POLICY
Community Complaints Policy & Procedure

POLICY AND PROCEDURE LEVEL

Level:	All Schools and Colleges, Early Years & OSHC Services and the Secretariat. This Framework is intended to apply consistently to all Schools, Colleges, Early Years & OSHC Services and the Secretariat (LEQ Office).

REVIEW AND VERSION TRACKING

Responsibility:	CLEQ, in consultation with Schools Assembly
Establishment Date:	May 2026
Review Cycle:	1 year
Last Review:	
Approval Date:	

Document ID	Date Adopted	Description of amendment
V1	TBA	Framework adoption.

DISTRIBUTION

Website:	Required - School and College. Required – Early Years & OSHC Services
Employee:	Required – Governance and Staff portals for CLEQ, Secretariat, Councils and Early Years & OSHC Services
Parents:	Required – Parents' Portal
Students	Required – Student Portal

Policy Statement

Faith Lutheran College Redlands, Faith Kindy Plus and Faith OSHC acknowledges the right of children, parents/guardians, employees and others to complain when dissatisfied with the Faith Lutheran College Redlands, Faith Kindy Plus and Faith OSHC's actions, including an action, inaction or decision of the school. Faith Lutheran College Redlands, Faith Kindy Plus and Faith OSHC encourages constructive criticism and complaints. Faith Lutheran College Redlands, Faith Kindy Plus and Faith OSHC is committed to ensuring that complaints received are handled in a responsive, efficient, consistent, effective, transparent and fair way.

Faith Lutheran College Redlands, Faith Kindy Plus and Faith OSHC recognises that time spent on handling complaints can be an investment in better service to children and parents/guardians and a better culture for employees, and views complaints as part of an important feedback and accountability process.

Some complaints are better handled under other policies and procedures of Faith Lutheran College Redlands, Faith Kindy Plus and Faith OSHC. Faith Lutheran College Redlands, Faith Kindy Plus and Faith OSHC have specific policies and procedures in place for issues such as child protection and discrimination.

Faith Lutheran College Redlands, Faith Kindy Plus and Faith OSHC have separate policies that apply for complaints by or against employees covered by the *Queensland Lutheran Schools Single Enterprise Agreement 2024*, or its governance and senior leadership team.

Child-focused Complaints Management

Faith Lutheran College Redlands, Faith Kindy Plus and Faith OSHC will manage all complaints received by giving priority to the safety and well-being of children enrolled or connected with Faith Lutheran College Redlands, Faith Kindy Plus and Faith OSHC.

Child-focused complaints management means that, in the management and resolution of a complaint, parties will seek that:

- the safety and well-being of children are prioritised above all other factors (such as, reputation or cost); and
- the timeliness and management of any investigation in the complaint will be carried out in a way that minimises the impact on the safety, well-being and education of affected children.

Our Governance

Faith Lutheran College Redlands, Faith Kindy Plus and Faith OSHC is part of the District. Our governance consists of

- *District Church Board* – the board with the ultimate governance responsibility for all ministries of the District;
- *Lutheran Education Queensland Secretariat* (**LEQ Office, or LEQ Secretariat**) – the co-ordinating arm that supports the District's Schools, Colleges and Early Years & OSHC Services, on behalf of District Church Board; and
- *Schools and College Councils* – the council of volunteers that oversees the local governance of each School or College of the District. These councils provide oversight to the principal, but do not manage the school or college. Each school or college council has a council chair appointed.
- *Principals* – the leaders of the school or college, who are responsible for the day-to-day management of a school or college, and in some cases, a connected early years or OSHC service.

For more information about our governance structure, please refer to FLCR Organisational Chart.

Under this policy and procedure, the College is the appropriate body to manage your complaint, and their contact details are listed in this policy. The LEQ Secretariat will not have authority to deal with your

complaint. Additionally, unless your complaint relates to the principal, the Faith Lutheran College Redlands Council does not have responsibility for managing your complaint.

