



CHRIST'S COLLEGE
CANTERBURY

Historical Abuse Complaints Policy

Responsibility for Policy:	Board Chair
Approving Authority:	Executive Principal
Applies to:	Anyone within the care of Christ's College
Last Review Date:	February 2021
Next Review Date:	February 2023

INTRODUCTION:

Christ's College is committed to acknowledging and apologising for historical abuse of anyone within its care, to providing redress, and to reviewing policies and procedures to prevent the potential recurrence of further abuse.

This policy establishes a formal process for people to seek redress and resolution for abuse that occurred while in care of or otherwise engaged with Christ's College.

In support of that process, Christ's College has appointed an Historic Complaints Facilitator (the Facilitator) to manage and oversee the complaints process. The Facilitator will report to the Board Chair and the Executive Principal.

The Board of Christ's College is responsible for ensuring all complaints are investigated in accordance with the procedures outlined in this policy and following the principles of natural justice. In all cases, the Board Chair and the Executive Principal will work together in addressing the complaints and resolving them with the guidance of the Facilitator.

PURPOSE:

The purpose of this policy is to describe and guide the principles and processes in relation to Survivors of historic abuse when in the care of Christ's College. It's aims include:

- To acknowledge the abuse, accept responsibility for it and apologise to the Survivor
- To provide redress
- To review policies and procedures to prevent future abuse

DEFINITIONS:

Redress means to remedy, set right and/or compensate. The College seeks to firstly acknowledge harm done to people who experienced abuse while in its care, then actively engage in steps to 'set right' the experience to the extent that is possible.

Abuse is defined as the harming (physical, emotional, psychological or sexual), ill-treatment, neglect or deprivation of any person.

Survivor means the victim of the abuse

Board means the Governors of Christ's College from time to time.

College means Christ's College.

Executive Principal means the person employed as the primary executive officer of the College from time to time.

Facilitator means the Historical Claims Facilitator engaged to manage and oversee the complaints process.

Royal Commission means the Royal Commission of Inquiry into Abuse in State and Faith-Based Care.

OVERARCHING PRINCIPLES:

For all concerns not covered separately, such as in the bullying or harassment policies, the procedures are as set out below:

In responding to claims of abuse and offers for redress, Christ's College will:

- Maintain a Survivor/complainant focus and recognise the potential for trauma associated with re-visiting and describing the abuse
- Ensure information about how College addresses historical Abuse complaints is readily accessible to the College community, past and present
- Allow Survivors to engage in the process in a manner of their own choosing. This may be verbal, written or on-line
- Behave with integrity in the complaint process by being open, respectful, and taking all complaints seriously and investigating them to the point of resolution to the extent that is possible
- Assess, offer, and provide resolution having regard to the nature and impact of abuse and cultural needs of the Survivor
- Prioritise the interests of Survivors above the interests of the College

COMPLAINTS PROCESS:

Any person or group may submit a complaint, either verbally or in writing. A complaint may also be lodged on behalf of the Survivor by an advocate or support person with the Survivor's consent.

1. Receipt of Complaint:
 - a) When a complaint is received, the College will acknowledge receipt within seven days and outline the complaints process to the Survivor
 - b) A review of any relevant College records will be undertaken

- c) The complaint will be lodged in the Historic Complaints Register and notice of the complaint will be provided to the Board
 - d) The complaint will be forwarded to the Facilitator to follow up in line with this policy, and to confer with the Survivor to ascertain their wishes regarding confidentiality issues and the use and retention of information gathered during the complaints process
2. Meetings and Investigation Process:
- a) The Facilitator will arrange a meeting with the Survivor at a mutually suitable venue and time
 - b) The Survivor is encouraged to bring a support person/s, advocate or interpreter to this and any subsequent meetings
 - c) The Facilitator shall conduct the meeting in accordance with the Principles of this policy
 - d) The meeting should be recorded but by mutual agreement
 - e) The meeting will include:
 - Any matter the Survivor wishes to raise including, but not limited to, any incident that may have resulted in harm, or has had a negative impact on them
 - The Survivor's desired outcome of the complaint process
 - Options for tangible support that Christ's College offer the Survivor to contribute to their healing and the resolution of their complaint.
 - f) Following the meeting:
 - The Facilitator may undertake further investigation and there may be further communication between the Facilitator and the Survivor at the request of either party
 - The Facilitator will provide the Survivor with a report recording the facts pertinent to the complaint for their agreement
 - The Facilitator will prepare a report with redress recommendations for the Board Chair and the Executive Principal to consider and then refer to the College Board for its consideration.
3. Consideration of Redress Recommendations:
- a) The report and recommendations for redress should be considered with the aim of progressing the Survivor's healing and resolving their complaint.
 - b) The decision-recording should anonymise all Survivor and complaint details that identify the person/s making the complaint.
 - c) The decision-making should determine the details of any tangible support along with the form of any apology to be offered to the Survivor, considering any preferences the Survivor has indicated e.g., whether the apology will be provided in writing or at a face-to-face meeting to be arranged at a later date.
- Note: Christ's College will not seek confidentiality as a pre-requisite to any settlement and where compensation is involved, will review the level of compensation paid to a Survivor once the outcomes of the Royal Commission are known.*
4. Resolutions and Outcomes:
- a) Unless otherwise agreed, the Facilitator will advise the Survivor of the outcome and of College's full response to the complaint.
 - b) On completion of the investigation, a summary of the findings will be documented, provided to the Survivor, and filed

The Board will regularly review the timeliness of the processing and outcome of each complaint.

Types of Redress

Christ's College may offer the following in terms of redress (as a full and final offer):

1. A personal response from the College, which may include a verbal and/or written apology to the Survivor by the Executive Principal and/or the Board Chair
2. Funding for counselling or psychological care where needed and which will be on the following basis:
 - Referral to a registered counsellor or psychologist acceptable to the Survivor;
 - On an initial finite basis, say 6 sessions, but with potential to agree additional sessions
3. Assistance, if required, to report abuse to the Police, if agreed with the Survivor
4. A monetary sum as some acknowledgement of the seriousness of the harm suffered. This offer will consider:
 - The severity of the abuse;
 - The severity of the effects and harm caused by the abuse;
 - Any other relevant factors including the outcomes of the Royal Commission.