

St Paul's Lutheran Primary School, Caboolture



Grievance Policy and Procedures for Staff

POLICY

The School is committed to providing a fair, safe and productive work environment where grievances are dealt with sensitively and expeditiously. An essential part of developing that environment is ensuring that staff members are encouraged to come forward with their grievances in the knowledge that the responsible school leaders will take appropriate action to address those grievances. This policy applies to all forms of grievances involving workplace bullying and harassment.

Each supervisor has a responsibility to identify, prevent and address problems in the workplace. Any member of staff may lodge a grievance regarding work-related problems. All employees shall be protected from being victimized because they have lodged a grievance and also protected from vexatious and malicious grievances.

The executive staff shall ensure appropriate confidential records are kept about grievances and that this information is stored and managed appropriately. If however, other policies exist that more appropriately address the grievance presented (e.g. sexual harassment or unlawful discrimination), that mechanism should be used rather than lodging a grievance under this policy.

The Principal will review procedures that apply to this policy on an annual basis.

Review Date: August 2019

Next Review Date: 2021

Signed: _____

Date: ____ / ____ / ____

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Created:

Reviewed: January 2013, July 2015; July 2017, August 2019

Accessed: 2 September 2019

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55 Smiths Road, Caboolture QLD 4510
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PROCEDURE

1. **[Level 1]** - Before initiating the grievance procedures, complainants are encouraged to try to resolve any grievance directly with the person/s concerned (c.f. Matthew 18:15). If this is not possible or appropriate, the complainant should proceed to Level 2 of the grievance procedures.
2. **[Level 2]** - Where the complainant has been unable to resolve the grievance him/herself, the complainant should take the matter up with an immediate school leader. Where the grievance involves the leader, the staff member should refer the matter to the Principal. However, should the grievance involve the Principal, it shall be referred to the Chair of School Council.

3. **[Level 3] - Referral to Principal**

At this level, the Complainant refers their grievance, in writing, to the Principal (or Principal's delegate) for resolution. Grievances in writing may be handed in to the School Office marked confidential or emailed to admin@stpaulslps.qld.edu.au. However, should the grievance involve the Principal, it shall be referred to the Chair of School Council.

Reference to the Principal (or Principal's delegate) should resolve most, if not all grievances. However, if the grievance is still not resolved at this level, then the Complainant may properly refer a matter to their Chair of School Council.

Grievances in writing may be handed in to the School Office addressed to Chair of School Council and marked confidential or emailed to: schoolchair@stpaulslps.qld.edu.au.

4. The leader should address the grievance asap, with a view to resolving it expeditiously.
5. Following resolution of the grievance, the leader should monitor the situation for a period of time.
6. In any action taken, the leader should ensure procedural fairness for all parties involved, including informing the respondent of the allegations made against them and providing them with an opportunity to respond.
6. If the complainant believes the grievance has not been resolved to their satisfaction by reference to a leader, they can refer the matter to the Principal. The Principal may require the complainant to put the grievance in writing. The Principal should attempt to resolve the matter asap and should follow similar procedures outlined above for action by the supervisor.
7. A Restorative Justice Strategy might be implemented before an outside independent person is involved.
8. If the grievance remains unresolved, it may be referred in writing to an independent person by the complainant or the Principal.
9. After giving due consideration to the grievance the independent person may do one or more of the following:
 - refer the complaint back to the Principal or to a nominee, with

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- advice for resolution; or
- initiate an investigation into the matter; or
- seek to resolve the matter directly.

Any determination made by the independent person in accordance with Step 3 of these procedures with regard to the grievance will be final.

Other Considerations

Mediators may be used if people feel uncomfortable about meeting with the other staff member alone. This could be the Principal, School Pastor, Chaplain or agreed professional.

It is important that the grievances are kept confidential, and although at times the complainant may wish to seek support from friends or an advocate, it is very important to do so with discretion.

Whilst constructive criticism, appropriately shared and in line with this policy is welcomed, denigration or defamation of the school, other employee or Principal undermines trust and confidence. The school can only deal with issues raised in ways outlined above. If issues are not raised with the school, then it assumes all is well.

In the event that an employee persists in airing grievances in inappropriate ways, the employee will be required to meet with the Principal and/or Council Chairperson. The meeting will express its desire to maintain confidentiality, confidence and trust in the due processes of the school. It will point out the need to follow appropriate grievance policy guidelines.

OUTCOMES

Outcomes could include:

- The complainant gaining a better understanding of the situation and no longer being aggrieved.
- The complainant receiving a verbal or written apology.
- The respondent receiving a verbal or written reprimand.
- One or both parties agreeing to participate in some form of counselling(*) or mediation. (*) St Paul's will provide counselling support by financially supporting two (2) x sessions.
- Disciplinary action where the School Code of Conduct has been found to have been breached, and/or where misconduct/serious misconduct or unsatisfactory performance has occurred.

Resources:

The Bible, Matthew 18:15, Colossians 3:12-13, Ephesians 4:29.

VSC – “Valuing Safe Communities – Sexual Harassment, Anti-discrimination, Workplace Bullying & Harassment”.

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