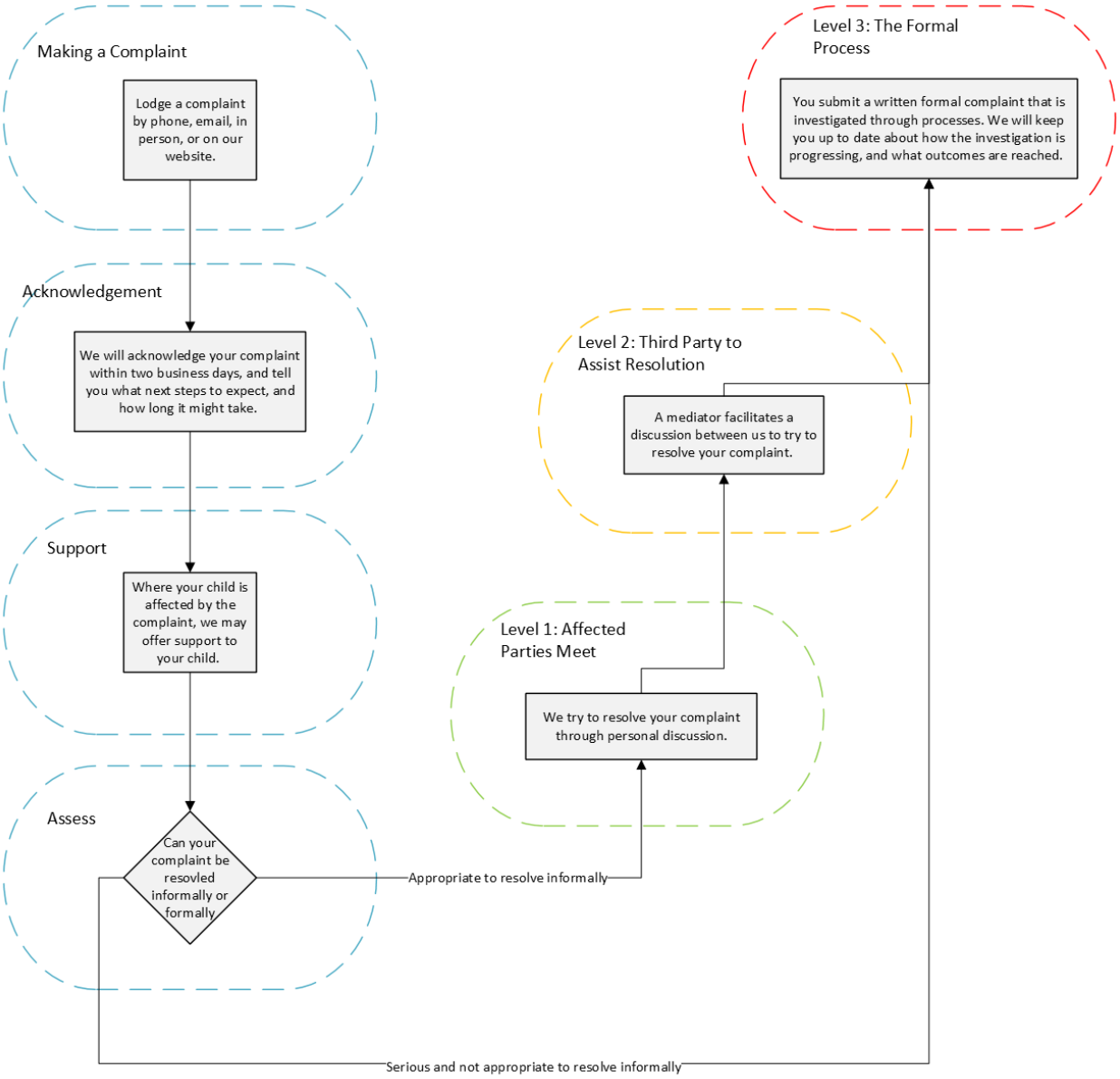
Under our structure, the LEQ Secretariat is the appropriate governance body to manage your complaint, and their contact details are listed in this policy.

Definitions

Complaint	An expression of dissatisfaction made to or about Faith Lutheran College Redlands, Faith Kindy Plus and Faith OSHC, related to the Faith Lutheran College Redlands, Faith Kindy Plus and Faith OSHC's services, employee or the handling of a complaint, where a response or resolution is explicitly or implicitly expected or legally required.
District	The Lutheran Church of Australia Queensland District.
Informal Complaint	A complaint about a matter that is likely to be simple, straight forward, easily manageable, or minor, where a simple or quick resolution is appropriate such as discussion of the matter with a relevant employee.
Formal Complaint	A complaint about a matter that is serious, complex or may pose a threat to the health and safety of any person. Examples include serious allegations or breaches of policy or an informal complaint that could not be resolved informally. Assessment of the complaint is required by the principal.
Complainant	The person, organisation or their representative making a complaint.
Respondent	The person who is referred to in a complaint by a complainant as the person responsible for their concerns or who can best respond to their concern.

