

# KCCS COMPLAINTS AND GRIEVANCE POLICY

## 1. CONTEXT

The School seeks to promote a safe, positive and supportive environment leading to relationships that reflect Christian values. Effective communication within the community is an important element of the School's culture and is the key to the prevention of grievances and the resolution of grievances that do occur. The College encourages students, parents, staff and members of the wider School community to express any grievances they may have in accordance with this policy.

## 2. PURPOSE

The School encourages students, parents, employees and members of the wider College community to express any grievances they may have to an appropriate member of staff with courtesy and respect. When this happens the grievance should be considered a complaint, whether identified as such by the complainant or not.

The purpose of this policy is to outline the means by which complaints should be resolved and relationships restored, including the relationship between the complainant and the School. Positive social and learning environments of School students, and working conditions of staff are a priority.

## 3. POLICY STATEMENT

The School will promptly investigate complaints, seeking to manage them effectively to expedite their satisfactory resolution in accordance with the principles of procedural fairness, incorporating the right to be treated without bias, the right to be informed of allegations being made against you, the right to respond to an allegation and the right to information regarding the status of the complaint.

## 4. DEFINITIONS

Complaint	a formal accusation or an expression of dissatisfaction, blame or pain;
Grievance	anger or annoyance caused by the occurrence of something perceived to be unfair;
Procedural Fairness	the minimum standard of fairness to be applied when resolving a dispute

## 5. PROCEDURES

Any member of the School community who has a grievance should seek an immediate interpersonal resolution with the person concerned in the first instance (exceptions could be situations like a child protection concern or a bullying event).

- Students (and parents) should direct complaints in the first instance to the class teacher. If there is not an interpersonal resolution or the complainant is not satisfied with the outcome, the complaint is referred to the Principal.
- Parents are to express complaints in the first instance by contacting the office manager by phone or email, to request a time to speak with the teacher/staff member. Or by providing a written letter outlining the grievance/complaint addressed to the staff member.
- Where the complaint about a teacher is unresolved with the teacher, the parents will direct their complaints to the Principal.
- If a staff member, who has a grievance or complaint with another staff member, they should seek an interpersonal resolution. Where the complaint is unresolved, the staff member can direct the complaint to the Principal.
- Where a parent or staff member has a grievance or complaint with the Principal then they should first seek an interpersonal resolution with the Principal. Then the parent or staff member should direct the complaint in writing to the chair of the School's Board of Directors at the School's postal address.

## 6. INVESTIGATING COMPLAINTS

The Teacher/Principal investigating the complaint should:

- Maintain an appropriate level of confidentiality when managing grievances and complaints;
- Establish the basis of the complaint;
- Ascertain the complainant's requirements to resolve the situation;
- Permit any person/s subject of complaint to respond to the complaint;
- Beware of hearsay, gossip and second-hand information

## **7. DETERMINE A MANAGEMENT STRATEGY**

The Principal must determine whether the complaint can be managed solely by the school or requires the assistance of an external agency. Some will require negotiation in order to arrive at a satisfactory resolution. Others may involve conflict or interpersonal issues that require mediation in order to resolve the matter and restore healthy relationships. When negotiation and/or mediation are unsuccessful then an external arbiter may be appointed

## **8. KEEPING RECORDS**

The staff member in receipt of a complaint should make a diary note of the conversation. Meeting notes are to be taken for all formal interviews. The most senior staff person in the interview is responsible for the meeting notes. As records of the complaint process may be required in a litigation, staff must be careful to record only opinions based on facts and avoid judgmental comments.

## **9. FORMAL RESPONSE TO THE COMPLAINANT**

Serious complaints require a written response related to the resolution of the complaint or an explanation as to why this is not possible. The response should explicitly address how the resolution meets the concerns of the complainant.