



St Bernadette's Catholic Primary School

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Complaints / Grievance Policy

The resolution of grievances and disputes within school communities is vital to the wellbeing of all. The intention of this policy is to describe procedures for the effective and early resolution of any grievance.

Definition

For the purposes of this policy a grievance is defined as any type of problem, conflict, concern, dispute or complaint related to the school environment, which cannot be resolved through normal communication procedures.

Rationale

Good relationships among all parties within school communities give children greater opportunities to succeed. It is natural that parents and community members at one time or another will have concerns about what happens at school. To maintain good relationships, grievances should be resolved so that all parties achieve satisfactory results. Open criticism of any parties, including the use of internet, twitter and other digital mediums, in a dispute does not support children's education. To this end, fair communication conducted within this procedures framework ensures that the rights and responsibilities of all parties are respected.

Procedures

First contact the school:

- All personal matters, such as concerns regarding student, parent or staff relationships should be raised directly with the school.
- If the matter relates to an individual student and/or an issue of everyday class operation, the child's teacher will be the first point of contact. Teachers are usually available to discuss minor issues in the 15 minutes prior to the commencement of lessons and after school.
- If the matter cannot be satisfactorily resolved, it should be referred to the school principal, deputy principal or acting principal.
- Where the issue relates to school policy or matters beyond an individual classroom, the principal, deputy principal or acting principal should be the first point of contact.
- Grievances should be kept as confidential as possible.
- Appointments may be necessary, especially if the grievance involves staff who are teaching.

The following outlines refer to grievances which are not easily solved or are of a more serious nature:

1. At an agreed time, a meeting is organized with the principal, deputy principal or acting principal, and if necessary, other relevant parties.
2. Each person listens and has opportunity to identify the issues. We may list the issues. We generate solution options.

Principles

All disputes are to be settled in a calm and reasonable matter, with a respect to people's dignity. Aggressive or threatening behaviour will not be tolerated. If a meeting degenerates it will be aborted. If suitable, another meeting may be arranged for a time when parties affected have gathered their composure. Any party to a dispute has the right to be accompanied by another person, in a support role, at any meetings convened to discuss a resolution of that dispute.

Accurate records of proceedings will be maintained and held by the school. It is the obligation of all parties to deal with a concern as promptly and amicably as possible. In most cases, a reasonable time for resolution might be one month. In some cases where external personnel or factors are involved, resolution might take longer.

Evaluation

This policy will be reviewed as part of the school's three-year review cycle.

This policy was last reviewed: **2017**