Procedure Overview

The seven-step diagram below summarises how a person's complaint will be managed if this policy applies.



Complaints Handling Principles

Faith Lutheran College Redlands, Faith Kindy Plus and Faith OSHC will manage complaints according to the following:

- complaints will be taken seriously, dealt with fairly and objectively, without judgement and addressed in a reasonable timeframe

- complaints should be resolved with as little formality and disruption as possible, having regard to the nature of the complaint
- interested parties to the complaint (for example, the complaint and any respondent) will be heard and/or may provide relevant information in relation to the complaint
- confidentiality and privacy will be maintained as much as possible, and public statements which may impact or damage the management of the complaint should be avoided
- the complainant and any respondent will be offered support as appropriate
- victimising behaviour towards a complainant, respondent or other people associated with the complaint, will not be tolerated
- complainants that lodge a complaint on reasonable grounds will not suffer any other reprisals on the basis of the lodging the complaint
- Faith Lutheran College Redlands, Faith Kindy Plus and Faith OSHC will provide a review pathway for parties to the complaint if appropriate
- procedural fairness will be ensured wherever practicable, including the right of interested parties to the complaint to be heard

Complaints that may be Resolved under this Policy

Faith Lutheran College Redlands, Faith Kindy Plus and Faith OSHC encourages anyone who feels impacted by an issue involving Faith Lutheran College Redlands, Faith Kindy Plus and Faith OSHC to file a complaint. Complaints can address matters such as:

- Faith Lutheran College Redlands, Faith Kindy Plus and Faith OSHC or children having done something wrong
- Faith Lutheran College Redlands, Faith Kindy Plus and Faith OSHC or children having failed to do something they should have done
- Faith Lutheran College Redlands, Faith Kindy Plus and Faith OSHC or children having acted unfairly or impolitely
- issues of child behaviour that are contrary to the relevant relational management guidelines and college code of conduct.
- issues related to learning programs, assessment and reporting of child learning
- issues related to communication with children or parents or Faith Lutheran College Redlands, Faith Kindy Plus and Faith OSHC
- issues related to Faith Lutheran College Redlands, Faith Kindy Plus and Faith OSHC fees and payments
- general administrative issues
- issues relating to non-compliance with a process outlined in Faith Lutheran College Redlands, Faith Kindy Plus and Faith OSHC policies or procedures, for example the child protection policy, discrimination policy, or privacy policy.

Children’s complaints may be brought by children or by parents on behalf of their children, as appropriate in the circumstances.

Issues Outside this Policy

The following matters are outside the scope of this policy and should be managed as follows:

- Child protection concerns including allegations of sexual abuse, likely sexual abuse or harm to children should be dealt in accordance with Faith Lutheran College Redlands, Faith Kindy Plus and Faith OSHC's Child Protection or Child Safeguarding Policy.
- Child bullying complaints should be dealt with under the Relational Management Procedures or FLCR Code of Conduct.
- Child discipline matters, including matters involving suspension or expulsion, should be dealt with under the Relational Management Procedures and Enrolment Policy.
- Children or employee violence or criminal matters should be directed to the principal who will involve the Police as appropriate.
- Disputes with Faith Lutheran College Redlands council members, which should be referred to the District Church Board of the Lutheran Church of Australia Queensland District, and should be dealt with under the Governance & Executive Complaints Policy & Procedure.
- Complaints by or against employees covered by the *Queensland Lutheran Schools Single Enterprise Agreement 2024* (generally, non-executive teaching staff of Faith Lutheran College Redlands.
- Complaints about Senior Leadership Team, such as the Principal or Heads of Faith Lutheran College Redlands, should be dealt with under the Governance & Executive Complaints Policy & Procedure.
- Formal legal proceedings should be managed as appropriate in the circumstances.
- Complaints relating to the education and training services provided by Faith Lutheran College Redlands, Faith Kindy Plus and Faith OSHC to an overseas student should be dealt with in accordance with the *Education Services for Overseas Students Act 2000* and National Code and the school's Overseas Student's Complaints and Appeals Policy and Process.

