

San Clemente High School

**Grievance/Complaints Resolution
Policy & Procedures**

Revised: August 2008





Grievance/Complaints Resolution Policy & Procedures

Rationale:

- Our school has both a desire and a responsibility to ensure that high standards of conduct are maintained by staff and students at all times, and that grievances are managed and resolved fairly, efficiently, promptly and in accordance with relative legislation requirements and processes as detailed in our Student Handbook.

Aims:

- To provide a harmonious, positive and productive school environment.
- To resolve grievances fairly, efficiently, promptly and in accordance with requirements.

Implementation:

General Guidelines

- Grievances/complaints occur when a member of the school community complains that an action or decision has been taken (or not taken) within the school that he/she believes to be a breach of a relevant Act or Regulation, infringes upon the principles of merit and equity, or is otherwise unreasonable.
- Our school seeks to provide a positive, harmonious and productive environment.
- It is the Principal's responsibility to provide a healthy and positive school environment that is free from grievances such as all forms of discrimination and harassment. In doing so, all members of the community (staff, students, parent/carers) will be made aware of their rights and responsibilities, including their rights to have grievances/complaints resolved.
- Undisclosed or unresolved grievances/complaints create distress and can be a violation of a person's rights.
- Resolution of grievances/complaints at a local level, where appropriate, is the desired outcome.

STAFF

- Employees may choose to resolve grievances/complaints personally by talking with, or writing to the person whose behaviour is of concern.
- Employees may choose to seek assistance in resolving grievances/complaints, including assistance from the harassment officer or Principal, Assistant Principal or

IEU Representative. In such circumstances the Principal may refer to the Catholic Schools Office's Education Officer where resolution procedures including private discussions, mediation, monitoring, training or counselling are instigated.

- It is incumbent upon the Principal to act where unacceptable conduct is observed or brought to his or her attention.
- It is important that all grievances/complaints, ensuing procedures and outcomes are fully documented. All grievances/complaints that are reported to an employee, including the Principal, will be recorded on a Grievance/Complaint Incident Report Form.
- Employees are encouraged to lodge formal grievance/complaints in serious cases or when unwelcome behaviour persists despite advice to a respondent that his/her behaviour is causing problems and must cease. Formal grievance/complaints should be lodged with the Principal.
- The rights of complainants and respondents will be upheld at all times, including the use of fair, confidential, impartial and dignified resolution procedures.
- Full details regarding grievance/complaints resolution procedures and external support agencies are outlined within the Catholic Schools Office policies and procedures manual.

Students

- The principal is required to use school's complaints resolution procedures, where appropriate, for resolving complaints in relation to issues that fall within the school's area of responsibility. All cases of serious misconduct – sexual offences, criminal charges, or other serious incidents – must instead be referred to the Department of Community Services or the Child Protection Unit at the CSO.
- Should a student wish to lodge a grievance/complaint the following procedure should be adopted.
 - Advise Student Coordinator if the matter pertains to an incident with another student, an incident on the way to or from school, a process within the school, or
 - Advise Studies Coordinator if the matter refers to an academic area either teacher behaviour, or process used for determination

If student's complaint has not been satisfied the matter is referred to the Assistant Principal (Students), or the Curriculum Coordinator (Studies).

Unresolved grievance/complaints are referred to the Principal.

- It is incumbent upon the Principal to act where unacceptable conduct is observed or brought to his or her attention.
- A Parent/Carer may at any stage choose to take their complaint to the Director of the Catholic Schools Office on behalf of the student, or directly to an external agency such as the Equal Opportunity Commission, the Human Rights and Equal Opportunity Commission or the Ombudsman.
- It is important that all complaints, ensuing procedures and outcomes are fully documented.

- The Principal may choose to respond to a complaint through an informal process in cases where the complaint is minor or if the complainant wishes the matter to be dealt with informally, or the complaint has arisen from lack of or unclear communication.
- Formal processes will be used when informal processes haven't been successful, a complainant seeks a formal process, or the Principal believes the grievance/complaint warrants formal investigation.
- Full details regarding formal grievance/complaint resolution procedures are as follows:

The Principal investigates the complaint including formal interviews, written statements, conveying the details of the complaint to the respondent in writing and providing the opportunity for a written response.

The Principal either dismisses or accepts the complaint. Acceptance may involve further investigation, verbal or written warnings, conciliation, or counselling etc.

- Preparation of a detailed confidential report.
- Monitoring of the situation.
- Parties dissatisfied with the process can appeal to the previously mentioned external agencies.
- All matters must be treated with utmost confidentiality, and professional respect at all times.

Parent/Carer

- Should a parent/carers wish to lodge a grievance/complaint the following procedure should be adopted.
- Advice of the grievance/complaint should be made to the school. The admin staff may elect to refer the grievance/complaint to either of the following:
 - Advise Student Coordinator if the matter pertains to an incident with another student, an incident on the way to or from school, a process within the school, or
 - Advise Studies Coordinator if the matter refers to an academic area either teacher behaviour, or process used for determination
 - If the Parent/Carer's grievance/complaint has not been satisfied the matter can be referred to the Assistant Principal (Students), or the Curriculum Coordinator (Studies)

If either of the above are unable to adequately resolve the grievance/complaint the Principal will ensure the matter is dealt with appropriately.

- A Parent/Carer may at any stage choose to take their complaint to the Director of the Catholic Schools Office, or directly to an external agency such as the Equal

Opportunity Commission, the Human Rights and Equal Opportunity Commission or the Ombudsman.

- It is important that all complaints, ensuing procedures and outcomes are fully documented.
- The Principal may choose to respond to a complaint through an informal process in cases where the complaint is minor or if the complainant wishes the matter to be dealt with informally, or the complaint has arisen from lack of or unclear communication.
- Formal processes will be used when informal processes haven't been successful, a complainant seeks a formal process, or the Principal believes the grievance/complaint warrants formal investigation.
- Principal may refer to the Catholic Schools Office's Assistant Director where resolution procedures including private discussions, mediation, monitoring, training or counselling are instigated.
- Full details regarding formal grievance/complaint resolution procedures are as follows:

The Principal investigates the complaint including formal interviews, written statements, conveying the details of the complaint to the respondent in writing and providing the opportunity for a written response.

Evaluation:

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

August 2008