

## Dispute Resolution Policy

Prince of Peace Lutheran College is a complex organisation. The College 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. Just as we are called in 1 Peter 3 Verse 8-9:

*“Finally, all of you should be in agreement, understanding each other, loving each other as family, being kind and humble. Do not do wrong to repay a wrong, and do not insult to repay an insult. But repay with a blessing, because you yourselves were called to do this”.*

### Introduction

The purpose of this document 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.

The objectives of these procedures are to promote the prompt resolution of grievances at the lowest level possible by consultation, cooperation and discussion, and to promote efficiency, effectiveness and equity in the College.

The process followed will be confidential and all related documentation securely stored. Any complaints are a matter between the parties directly concerned and those involved in this procedure. However, the College may be required to release confidential information under legal requirement and/or to ensure the safety or welfare of others.

### Scope

Some grievances are better handled under other policies and procedures of the College. The College has specific policies and procedures in place for issues such as child protection, workplace discrimination, complaints by or against staff covered by the *Queensland Lutheran Schools Single Enterprise Agreement 2016* (as amended or replaced from time to time) amongst others.

Subject to this, these procedures extend to grievances brought by any College parent, student, employee or other College community member.

### Procedure

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

#### Level 1: Informal Discussions

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

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.

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 Complainant may process to Level 2.

All Level 1 resolutions will be started within 30 days of receipt.

### **Level 2: Third Party to Assist Resolution**

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

- A Complainant may refer the grievance to a staff member's immediate supervisor who shall consult with the parties and attempt to facilitate resolution of the grievance by negotiation. However, if the supervisor is the source of the grievance, the Complainant shall refer the matter to any other member of College Senior Staff, namely the Head of Campus to facilitate the negotiation or the Head of Campus may identify an appropriate third party to facilitate the negotiation.
- If the grievance cannot be resolved satisfactorily at this level, within a mutually acceptable time frame or the seriousness of the matter warrants, the Complainant may proceed to Level 3.

All Level 2 resolutions will be started within 30 days of receipt.

### **Level 3: Referral to Head of College**

At this level, the Complainant refers their grievance, preferably in writing, to the Head of College (or Head of College's delegate) for resolution. However, should the grievance involve the Head of College, it shall be referred to the Chair of College Council, either directly or via the College Council Secretary:

Head of College:	headofcollege@princeofpeace.qld.edu.au
College Council Chair:	collegechair@princeofpeace.qld.edu.au
College Council Secretary:	councilsecretary@princeofpeace.qld.edu.au

Reference to the Head of College (or Head of College'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 College Council.

Due to the complexity of Level 3 grievances, the College will endeavor to resolve the dispute as soon as practical taking into account that the grievance may require input from external agencies.

### **General Guidelines**

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

### **Employees**

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

### **Parents**

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

---

## **Dispute Resolution Policy**

Version 1– As at 01/10/17

For review on 01/10/19 by Head of College

**Students**

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

**Senior Staff and the Head of College**

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