

*From whom the whole body, joined and held together by every joint with which it is equipped, when each part is working properly, makes the body grow so that it builds itself up in love. Ephesians 4:16*

Within this policy, unless the context otherwise requires:

“Principal” means Principal or Head of College of Prince of Peace Lutheran College

“School” means school or college and specifically Prince of Peace Lutheran College

<b>Purpose:</b>	The purpose of this policy is to ensure that student, parent and employee complaints and disputes are dealt with in a responsive, efficient, effective and fair way.	
<b>Scope:</b>	Students, parents and employees, including full-time, part-time, permanent, fixed-term and casual employees, as well as contractors, volunteers and people undertaking work experience or vocational placements.	
<b>Status:</b>	Approved	<b>Supersedes:</b> Previous Versions
<b>Authorised by:</b>	College Council	<b>Date of Authorisation:</b> August 2025
<b>References:</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <a href="#">Education (Accreditation of Non-State Schools) Regulations 2017</a></li> <li>• <a href="#">Australian Education Regulations 2013</a></li> <li>• <a href="#">Fair Work Act 2009</a></li> <li>• <a href="#">Work Health and Safety Act 2011 (Qld)</a></li> <li>• <a href="#">Privacy Act 1988 (Cth)</a></li> <li>• <a href="#">Anti-Discrimination Act 1991 (Qld)</a></li> <li>• <a href="#">Australian Human Rights Commission Act 1986 (Cth)</a></li> <li>• <a href="#">Sex Discrimination Act 1984 (Cth)</a></li> <li>• <a href="#">Age Discrimination Act 2004 (Cth)</a></li> <li>• <a href="#">Disability Discrimination Act 1992 (Cth)</a></li> <li>• <a href="#">Racial Discrimination Act 1975 (Cth)</a></li> </ul> <p>Choose those appropriate from list below</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Lutheran Education Queensland Enterprise Bargaining Agreement</li> <li>• Prince of Peace Lutheran College Complaints Handling Policy &amp; Procedure</li> <li>• Prince of Peace Lutheran College Workplace Health and Safety Policy</li> <li>• Prince of Peace Lutheran College Student Code of Conduct</li> <li>• Prince of Peace Lutheran College Parent Code of Conduct</li> <li>• Prince of Peace Lutheran College Disability Policy</li> <li>• Prince of Peace Lutheran College Privacy Policy</li> </ul>	
<b>Review Date:</b>	August 2025	<b>Next Review Date:</b> August 2027
<b>Policy Owner:</b>	College Council	

**Policy Statement**

Prince of Peace Lutheran College is committed to ensuring that student, parent and employee complaints are dealt with in a responsive, efficient, effective and fair way.

Prince of Peace Lutheran College views complaints as part of an important feedback and accountability process.

Prince of Peace Lutheran College acknowledges the right of students, parents and employees to complain when dissatisfied with an action, inaction or decision of the school and the school encourages constructive criticism and complaints.

Prince of Peace Lutheran College recognises that time spent on handling complaints can be an investment in better service to students, parents and employees.

**Complaints that may be Resolved under this Policy**

Prince of Peace Lutheran College encourages students, parents and employees to lodge promptly any concerns regarding sexual harassment, child protection, discrimination, workplace bullying and privacy breaches as well as more general complaints that include areas such as:

- the school, its employees or students having done something wrong
- the school, its employees or students having failed to do something they should have done
- the school, its employees or students having acted unfairly or impolitely
- issues of student or employee behaviour that are contrary to their relevant code of conduct
- issues related to learning programs, assessment and reporting of student learning
- issues related to communication with students or parents or between employees
- issues related to school fees and payments
- general administrative issues.

Student complaints may be brought by students or by parents on behalf of their children, as appropriate in the circumstances.

**Issues Outside this Policy**

The following matters are outside the scope of this policy and should be managed as follows:

- Child protection concerns or risks of harm to children should be dealt with in accordance with the law and the school's Child Protection Policy.
- Student bullying complaints should be dealt with under the Honouring Relationships Policy.
- Student discipline matters, including matters involving suspension or expulsion, should be dealt with under the Honouring Relationships Policy.
- Employee complaints related to their employment should be directed to their supervisor.
- Student or employee violence or criminal matters should be directed to the Head of College who will involve the Police as appropriate.
- Formal legal proceedings.

## ***Complaints Handling Principles***

Prince of Peace Lutheran College is committed to managing complaints according to the following principles:

- complaints will be resolved with as little formality and disruption as possible
- complaints will be taken seriously
- anonymous complaints will be treated on their merits
- complaints will be dealt with fairly and objectively and in a timely manner
- Prince of Peace Lutheran College will determine the appropriate person to deal with the complaint in the first instance
- complaints should be resolved with as little formality and disputation as possible
- mediation, negotiation and informal resolution are optional alternatives
- procedural fairness will be ensured wherever practicable, including the right of interested parties to the complaint to be heard
- confidentiality and privacy will be maintained as much as possible
- all parties to the complaints will be appropriately supported
- Prince of Peace Lutheran College will give reasonable progress updates
- appropriate remedies will be offered and implemented
- provide a review pathway for parties to the complaint if warranted
- complainants, respondents and people associated with them will not be victimised as a result of lodging the complaints and they will not suffer any other reprisals
- the school will keep records of complaints
- the school's insurer will be informed if a complaint could be connected to an insured risk.