RESPONSIBILITIES

Faith Lutheran College Redlands, Faith Kindy Plus and Faith OSHC

The Faith Lutheran College Redlands, Faith Kindy Plus and Faith OSHC has the following roles and responsibilities:

- develop, implement, promote and act in accordance with this policy
- appropriately communicate this policy to children and parents
- ensure that this policy is readily accessible by children and parents
- upon receipt of a complaint covered by this policy, manage the complaint in accordance with this policy
- ensure that appropriate support is made available to all parties to a complaint
- take appropriate action to prevent victimisation or action in reprisal against the complainant, respondent or any person associated with them
- appropriately implement remedies
- appropriately train relevant employees

- keep records
- conduct a review/audit of the Complaints Register in regular intervals
- report to Faith Lutheran College Redlands, Faith Kindy Plus and Faith OSHC's insurer when that is relevant.

All Parties to a Dispute

The complainant and respondent both have the following roles and responsibilities:

- comply with this policy
- provide complete and factual information in a timely manner
- not provide deliberately false or misleading information
- not make frivolous or vexatious complaints or retaliatory complaints
- act in good faith and maintain a mutually beneficial relationship of trust and cooperation
- act in a calm, courteous manner and non-threatening manner
- acknowledge that a common goal is to achieve an outcome acceptable to all parties
- recognise that all parties have rights and responsibilities which must be balanced
- maintain and respect the privacy and confidentiality of all parties
- not victimise or act in reprisal against any party to the dispute or any person associated with them.

Employees Receiving and/or Managing Complaints

Employees receiving and/or managing complaints have the following roles and responsibilities:

- identify the applicable and most appropriate policy to apply, and notify the complainant and respondent which policy is being applied
- if this policy is being applied, act in accordance with this policy
- if this policy is being applied, refer the complainant to this policy, and provide additional information as necessary
- maintain confidentiality as far as possible
- keep appropriate records
- forward complaints to more senior employees, including the Principal, or OSHC and Kindergarten Directors respectively, if the complaint cannot be resolved at the initial level or if it involves serious issues that require the involvement of more senior employees
- not victimise or act in reprisal against the complainant, respondent or any person associated with them.

IMPLEMENTATION

Communication and Training

Faith Lutheran College Redlands, Faith Kindy Plus and Faith OSHC is committed to raising awareness of the process for resolving complaints at Faith Lutheran College Redlands, Faith Kindy Plus and Faith OSHC, including by the development and implementation of this policy and via the clear support and

promotion of the policy. This includes making a copy of this policy available on its website and parent and student portals.

Faith Lutheran College Redlands, Faith Kindy Plus and Faith OSHC is also committed to regular training of employees on the implementation of this policy. Faith Lutheran College Redlands, Faith Kindy Plus and Faith OSHC will ensure that its employees are trained on this policy upon induction, and regularly thereafter.

Timeliness

This policy aims to promote the prompt resolution of complaints and grievances at the lowest level possible by consultation, cooperation and discussion, and to promote efficiency, effectiveness and equity in Faith Lutheran College Redlands, Faith Kindy Plus and Faith OSHC.

Complaints will be resolved with as little formality and disruption to Faith Lutheran College Redlands, Faith Kindy Plus and Faith OSHC as possible.

Communication

Faith Lutheran College Redlands, Faith Kindy Plus and Faith OSHC will give reasonable progress updates.

Support

All parties to the complaint will be appropriately supported.

Complaint Register

Faith Lutheran College Redlands, Faith Kindy Plus and Faith OSHC will maintain a complaint register with details such as the date, source and description of complaints, the employee managing the complaint, the actions taken, outcome and the date the complaint was closed.

The complaint register will be stored securely by Faith Lutheran College Redlands, Faith Kindy Plus and Faith OSHC.

All significant and material (not trivial) complaints shall be entered onto the complaint register as soon as practicable after the complaint is received. The complaint register will not contain complaints about the Principal. Records of complaints about the Principal will be maintained by Faith Lutheran College Redlands Council with access restricted to the Faith Lutheran College Redlands Council.

To safeguard confidentiality and maintain the integrity of the complaint process, access to the entire complaint register will be limited to the Principal and the Principal's Executive Assistant.

To safeguard confidentiality and maintain the integrity of the complaint process, access to the entire complaint register will be limited to the relevant service director and College Principal as required.

