

Complaints Policy



HEREWORTH
DESIGNED FOR BOYS

Background

The nature of schools is such that people from time to time have concerns about the behaviour of others, treatment of an individual towards another or others, and dissatisfaction arises from decisions that have been made, amongst many other situations. This Policy is necessary as it provides direction about complaint management and to whom complaints are to be made.

Purpose

The purpose of this Policy is to provide a school-based system for the management of complaints about educational and administrative issues made by employees of the school, all students of the school and parents or guardians, and all members of the community. The principles of this Policy are to:

- Provide an efficient, open, honest, transparent and accessible mechanism for addressing complaints, relevant to this policy, in accordance with the principles of natural justice;
- Ensure fairness towards both complainants and respondents is upheld throughout the complaints management process;
- Deal with complaints as swiftly and comprehensively as possible;
- Provide sufficient opportunity for any complaint to be fully discussed and addressed through dialogue and mutual understanding;
- Enhance the level of parent or guardian satisfaction with the school and the relationship of parents or guardians and students with teachers;
- Ensure the complaints information is integrated into the school's continual improvement process.
- Make provision for an adequate records system to maintain all complaints and ensure that due process is followed.
- Ensure complaints are dealt with in a fair, private and confidential manner that:
 - (a) is absent of victimisation, discrimination or retribution;
 - (b) includes Natural Justice principles; and
 - (c) is independent of those handling the complaints process.
- Exclude the following matters which are managed under other School Policies: (a) industrial relations (**refer to Employment Contracts, Dispute Resolution**)
- (b) alleged bullying, discrimination, physical assault, harm, harassment or sexual harassment (**refer to Human Relations Policy**)
- (c) the abuse of an enrolled student and is an allegation of sexual abuse or likely sexual abuse, harm, or unacceptable risk of harm, or inappropriate behaviour. (**refer to the Student Protection Policy**).

Guidelines

Making a Complaint

To whom shall a complaint be made:

- In the first instance, if appropriate, every attempt should be made to discuss the matter with the person most immediately and directly concerned with a direct report, teacher, Headmaster or the Chair of the Board.

Complaints concerning a student's teacher:

- If a complaint relates to a student's teacher, or relates to an issue concerning a student's experience at school, the complainant shall make an appointment with the student's teacher to discuss the matter (if appropriate) as soon as possible. In circumstances where a student has more than one teacher, where the complaint relates to one of the student's teachers, the appointment, through the school administration office, is to be made with the teacher to whom the complaint relates.
- If appropriate, the complainant shall give the teacher an opportunity to tell that person all he/she knows about the incident or issue. Together both the complainant and teacher can then take steps to attempt to resolve the problem at this level.
- The teacher will make a record of the complaint and report the meeting and any outcomes to the Headmaster.
- If the complainant determines it is not appropriate to raise the complaint in accordance with the process outlined above or if, after following that process, is dissatisfied with the manner in which their complaint was addressed then the complainant shall address their complaint, in writing, to the Headmaster.

Complaints concerning administrative staff:

- If the complaint is about a non-teaching or administrative staff member, or a teacher other than a student's teacher, the complainant shall attempt to discuss the matter with the person to whom the complaint relates by agreement with that person's immediate supervisor.
 - If the complainant determines it is not appropriate to raise the complaint in accordance with the process outlined above or if, after following that process, is dissatisfied with the manner in which their complaint was addressed then the complainant shall address their complaint, in writing, to the Headmaster.

Complaints concerning the Headmaster:

- If the complaint relates to the Headmaster the complainant shall make an appointment with the Headmaster to discuss the matter (if appropriate) as soon as possible through the school administration office.
- If appropriate, the complainant shall give the Headmaster an opportunity to tell that person all he/she knows about the incident or issue. Together both the complainant and Headmaster can then take steps to attempt to resolve the problem at this level.
- If the complainant determines it is not appropriate to raise the complaint in accordance with the process outlined above or if, after following that process, is dissatisfied with the manner in which their complaint was addressed then the complainant shall address their complaint, in writing, to the Chair of the Board.

Complaints concerning a member/s of the School Board or Chair of School Board:

- If the complaint relates to the School Board or a member of the School Board then the complainant shall make the complaint in writing to the Chair of School Board.
- If appropriate, the complainant shall give the Chair of School Board an opportunity to tell that person all he/she knows about the incident or issue. Together both the complainant and Chair of the Board can then take steps to attempt to resolve the problem at this level.
- If the complaint relates to the Chair of the School Board then the complainant shall make the complaint in writing to the Chair and also addressed to the whole Board. In such a case the Chair would remove himself from any further involvement until such time as the Board decides what process will be followed. The Board may attempt to resolve this or seek independent assistance.

Policy Review

This policy will be reviewed and, if appropriate updated by the Board every two years.