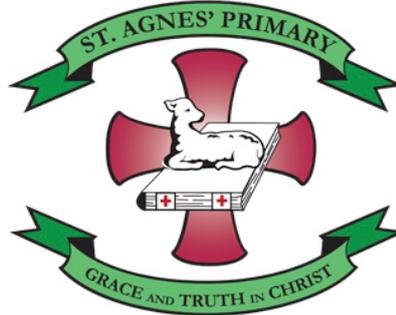


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GRIEVANCE RESOLUTION POLICY

St. Agnes' Primary School



RATIONALE:

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

If a complaint is made it will be investigated in a fair and impartial manner. The facts will be treated as confidential and every effort will be made to finalise the complaint within as short a period as possible.

AIMS:

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

IMPLEMENTATION:

What to do if you have a complaint

1. Approach the person involved.

In many situations, the most appropriate thing to do first is to tell the person who is the cause of the complaint how you feel. If the complaint is about their behaviour, tell them that it is offensive/hurtful/not acceptable. If it is about a work decision, tell them why you think it is discriminatory or harassment. Telling the person will give them a chance to reconsider their actions, stop or change what they are doing.

2. Go to the Principal.

The Principal will advise you about what your options are and what will happen if you decide to make a formal complaint. Nothing will be done in relation to the complaint without your agreeing.

3. What happens next?

Once you have made the complaint, the Principal will then consider whether there are any reasons why *he/she* should not proceed to deal with the complaint. For example, the person you complained about may be a personal friend. If there is such a reason, which indicates it is inappropriate for the Principal to deal with your complaint, it will, with your consent, be referred to another appropriate person.

The Principal will then interview you. During this interview a number of things will be explained

to you, such as what will happen if the complaint is found to be supported by the evidence, or if it is found to be not supported by the evidence. You will also be told where you can go for assistance if you are not happy with the way the *school* is dealing with the complaint. The Principal will then take a written record of the complaint. The Principal will then talk to the person about whom the complaint is made to hear their side of the story. Any witnesses will also be interviewed. These interviews will be conducted separately and impartially. Where a problem has been brought to the Principal's attention on a written complaint from parents, pupils or other staff members the teacher must be allowed to view the complaint. If the complaint has been received verbally by the Principal, the teacher may be informed of the person who complained.

The importance of confidentiality will be stressed to all parties and they will be warned of the consequences if there is a breach of confidentiality (e.g. possible defamation action, initiation of a complaint for harassment).

The Principal would normally write to the teacher confirming the outcome of the interview. This may include any specific instructions given to the teacher by the Principal as well as any strategies to assist the teacher to overcome the problem and the period of time in which those strategies are expected to lead to a resolution.

The Principal will then tell you what the other people said and discuss what should be done to solve the problem. You should tell the Principal what action you would like taken, e.g. a written apology from the person, a written warning, etc.

4. Review

If the complaint remains unresolved, it will be reviewed by the Principal who will make a final decision as to the outcome of the complaint.

5. Possible outcomes

If the complaint is proved, the following are possible outcomes:

- a written apology;
- an official warning;
- counselling;
- disciplinary action; or
- dismissal.

If the complaint is unproved (not enough evidence), possible outcomes are:

- relevant training for all staff; and/or
- monitoring of behaviour of employees

If the complaint is proved not to have happened at all, the following are possible outcomes:

- a written apology;
- an official warning;
- counseling for the person who made the complaint;
- disciplinary action; or
- dismissal.

The Principal will make sure that whatever outcome is decided upon actually happens. He/she will also assess the effectiveness of the outcome from time to time.

6. Catholic Schools Office

- The Director of Schools will become involved if it is the Principal's view that sufficient improvement in performance has not occurred **OR** where the problem is so immediate and serious that the procedures above cannot be applied.
- The Director (or his/her nominee) will make arrangements to meet with the teacher. The advice will normally be in writing and will indicate the time and place of the interview, the nature of the matters to be discussed and who may be expected to be present.
- The teacher may choose to inform the IEU of the interview. The IEU will inform the CEO of such a choice.
- Both parties may wish to have a witness present. The teacher may be accompanied at such

interview by another teacher of his/her choice from the staff of the school who may be the IEU chapter representative or by an IEU officer.

- Any person present at the interview is free to take notes.
- During this interview the teacher will be informed of the nature of the problem referred by the Principal. The teacher will be given an opportunity to respond. Again possible solutions to the problem should be discussed. The teacher must be advised of the consequences of his/her actions if the areas of concern are not addressed.
- As soon as practicable after the interview the teacher will be informed in writing of the appropriate action to be taken or of the current position of the teacher's employment. This may include the following:
 - there is a need for improvement in the teacher's performance and the matter will be reviewed at a later date; or
 - there are specific matters which have caused concern and that any re-occurrence of those matters may result in further action being taken by the employer; or
 - steps will be taken to make available to the teacher appropriate advisory or counseling services; or
 - the teacher is to be disciplined and the nature of such disciplinary action; or
 - such other steps as regarded appropriate by the employer are to be taken.
- Where the teacher is advised that his/her performance is to be reviewed at a later date the Director or representative will inform the teacher in writing of aspects of the review which should include:
 - the aspects of the teacher's performance to be reviewed and the nature of the improvement required;
 - the method that will be used to conduct the review;
 - the name(s) of the person(s) who will conduct the review;
 - the approximate time(s) at which the review will be carried out;
 - the nature of any special assistance that will be made available to the teacher during the course of the review;
 - any other matter deemed appropriate.
- During the review period changes to the above procedures may occur by mutual agreement.
- At the end of the period of review as mentioned in C.8.(d) above, the teacher will be advised in writing that:
 - the process of review has been completed and that the required improvement in the teacher's performance has been achieved; or
 - the process of review is to be extended; or
 - the process of review has been completed and that the required improvement in the teacher's performance has not been achieved; or
 - other steps as regarded appropriate will be taken.

7. Confidentiality

Every endeavour should be made to keep the issue confined within the particular school as much as possible in order to ensure that the dignity of the teacher(s), the school and its personnel is maintained at all times.

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