The Principal, or relevant service leader, may authorise the sharing of specific, relevant entries from the complaint register with other designated employees such as the Senior Administrative Leadership Team, provided measures are taken to protect the confidentiality of all parties involved, particularly ensuring that respondents to a complaint do not gain inappropriate access to information about the allegations against them.

APPENDIX – Complaint Handling Procedure

In the event of a complaint, any parent, child or other Faith Lutheran College Redlands, Faith Kindy Plus and Faith OSHC community member (**Complainant**) may seek resolution through following the steps below. The objective (where appropriate) is to resolve the grievance at the lowest level of Faith Lutheran College Redlands, Faith Kindy Plus and Faith OSHC as possible.

LODGING A COMPLAINT

Complaints can be lodged with the most appropriate employee at the local level, for example, the initial contact point for many complaints is the child's educator.

Complaints about the principal must be lodged with the Faith Lutheran College Redlands Council, at FLCRcouncilchairman@flcr.qld.edu.au

Complaints about the OSHC or Kindergarten Director should be lodged with the College Principal.

Complaints can be lodged through various methods, including:

Phone: 07 3820 5515

Email: principalpa@flcr.qld.edu.au

In-person (by appointment)

If the complainant is unsure where to direct their complaint, they can contact the college office on 07 3820 5515 for guidance.

If the complainant is uncomfortable directing the complaint to the most appropriate member at the local level, or wants to make a formal complaint, they can submit a complaint by reporting to a member of the College Executive via the College Office on 07 3820 5500.

Where an anonymous complaint is lodged, Faith Lutheran College Redlands, Faith Kindy Plus and Faith OSHC will follow the complaints handling policy, when there is sufficient information to do so.

If your complaint relates to the principal or an employee, a different policy may apply. We will let you know if a different policy applies.

Please note that your complaint must be lodged with Faith Lutheran College Redlands, Faith Kindy Plus and Faith OSHC, and not the LEQ Office/LEQ Secretariat.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT, ASSESSMENT AND REFERRAL

The employee receiving the complaint will:

- acknowledge the complaint within three (3) business days, outlining the next steps and where possible the estimated timeframes.
- assess the complaint:
    - to ensure that the correct policies are being applied;
    - to ensure any required internal and external notifications are made;
    - to identify whether the complaint is an informal or formal complaint under this policy; and
    - refer the complaint to the most appropriate employee to manage the complaint.

REGISTRATION AND SUPPORT

The recipient of the complaint (if the complaint is significant and material [not trivial]) will promptly enter it onto the complaints register, regardless of whether it proceeds through the informal or formal process.

The recipient of the complaint will offer support to the complainant as appropriate, which may include assistance with completing forms or understanding procedures.

If a child is a complainant, respondent or victim, or the child of a complainant, respondent or victim of a matter being managed through this policy, Faith Lutheran College Redlands, Faith Kindy Plus and Faith OSHC may offer support to the child where appropriate e.g. discussing suitable adjustments with parents/caregivers.

LEVEL 1: AFFECTED PARTIES MEET

Faith Lutheran College Redlands, Faith Kindy Plus and Faith OSHC recognises that often complaints are simple misunderstandings that are easily resolved via effective communication.

If at all possible and appropriate, the parties directly involved should first seek to resolve the complaint in a timely manner by way of informal discussion personally and in a spirit of goodwill and commitment to the maintenance of a safe and harmonious environment.

If the complaint cannot be resolved satisfactorily, within a mutually acceptable time frame, or the seriousness of the matter is not suitable for resolution informally, the Complainant may process to Level 2.

LEVEL 2: THIRD PARTY TO ASSIST RESOLUTION

At this level, the Complainant and Respondent have both indicated their willingness to participate in a third party facilitated discussion, and a meeting involving the Complainant, Respondent and third-party facilitator or mediator will be scheduled.

The third party to assist the third party facilitated discussion and/or mediation may be (as appropriate) an appropriately experienced, qualified and trained mediator or such other person as the Principal, or relevant service leader may nominate after discussion with both the Complainant and Respondent. The third party may be an appropriately trained person external to Faith Lutheran College Redlands, Faith Kindy Plus and Faith OSHC.

The role of the third-party facilitator or mediator is to provide a forum to allow the parties the opportunity to tell their side of the story openly, remain impartial, encourage formulation of solutions, advise about future process options if the matter is not resolved, and always maintain confidentiality.

If the complaint cannot be resolved satisfactorily at this level, within a mutually acceptable time frame or the seriousness of the matter warrants, the Complainant may proceed to Level 3.