## ***Responsibilities***

### **School**

The school has the following role and responsibilities:

- develop, implement, promote and act in accordance with the school's Complaints Handling Policy and procedures
- appropriately communicate the school's Complaints Handling Policy and procedures to students, parents and employees
- ensure that the Complaints Handling procedures are readily accessible by staff, students and parents
- upon receipt of a complaint, manage the complaint in accordance with the Complaints Handling procedures
- ensure that appropriate support is provided to all parties to a complaint
- take appropriate action to prevent victimisation or action in reprisal against the complainant, respondent or any person associated with them
- appropriately implement remedies
- appropriately train relevant employees
- keep records
- conduct a review/audit of the Complaints Register from time to time
- monitor and report to the governing body on complaints

- report to the school's insurer when that is relevant
- refer to the school's governing body immediately any claim for legal redress.

### **All Parties to a Dispute**

The complainant and respondent both have the following role and responsibilities:

- apply and comply with the school's Complaints Handling Policy and procedures
- lodge the complaint as soon as possible after the issue arises
- expect that the complaint will be dealt with fairly and objectively; in a timely manner; with procedural fairness wherever practicable; that confidentiality and privacy will be maintained as much as possible
- provide complete and factual information in a timely manner
- not provide deliberately false or misleading information
- not make frivolous or vexatious complaints
- act in good faith, and in a calm and courteous manner
- act in a non-threatening manner
- to be appropriately supported
- acknowledge that a common goal is to achieve an outcome acceptable to all parties
- recognise that all parties have rights and responsibilities which must be balanced
- maintain and respect the privacy and confidentiality of all parties
- not victimise or act in reprisal against any party to the dispute or any person associated with them.

### **Employees Receiving Complaints**

Employees receiving complaints have the following role and responsibilities:

- act in accordance with the school's Complaints Handling Policy and procedures
- inform the party lodging the complaint of how complaints can be lodged, when they should be lodged and what information is required
- provide the complainant with information about any support or assistance available to assist them in lodging their complaint
- provide the complainant with a copy of the school's Complaints Handling Policy and procedures
- maintain confidentiality
- keep appropriate records
- to forward complaints to more senior employees, including the Head of College, as appropriate
- not victimise or act in reprisal against the complainant, respondent or any person associated with them.

### **Implementation**

Prince of Peace Lutheran College is committed to raising awareness of the process for resolving complaints at the school, including by the development and implementation of this policy and related procedures, and via the clear support and promotion of the policy and procedures.

Prince of Peace Lutheran College is also committed to appropriately training relevant employees (especially senior staff) on how to resolve complaints in line with this policy and the related procedures.

Prince of Peace Lutheran College will keep appropriate records of complaints, will monitor complaints and their resolution and will report on a high-level basis to the school Board on complaint handling at the school.

Prince of Peace Lutheran College will act to encourage students, parents and employees to contribute to a healthy school culture where complaints are resolved with as little formality and disruption as possible.

## **Resolution Process**

In the event of a grievance, any employee, parent, student or other College member (Complainant) may seek resolution through following the steps below, with the objective to resolve the complaint at the lowest level possible.

### **Level 1: Informal Discussions**

The College recognises that often complaints arise from misunderstandings that can be easily resolved via effective communication.

If at all possible and appropriate, the parties directly involved should first seek to resolve the complaint 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 complaint 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 complaint 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 endeavour to reach a mutual agreement the parties are prepared to abide by.

- A Complainant may refer the complaint to a staff member's immediate supervisor who shall consult with the parties and attempt to facilitate resolution of the complaint by negotiation. However, if the supervisor is the source of the complaint, 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 complaint 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.

Head of Junior Campus:	headofjuniorcampus@princeofpeace.qld.edu.au
Head of Senior Campus:	headofseniorcampus @princeofpeace.qld.edu.au

All Level 2 resolutions will be started within 30 days of receipt in writing of the complaint. If the complaint cannot be resolved by the Head of Campus, refer to level 3.

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

At this level, the Complainant refers their written complaint, to the Head of College for resolution. However, should the complaint 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 should resolve most, if not all complaints. However, if the complaint is still not resolved at this level, then the Complainant may properly refer a matter to the Chair of College Council. The complaint will then be worked through with all parties and may require input from external agencies.

**General Guidelines**

- Complaint should be assessed as soon as practical.
- Complaints 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.
- For all parties, it is useful to make diary notes of dates and discussions.

**Parents and Caregivers**

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

**Students**

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

**Senior Staff and the Head of College**

- A complaint 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 complaint 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.

**Evaluation**

This policy will be reviewed as part of the College's five-year review cycle.