



COMPLAINTS & GRIEVANCE POLICY & PROCEDURES

Introduction

As with other policies in place within St John's Lutheran Primary School (hereafter referred to as 'the School', the Grievance Policy and Procedures document is an expression of the Mission Statement of the School in action.

1.0 POLICY

- 1.1 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 Principal will take appropriate action to address those grievances. Grievances that are not addressed have the potential to grow into major problems that can cause tension, low morale and reduced performance and productivity.
- 1.2 Any member of staff may lodge a grievance regarding work-related problems. However, if other procedures exist that more appropriately address that grievance (e.g. sexual harassment or unlawful discrimination), that mechanism should be used.

2.0 PROCEDURES

Preliminary Action

2.1 Before initiating the grievance procedures, complainants are encouraged to try to resolve any grievance directly with the person/s concerned.

- * Tell them of your concern/hurt.
- * Remember to use 'I' messages.
- * Avoid blaming or labeling statements.
- * Focus on the behavior, not the person.

If someone comes to you with a grievance against you or concern about your work or behavior:

- Listen until they feel understood.
- Try not to defend yourself too quickly.
- If you need to defend your position do it with an 'I' message.
- Let them know you have a response but need some time to think about it.

If someone comes to you with a grievance against or concern about another;

- Listen
- Suggest they go to the person directly
- If you share the concern, then suggest you go together. (Be careful this is not seen as a threatening action).

- 2.2 If the complainant has been unable to resolve the grievance him/herself, the Principal should be consulted. Where the grievance involves the Principal, the staff member should refer the matter to the Chair of School Council.
- 2.3 The Principal should address the grievance with a view to resolving it expeditiously, normally within two weeks of receiving the complaint.
- 2.4 Following resolution of the grievance, the supervisor should monitor the situation for a period of time.
- 2.5 In any action taken, the Principal 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.
- 2.6 If the complainant believes the grievance has not been resolved to their satisfaction by reference to a Principal, they can refer the matter to the Chair of School Council. The grievance is to be put in writing and given via the Principal. Once again every attempt should be made to resolve the matter expeditiously.
- 2.7 If the grievance remains unresolved, it may be referred in writing to an independent person from Lutheran Education Queensland (LEQ).
- 2.8 After giving due consideration to the grievance the facilitator nominated by LEQ may do one or more of the following:
- (i) refer the complaint back to the Principal or to a nominee, with advice for resolution; or
 - (ii) initiate an investigation into the matter; or
 - (iii) seek to resolve the matter directly.
- 2.9 Any determination made by the independent person in accordance with Step 3 of these procedures with regard to the grievance will be final.

3.0 REFERRAL TO PRINCIPAL

3.0 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 into the School Office marked confidential or emailed to principal@stjohnsbundaberg.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 the Chair of School Council.

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

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; and
- 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.