LEVEL 3: THE FORMAL PROCESS

When the Complainant has a complaint which has not been able to be resolved by level 1 and 2 approaches outlined above, they can lodge a formal complaint. This should be submitted in writing to FLCRcouncilchairman@flcr.qld.edu.au outlining the complaint, steps taken to resolve it, some contact details for follow up actions to be undertaken, and identify that the Complaint is a *"formal complaint"*.

If the complaint involves the Principal or Faith Lutheran College Redlands Council or its committee members, then it should be submitted in writing to the Faith Lutheran College Redlands Chairperson at FLCRcouncilchairman@flcr.qld.edu.au. In this situation, our Governance & Executive Complaints Policy & Procedure will apply. We will provide you with a copy of this policy and procedure, and support you with understanding it.

Upon assessment of the complaint, it is then registered on the complaint register (if the complaint is significant and material [not trivial]).

Correspondence of receipt of the complaint, possible actions and estimated timeline will be provided in Faith Lutheran College Redlands, Faith Kindy Plus and Faith OSHC's attempt to address the complaint.

Faith Lutheran College Redlands, Faith Kindy Plus and Faith OSHC will take appropriate steps to resolve the complaint.

When the complaint has been resolved, Faith Lutheran College Redlands, Faith Kindy Plus and Faith OSHC should advise the parties directly concerned, in writing, of:

the decision taken by Faith Lutheran College Redlands, Faith Kindy Plus and Faith OSHC.

- a summary of the reasons for the decision made
- what and when follow up action, if any, is to be taken.

The decision and communication in writing of the outcome by Faith Lutheran College Redlands marks the end of this Complaint Handling Procedure.

The decision and communication in writing of the outcome by Faith Kindy Plus and Faith OSHC marks the end of this Complaint Handling Procedure.

REVIEW PROCESS

If you are unsatisfied with whether this procedure was followed, and the person managing your complaint was our Council, Principal or a Senior Leadership Team member, you may have a right of review under our Governance & Executive Complaints Policy & Procedure. We can provide you with a copy of this policy and procedure, and support you with understanding it.

If you are unsatisfied with whether this procedure was followed, and your complaint was not managed by our Council, Principal or a Senior Leadership Team member, you may seek a review of the outcome by applying for a review to our Principal.

We may not permit your review if we determine your request for a review is frivolous or vexatious.

Your right to review under this review process (including where the Governance & Executive Complaints Policy & Procedure is applied) will only be on whether Faith Lutheran College Redlands, Faith Kindy Plus and Faith OSHC has followed this procedure. In other words, there is no right for a review of a decision made by the person that managed the complaint, if they correctly followed this procedure.

You must make your application for review in writing and include brief reasons for your belief that the person managing your complaint did not comply with this procedure.

The Principal (or their delegate) will determine your review, and Faith Lutheran College Redlands, Faith Kindy Plus and Faith OSHC should advise the parties directly concerned, in writing, of:

- the decision taken by the Principal (or their delegate);
- a summary of the reasons for the determination made; and
- what and when follow up action, if any, is to be taken.

The determination and communication in writing of the outcome by the Principal (or their delegate) marks the end of this review process.

If a review is in respect of any changes proposed by Faith Lutheran College Redlands, Faith Kindy Plus and Faith OSHC, we are not prevented from implementing those changes while your complaint is being reviewed under this review process.

If you are unsatisfied with whether this procedure was followed, you may seek a review of the outcome by applying for a review to director@leq.lutheran.edu.au

We may not permit your review if we determine your request for a review is frivolous or vexatious.

Your right to review under this review process will only be on whether our service has correctly implemented this procedure. In other words, there is no right for a review of a decision made by the person that managed the complaint, if they correctly followed this procedure.

You must make your application for review in writing and include brief reasons for your belief that the person managing your complaint did not comply with this procedure.

An appropriately qualified and experienced person from the LEQ Secretariat will determine your review, and the service should advise the parties directly concerned, in writing, of:

- the decision taken by our delegate;

- a summary of the reasons for the determination made; and
- what and when follow up action, if any, is to be taken.

The determination and communication in writing of the outcome by the LEQ Secretariat's delegate marks the end of this review process.

If a review is in respect of any changes proposed by the service, we are not prevented from implementing those changes while your complaint is being reviewed under this review process.