



St Paul Lutheran School

Grievance Policy & Procedure – Parents

Created: February 2003

Last Reviewed: February 2019

Rationale

Issues or concerns that you, as parents, may have regarding your child's education are most effectively dealt with if they are raised in the following ways.

All personal matters such as concerns regarding student, parent or staff relationships should be realised **directly with the school** through the class teacher or Principal in a **confidential manner**.

Procedure

The following guidelines may assist you if you have a concern.

- a) **Make an appointment** to talk to the person with whom you have a concern or with whom is closely related to your concern. This may be the classroom teacher, principal or other school staff (eg. SPLASH or Canteen). Let him/her know what subject you wish to discuss as this will facilitate the process. This makes the most productive use of the time available - when the individual is free to give you his/her full attention.
- b) **Meet with the staff member** and use appropriate problem solving and/or conflict resolution strategies to formulate positive action for future.

That is:

- Identify the facts
- Explore why the facts present a problem
- Share feelings
- Jointly commit to some future action and goals within the guidelines of school policy, procedure and importantly, by observing school values.

If you consider that the issue you have raised is still unresolved, it is important that you state this to the person at the conclusion of the meeting.

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- c) If the issues are not resolved, **make an appointment with the Principal or Deputy Principal**. Let him/her know what subject you wish to discuss as this will facilitate the process.
- d) **Meet with the Principal or Deputy Principal**. Results of this meeting may include the following:
 - the situation is monitored;
 - further discussions with the people involved (e.g. Principal and teacher);
 - outside support for the child or family may be sought.
- e) If you are still dissatisfied with the outcome of the meeting, phone or **write to the Principal** again to air your concerns. If St Paul does not receive further information it is reasonable to assume that the issue has been resolved.
- f) If after steps a) - e) you are still dissatisfied **approach the Chairperson or designated School Councillor** who will try to resolve the situation further. The expectation of you by the Chairperson of School Council will be that the above steps have been followed.

Steps a) – f) are considered appropriate toward the resolution of all grievances. If there is the case where a parent feels uncomfortable meeting with the appropriate school staff member, then an agreed mediator should be sought. Example: another staff member, council member, pastor, or agreed professional.

In the rare event that a person feels steps a) – f) did not result in a satisfactory conclusion, the final point of call is to make contact with the Lutheran Schools Association in North Adelaide.

Neither the Minister for Education nor the Department for Education has any power to directly intervene in any complaints relating to the operations of a non-government school.

It is important that these grievances are kept **confidential**, and although at times you may wish to seek support from friends or an advocate, it is very important to do this with discretion.

When the matter is discussed in the student's hearing, it is important that the student understands that you have **confidence** that the issue will be resolved **confidentially** at the school level.

Whilst constructive criticism, appropriately shared and inline with this policy is welcomed, denigration or defamation of the school, teacher or principal does not support the child's education as it undermines **trust and confidence**. The school can only deal with issues that are raised in the ways outlined above. If we do not receive information then we assume that all is well.

In the event that a parent persists in airing grievances in an inappropriate manner, the parent(s) will be required to attend a meeting with the principal and/or chair of council. Consultation by the principal and/or chairperson for the benefit of maintaining confidence, trust and confidentiality, will occur and this policy will be highlighted as an expectation for all.

Due to the importance that St Paul Lutheran School places on the building and maintenance of positive community relationships, repeated deviation from policy may result in the termination of enrolment from St Paul Lutheran School.