



Community Grievances

Rationale

Positive, clear and effective processes for resolving grievances between the school and community members assists in the building of strong relationships, dispels anxiety, and ultimately, provides students with an enhanced learning environment.

Vision Statements

At St. Joseph's, we believe we are:

- A school where respect for self, others and the environment is nurtured in partnership with all community members.
- A community that strives to educate and challenge the whole child to reach their full potential and become lifelong learners.
- A community that challenges all children by planning and facilitating enriching curriculum experiences.

Aims:

St Joseph's aims to:

- Actively involve the Canonical Administrator, School Board and Parents and Friends in appropriate areas of school life.
- Encourage and welcome parental involvement.
- Provide a range of School and Parish activities enabling social interactions between stakeholders.
- Create a welcoming atmosphere and caring attitude towards all.
- Provide pastoral care and support for students and their families.
- Establish classroom expectations, staff member norms and appropriate behaviour management programs and other wellbeing strategies; and support the P&F in community building activities.
- Provide clear, positive and fair processes that allow grievances to be aired and resolved in a timely and effective manner.

Implementation

- St Joseph's prides itself on clear, consultative and open communication.
- While we accept our responsibility to consult, and to communicate both clearly and effectively with the community, community members also have an obligation to read notices and newsletters, to attend Parent/Teacher Learning Conversations, information sessions, etc.; and to seek clarification when required.

- Despite every best intention, there may be times when members of the community disagree or are confused about issues or actions.
- It is essential that the established process as outlined below is followed to resolve grievances and that the principle of subsidiarity is applied, consistently; i.e.: that disputes and grievances are resolved at the most appropriate level, or with the most appropriate people. The process involves:

1. *Try to establish the facts as clearly possible, being wary of third hand information or gossip.*
2. *If the matter involves your child or an issue of everyday class operation, make an appointment to see their classroom teacher, detailing the reasons for the appointment.*
3. *An appointment should be made with the Principal to discuss issues involving school policy, operations beyond your child's classroom, concerns about staff, or other matters of a complex or sensitive nature.*
4. *The Principal will provide the concerned community member with a copy of this 'Community Grievances Policy', to ensure a resolution is in keeping with the intent of this policy.*
5. *The Principal (or a member of the School Leadership Team) will attend Parents and Friends group meetings in order to facilitate direct communication between parents and school leadership. Whilst always seeking to clarify concerns, or provide timely answers about school procedures, it must be noted that there is a difference between answering a query and addressing a grievance, in a public meeting. The Principal or Leadership Team Member will exercise their judgement on the appropriateness of the issue raised.*
6. *The Parents & Friends Group and the School Board are in agreement that they will not become a conduit for community complaints, neither will they become involved in confidential or personal issues, and will always refer specific grievances to the Principal or the School Board Chairperson.*
7. *All grievances are to be kept as confidential and respectful as possible, following the Child Safe and School Relationships Codes of Conduct. All parties involved in a grievance procedure must protect the reputations and good standing of individuals and the school.*
8. *Community members may be accompanied by another person, in a support role, at appointments to resolve grievances. The Principal reserves the right to appoint a CEO Officer as Chairperson or advisor to the process.*
 - *All formal discussions and processes involving grievances will be documented.*
 - *The Principal will exercise his/her judgement as to whether or not they will act upon anonymous complaints.*
 - *The Principal will provide community members with appropriate contact names, if grievances are unable to be resolved using these guidelines.*

Evaluation & Review This policy will be reviewed as part of St Joseph's overall cyclical review process and should be read in conjunction with the St Joseph's Child Safe policies.

This policy was ratified by the St Joseph's Governing Authority in 2020.