the matter thoroughly, ideally using the following steps:

- a clear description and understanding of the issue;
- the claimed impact and whom it impacts;
- what is claimed will happen if the issue is not resolved;
- what action(s) is requested in order to resolve the complaint.

These steps will be summarised briefly and will be included in the documentation of the process.

At each step of the process, all those attending the meeting will have the opportunity to put forward their point of view and will be treated with dignity and respect.

It may not be possible to agree the way forward in just one meeting; in this case further meetings will be scheduled until all those involved agree the issue has been considered as thoroughly as needed.

At any time in the process, the investigator:

- May choose to contact the parents of any students involved;
- May choose to interview any witnesses identified by the Complainant, check the accuracy of the evidence before making a written statement of the evidence given by the witnesses;
- Will offer the Complainant the opportunity to meet with the Principal to discuss the complaint and provide additional information where relevant;
- Will document, in writing, all meetings and interviews conducted during the formal process. Any supporting evidence such as emails, photographs or other documentation will be copied and attached to any written notes;
- Will review relevant information and documents;
- Will obtain any other relevant information or documentation that will assist in resolving the complaint;
- May seek advice, where appropriate, from individuals or organisations that may be able to assist in resolving the grievance.

### *Step 3: Outcome and resolution*

The investigator will provide a written report to the Executive Director detailing all the evidence and a finding as to whether the complaint is substantiated or not.

All those involved should agree when the complaint (or an aspect of the complaint) is considered resolved. If not everyone agrees, the complaint procedures should continue until a resolution is found, even if the resolution is to agree that the complaint is dismissed or that no further action should be taken.

In resolving the issue, the following steps should be followed:

- a statement confirming that those involved consider the complaint (or an aspect of the complaint) is resolved;
- how the complaint is resolved;
- a description of each specific action or decision, including a note as to who is responsible for the action and by when.

These steps will be summarised briefly and will be included in the documentation of the process.

When the complaint is resolved (or dismissed), a follow up meeting or conversation should be scheduled to ensure that the agreed actions have been implemented and that there are no further matters outstanding.

If the decision concludes that the complaint is not substantiated, the complainant and the respondent will both be advised accordingly. Each party has the right to appeal and request an independent arbiter to review the decision.

If an appeal is lodged, the Executive Director will outsource to an independent arbiter to examine all of the evidence and advise accordingly. The independent arbiter's review will be final with MITS.

If the Executive Director believes that there is a risk of litigation, MITS's insurers and Chair of Board will be notified.

#### *Step 4: Review*

MITS reviews all data from a complaint to identify opportunities to improve its care and service.

It is expected that a formal complaint will be resolved when the complainant and MITS agree on an appropriate response or remedy. A complaint may be dismissed, if after it has been investigated, the investigation has determined that the complaint cannot be substantiated.

It may not always be possible to fully resolve all complaints to the Complainant's satisfaction. This could happen if the Complainant has unrealistic expectations about the outcome of their complaint or MITS policy is contrary to their opinions.

Throughout any complaints process involving a student's parent, MITS will use every endeavour to care for and protect that student and their parent, as well as any other student connected to the complaint and their parent, until resolution of the complaint.

#### **Record Keeping**

MITS will keep consistent, well-structured, concise and complete information on file for current and future use. Parents will be provided with a copy of the record of the complaint.

The following documentation will form the record of the complaint:

- the formal complaints form, whether completed by the parents or by MITS and confirmed by the parents;
- a record of the complaints meeting and the steps followed as set out above;
- a record of the resolution as set out above;
- a record of the follow up meeting.

The management of these records will follow MITS's Record Management Policy. Except where dictated otherwise by law, MITS will retain all records of complaints for a minimum of one year after the family or student has left MITS and then will be destroyed. The records will be kept secured by the Executive Director or the Board (in the case of a complaint made against the Executive Director) as is appropriate.

## Appendix 2: Students who wish to raise a concern or a complaint

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### Complaints and Grievance Informal Resolution Process - Students

A student may wish to make a complaint to MITS over matters such as but not limited to the following:

- General issues of staff and/or student behaviour that are contrary to any school policy, including but not limited to a breach of the Child Safety Policy, the Child Safety Code of Conduct, the Reportable Conduct of Staff, Volunteers or Others Policy, or any Mandatory Reporting obligations;
- Incidents of bullying, harassment and/or victimisation at school or in a boarding house;
- Academic matters such as teaching methods, curriculum, assessment and school reports;
- School practices, policies or decisions made or ignored that are perceived to be unfair, unreasonable or inappropriate.

