



Complaints Resolution Policy

1. PURPOSE

1.1

Frank Dando Sports Academy (FDSA) is committed to providing a safe, respectful, and supportive environment for all students, staff, and members of the school community.

1.2

This policy outlines the process for managing complaints in a manner that is:

- fair and transparent;
- timely and respectful;
- consistent with **procedural fairness (natural justice)**;
- aligned with **child safety and duty of care obligations**.

1.3

FDSA encourages concerns to be raised early and resolved at the most appropriate level wherever possible.

2. GUIDING PRINCIPLES

2.1

All complaints will be handled with the following principles:

- **Good faith** – all parties act honestly and respectfully
- **Procedural fairness** – all parties have the right to be heard
- **Confidentiality** – information is shared on a need-to-know basis
- **Timeliness** – complaints are addressed promptly
- **Focus on resolution** – emphasis on outcomes, not blame

2.2

Each complaint will be assessed on its own circumstances. Outcomes do not set precedent for future matters.

3. WHAT IS A COMPLAINT

3.1

A complaint is any expression of dissatisfaction regarding:

- student wellbeing or behaviour;
- teaching and learning;
- staff conduct;
- school operations;
- safety concerns.

4. WHO CAN MAKE A COMPLAINT

Complaints may be made by:

- students;
- parents/guardians;
- staff;
- community members.

5. STUDENT COMPLAINTS

5.1

Students are encouraged to raise concerns with a trusted adult at the School, including:

- a teacher;
- the Principal;
- welfare staff (e.g., psychologist or wellbeing staff);
- any staff member they feel comfortable with.

5.2

Staff must ensure the complaint is taken seriously and directed appropriately.

6. LODGING A COMPLAINT

6.1

Complaints may be made by:

- speaking directly to staff;
- contacting the School via phone;
- requesting a meeting;
- submitting a written complaint (email or letter).

6.2

When lodging a complaint:

- the **health, safety and wellbeing of students is the highest priority**;
- complaints must be made **in good faith**;
- vexatious or malicious complaints will not be tolerated.

7. INITIAL RESPONSE TO A COMPLAINT

7.1

Upon receiving a complaint, FDSA will:

- acknowledge the complaint promptly;
- take the matter seriously;
- ensure the complainant is treated fairly and respectfully;
- determine the appropriate level of response.

7.2

Staff may refer the complaint to the **Principal** where appropriate.

7.3

FDSA will ensure that no person is victimised for making a complaint.

8. PROCEDURAL FAIRNESS (NATURAL JUSTICE)

8.1

FDSA will ensure:

- all parties are informed of allegations (where appropriate);
- all parties have an opportunity to respond;
- investigations are conducted fairly and without bias;
- only relevant information is considered.

8.2

The application of procedural fairness may vary depending on the seriousness of the complaint.

9. INFORMAL RESOLUTION

9.1

Where appropriate, complaints should first be resolved informally through:

- discussion;
- mediation;
- clarification of misunderstandings.

9.2

FDSA encourages early resolution to prevent escalation.

10. FORMAL COMPLAINT PROCESS

10.1

A complaint becomes formal when:

- it cannot be resolved informally;
- it is serious in nature;
- it is submitted in writing;
- the complainant requests a formal investigation.

10.2 Investigation Process

The School will:

- meet with the complainant privately;
- clearly document the complaint;
- clarify desired outcomes;
- gather relevant information;
- interview relevant parties where necessary.

10.3

The School will:

- avoid premature judgement;
- maintain professionalism and neutrality;
- ensure the process is respectful and structured.

10.4 Outcome

Following investigation:

- a decision will be made based on available evidence;
- reasons will be provided where appropriate;
- actions will be implemented.

10.5

Where a complaint is found to be **malicious or vexatious**, disciplinary action may be considered.

11. ROLE OF THE PRINCIPAL

11.1

The Principal (or delegate) is responsible for:

- investigating serious complaints;
- managing complaints relating to staff conduct;
- overseeing fairness and compliance.

11.2

If a complaint involves the Principal, it must be directed to the **School Board/Chairperson**.

12. OUTCOMES OF COMPLAINTS

Where a complaint is substantiated, outcomes may include:

- mediation or counselling;
- behaviour management strategies;
- parent meetings;
- staff guidance or disciplinary action;
- changes to school processes;
- suspension or further action (where appropriate).

12.2

FDSA will monitor outcomes to ensure the issue is resolved.

13. RECORD KEEPING

13.1

All complaints will be documented, including:

- dates and times;
- individuals involved;
- summary of complaint;
- actions taken;

- outcomes.

13.2

Records will be stored securely and confidentially.

14. CONFIDENTIALITY AND MANDATORY REPORTING

14.1

FDSA will treat complaints with sensitivity and discretion.

14.2

However, confidentiality cannot be guaranteed where:

- disclosure is required by law;
- there are child safety concerns;
- mandatory reporting obligations apply.

15. ANONYMOUS COMPLAINTS

15.1

Anonymous complaints may be considered; however:

- investigation may be limited;
- outcomes may be restricted due to lack of information.

16. WITHDRAWING A COMPLAINT

16.1

A complaint may be withdrawn at any time.

16.2

The School may still proceed with an investigation if:

- there are safety concerns;
- there are legal obligations.

17. EXTERNAL COMPLAINTS

17.1

If a complaint is not resolved internally, individuals may refer the matter to:

- **VRQA (Victorian Registration and Qualifications Authority)**
- **Department of Education**
- **Office of the Australian Information Commissioner (if privacy-related)**
- other relevant authorities

18. CHILD SAFETY

18.1

All complaints involving child safety will be managed in accordance with:

- **Child Safe Standards (Victoria)**
- FDSA Child Safety and Wellbeing Policy

18.2

Child safety concerns will take priority over all other considerations.

19. RESPONSIBILITIES

Principal

- Overall responsibility for complaint handling and school safety.

Staff

- Must follow this policy and respond appropriately to complaints.

Students and Parents

- Expected to engage respectfully and in good faith.

20. REVIEW

20.1

This policy will be reviewed regularly to ensure alignment with:

- VRQA requirements;
- Child Safe Standards;
- best practice in education.