

Managing Complaints and Grievances Procedures



53 Plymouth Road, Croydon Hills, Victoria 3136
Phone: (03) 9725 8255 | Fax: (03) 9725 8256
goodshep@gsllps.vic.edu.au
www.gsllps.vic.edu.au

Procedures

The following are the appropriate procedures for managing all complaints and grievances at The Good Shepherd Lutheran Primary School. It reflects the School's commitment to the positive restoration of relationships and encourages people with a complaint or grievance against another to, in the first instance, discuss with the other person their grievance or concern.

Raising a complaint or grievance at the initial level

Complaints made at the initial level should be resolved by the appropriate School representative as indicated above. Early action at the informal level generally provides the best opportunity for a positive resolution.

The following guidelines relate to the process:

1. Complaints may be raised verbally or via written correspondence, including email. All complaints must be raised in a respectful manner that is open, non-offensive and unbiased.
2. The Complainant will be advised that the Respondent is entitled to receive full details of the complaint, including the name of the Complainant.
3. Every endeavour will be made to handle complaints in a confidential, timely and supportive manner, utilising conflict resolutions actions in accordance with the values and ethos of the School.
4. The Complainant and Respondent should attempt to resolve the matter personally through a discussion of open and honest dialogue.
5. A third party may be required to assist with a resolution, such as a relevant coordinator.
6. The outcome and remedies should be determined by mutual agreement between both parties.
7. It is expected that most complaints will be resolved at this stage.

Procedure for Parents and Guardians

In the first instance parents or guardians are encouraged to directly raise their concern with the member of staff their complaint is about. This is best achieved through making an appointment to meet with the individual member of staff.

If the complaint or grievance is about an educational, behavioural or school environment matter, the following table offers some guidance:

Teaching and Learning Concern	First instance:	Class or Subject Teacher
	then:	Director of Learning or Department Coordinator
	then :	Assistant Principal or Principal

Sensitive or Personal Concern	First instance: Class Teacher then: Coordinator of Wellbeing then: Assistant Principal or Principal
Instrumental Music Concern	First instance: Instrumental Music Tutor then: Director of Instrumental Music then: Assistant Principal or Principal
Sport Concern	First instance: Sport / Physical Education Coordinator then: Assistant Principal or Principal
Financial Concern	Business Manager
A complaint relating to physical, emotional or sexual abuse	Child Protection Officer
A complaint raised regarding another student	First instance: Class Teacher then: Assistant Principal then: Principal

In all instances, the School's representative will record the issues and steps which have been taken to resolve the complaint. The School's representative may choose to meet with student/s, without a parent being present, as part of due process and natural justice.

Procedure for Staff Members

In the first instance, complaints should be resolved between the staff member and the Respondent. Another staff member may be called upon by either party to act as an impartial facilitator. The facilitator should be agreed upon by both parties. If the complaint is not resolved the complaint should be raised with the relevant coordinator, Assistant Principal or Principal.

At any stage of process, the Complainant or Respondent may nominate a support person to attend meetings or interviews.

In all instances, the School's representative will record the issues and steps which have been taken to resolve the complaint.

Procedure for Students

Students have the right and responsibility to raise issues with staff in an appropriate manner where they feel they have been treated in an unfair manner by a member of staff of the School. It is important that matters are discussed in private and in a way that reflects respect for each person involved in the discussion.

The following guidelines may assist you if you have a concern. For some issues, particularly where a student believes that a teacher has behaved unfairly or if you are worried about talking to a teacher, it may be better to discuss the matter directly with the Principal.

What to do	Notes	Why?	When is this usually done?
1. Arrange a meeting to talk to the teacher you are having a problem with	You can ask another adult to be with you for support (teacher or parent/carer)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • So the teacher can focus on you • So you can talk about the problem in private 	Within 3 days

2. If the meeting did not fix your problems, let your parents know and arrange a meeting with the Coordinator of Wellbeing, School Pastor or Assistant Principal	You can ask another adult to be with you for support	May lead to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • the situation is monitored; • further discussions with the people involved; • outside support for the child or family 	Within 3 days
3. If the meeting did not fix your problems, let your parents know and arrange a meeting with the Principal	You can ask another adult to be with you for support	May lead to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • the situation is monitored; • further discussions with the people involved; • outside support for the child or family 	Within 5 days

NOTES:

- Each time you arrange a meeting please let the person know what you want to talk with them about.
- You need to speak up. If you don't let the teacher or the School know that you are still unhappy after a meeting they will think everything has been resolved.
- It is important that grievances are kept as confidential as possible. Sometimes you might need to talk to a friend or another support person. You need to try not to talk to too many people and also try not to hurt others by sharing too much.

Procedures for General Public

Members of the general public have the right to raise issues with the School in an appropriate manner where they have a concern with the School. It is important that matters are discussed in private and in a way that reflects respect for each person involved in the discussion.

Please call the School Administration Centre on 9725 8255 to report your concern, giving as much detail as possible. These grievances will generally be investigated by the Principal.

Anonymous complaints are taken seriously, recorded and considered as far as practically possible as they can at times lead to a productive outcome. As there are limitations on investigation and resolution of anonymous complaints, Complainants are encouraged to identify themselves.

If you have a grievance with the Principal and do not feel that you are able to approach him/her directly, please raise your concern with the School Council Chair.

If a complaint or grievance remains unresolved

If a matter remains unresolved, or a complaint is of a serious nature, the Complainant may make an appointment to meet with the Department Coordinator or the Assistant Principal. If this meeting brings about no resolution, the Complainant may make an appointment to meet with the Principal. If the complaint is against the Principal, the matter should be referred directly in writing to the Chair of the School Council.

When complaints or grievances are raised with the relevant Department Coordinators, Assistant Principal or Principal the following guidelines are to be followed.

1. Complaints are to be made in writing and signed. It must contain sufficient detail for it to be addressed and recorded, including:
 - the full names of both the Complainant and Respondent;
 - the Complainant's contact details;
 - the nature and details of the complaint, including dates, times and any witnesses;
 - any previous attempts to resolve the matter; and
 - the Complainant's desired outcome or suggestions for resolution.
2. Upon receipt, the relevant member of staff may contact the Complainant to arrange a meeting to accompany the written complaint.
3. The relevant member of staff will determine how best to investigate and manage the complaint. This may include handling the complaint under a specific School policy; investigating the complaint internally or through an external provider; or mediation.
4. The relevant member of staff will meet with the Respondent to notify them of the complaint and supply a copy of the written complaint.
5. During the investigation, the relevant member of staff may meet with the Complainant for further discussions.
6. All parties are invited to have support persons at any stage of the process.
7. The relevant member of staff (or nominated external provider) will assess the evidence to establish whether the complaint is substantiated or not.
8. The relevant member of staff will inform the Complainant and Respondent in writing of the consequences, outcomes and remedies of the investigation.

Further Information

Please refer to the Good Shepherd Lutheran Primary School Managing Complaints and Grievances Policy for further information.

Date of Endorsement: November 2016

Document to be Reviewed: November 2021