

Approved:	31/05/2016
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Audience:	Staff, Parents, Carers, School Council

POLICY: GRIEVANCE POLICY & PROCEDURE

Definition

Peace Lutheran Primary School is a complex organisation. The School values each of its members and believes that a clear process for the resolution and monitoring of conflict, complaints, and grievances is in the best interests of all.

1. Purpose

- 1.1 The purpose of this policy is to provide parents, students, employees and other community members with the opportunity to have a complaint dealt with formally through the most appropriate channels, speedily and flexibly.
- 1.2 The objectives of these procedures are to prompt resolution of grievances at the lowest possible level possible by consultation, cooperation and discussion, and to promote efficiency, effectiveness and equity in the School.
- 1.3 The process followed will be confidential and all related documentation securely stored. Any complaints are a matter between parties directly concerned and those involved in this procedure. However, the School may be required to release confidential information under legal requirement and/or to ensure the safety or welfare of others.

2. Scope

- 2.1 These procedures extend to grievances brought by any School employee, parent, student or other School community member.
- 2.2 Some grievances are better handled under other policies and procedures of the School. The School has specific policies and procedures in place for issues such as child protection, workplace discrimination, complaints by or against staff against others.

PROCEDURE

In the event of a grievance, any employee, parent, students or other School community member (**Complainant**) may seek resolution through following the steps below. As stated in 1.2 above, the object (where appropriate) is to resolve the grievance at the lowest level possible.

Level 1: INFORMAL RESOLUTION

The School recognises that often grievances are simple misunderstandings that are easily resolved via effective communication.

- a. If at all possible and appropriate, the parties directly involved should first seek to resolve the grievance in a timely manner by way of informal discussion personally and in a spirit of goodwill and commitment to the maintenance of a safe and harmonious environment.
- b. If the grievance cannot be resolved satisfactorily, within a mutually acceptable time frame, or the seriousness of the matter is not suitable for resolution informally, the Complaint may process to Level 2.

Level 2: THIRD PARTY TO ASSIST RESOLUTION

At this level, the Complainant refers their grievance to a third part facilitator to help the parties to identify the disputed issues, understand the perspective of the other, develop options, promote co-operation, consider alternatives and endeavour to reach a mutual agreement the parties are prepared to abide by.

- a. A Complainant may refer the grievance to the Student Welfare Worker, or Deputy Principal who shall consult with the parties and attempt to facilitate resolution of the grievance by negotiation. However, if the above listed staff members are the source of the grievance, the Complaint shall refer the matter to another member of the Administration staff, namely the PA to the Principal/Business Manager, to facilitate the negotiation.
- b. If the grievance can not be resolved satisfactorily at this level, within a mutually acceptable time frame or the serious of the matter warrants, the Complaint may proceed to Level 3.

Level 3: REFERRAL TO PRINCIPAL

At this level, the Complaint refers their grievance, preferably in writing, to the Principal (or the Principal's delegate) for resolution. However, should the grievance involve the Principal, it shall be referred to the Chair of the 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 the Chair of the School Council.

4. GENERAL GUIDLELINES

- 4.1 Grievances should be assessed as soon as possible.
- 4.2 Grievances will be addressed in accordance with principles of natural justice and procedural fairness.
- 4.3 Investigations (where deemed appropriate) will be conducted thoroughly, with care, and with sensitivity to the privacy of individuals.

5. EMPLOYEES

- 5.1 During discussions an employee can have their union representative or another support person present.
- 5.2 While the Grievance Procedure is being followed, normal work is to continue where appropriate.
- 5.3 For all parties, it is useful to make diary notes of dates and discussions.

6. PARENTS

- 6.1 During discussions an individual can have a support person present.

7. STUDENTS

- 7.1 During discussions a student can have a support person present.
- 7.2 If students take a grievance to Level 2 of the Grievance Procedure, parents may be advised.

8. SENIOR STAFF AND THE PRINCIPAL

- 8.1 The School acknowledges that Complainants are entitled to raise a grievance in good faith.
- 8.2 A grievance/s shall be assessed and (if deemed appropriate) investigated in a thorough fair and impartial manner.
- 8.3 A senior staff member/Principal can have a support person present during discussions.
- 8.4 If a member of Senior Staff or the Principal is unable to resolve the issue, they are to advise the Complainant to take the grievance to the next step of the process.
- 8.5 The Principal (or delegate) should advise parties directly concerned, in writing, at Level 3 of:
 - 8.5.1 The decision taken by the School;
 - 8.5.2 A summary of the reasons for the decision made;
 - 8.5.3 What and when follow action, if any, is to be taken.