Should the complainant wish to make a complaint to MITS over a matter that is within the scope of this policy they may do so by raising the complaint directly to the:

- A Teacher
- The Head of Teaching and Learning
- The Principal
- The Head of Boarding
- A Boarding House Manager
- A member of the Executive Team
- Respondent against whom the complaint is made

It is recommended that students follow the escalation process when initiating a complaint. This means that all student complaints should first be directed to the Head of Teaching and Learning or their Boarding House Manager for resolution. If the complaint is made directly to the Respondent, the Respondent must inform the Head of Teaching and Learning or the applicable Boarding House Manager.

A resolution will be encouraged through informal discussion between the Complainant, the Respondent and the Head of Teaching and Learning or the applicable Boarding House Manager (as appropriate). All meetings, discussions, telephone calls or emails will be recorded and documented by the MITS staff member handling the complaint on the complaints register. In the event that a resolution cannot be reached, the matter will be escalated to the Principal and/or the Head of Boarding followed by the Executive Director.

The Executive Director will be briefed about the complaint and the outcome of the process.

If the matter is not resolved informally, the complainant will be advised to submit a formal written complaint to the Executive Director using the Formal Complaints Form attached at the end of this document (Appendix 4). At this point in time, parents may be contacted, depending on the severity of the complaint. The process for determination of a formal complaint will follow Steps 1 – 4 outlined above in Appendix 1.

Throughout any complaints process involving a student, MITS will use every endeavour to care for and protect that student, and any other student connected to the complaint, until resolution of the complaint.

## Appendix 3: Staff who wish to raise a concern or a complaint

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### Complaints and Grievance Informal Resolution Process - Staff

A staff member may wish to make a complaint to the School over matters such as but not limited to the following:

- General issues of staff and/or student behaviour that are contrary to any school policy, including but not limited to a breach of the Child Safety Policy, the Child Safety Code of Conduct, the Reportable Conduct of Staff, Volunteers or Others Policy, or any Mandatory Reporting obligations;
- Incidents of bullying, harassment and/or victimisation in the workplace;
- Occupational, Health and Safety matters;
- Workload and working conditions;
- General HR issues;
- School practices, policies or decisions made or ignored that is perceived to be unfair, unreasonable or inappropriate;

Should the Complainant wish to make a complaint to MITS over a matter that is within the scope of this policy they may do so by raising the complaint directly to the:

- Principal
- The People and Capability Manager
- A member of the Executive Team
- Respondent against whom the complaint is made

If the complaint is made directly to the Respondent, the Respondent must inform the appropriate staff member with Key Responsibility to respond to the complaint. A resolution will be encouraged through informal discussion between the complainant and respondent. All meetings, discussions, telephone calls or emails will be recorded and documented by the staff member with Key Responsibility on the complaints register.

The Executive Director will be briefed about the complaint and the outcome of the process.

If the matter is not resolved informally, the complainant will be advised to submit a formal written complaint to the Executive Director using the Formal Complaints Form attached at the end of this document (Appendix 4). The process for determination of a formal complaint will follow Steps 1 – 4 outlined above in Appendix 1.

Throughout any complaints process involving a member of staff, MITS will use every endeavour to care for and protect that member of staff, and any other member of staff connected to the complaint, until resolution of the complaint.

#### Review of a Decision

A request for a decision to be reviewed should be made in writing to the Executive Director setting out the grounds for a review. Upon receipt of the request, the Executive Director will determine the most appropriate way to review the decision. Once the review is complete, the Executive Director's decision will be communicated in accordance with privacy and confidentiality principles.

## Appendix 4

### Formal Complaint Form

Complainant's Contact Details		
Full Name:	Phone:	
Address:	Email:	

Nature of Complaint

Complaint Details
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Describe the incident and/or your concerns</li><li>• Include key dates and times, such as when the incident occurred</li><li>• Details of telephone conversations or emails (attach copies)</li><li>• Any other relevant information</li></ul>

Preferred Outcome