
Grievance Policy



St Columba College
A joint Anglican and Catholic College

Grievance Policy

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ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Acknowledgement of Country

St Columba College Munno Para Inc. acknowledges the first custodians of Australia - First Nations Peoples - and we pay our respects to elders, past, present and future.

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DOCUMENT CONTROL

Policy Leader	Principal
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Approval Authority	St Columba College Council
Approval Date	July 2018
Review Date	Reviewed after 2 years or before if required.

Grievance Policy

1. Preamble

St Columba College is an Anglican and Catholic school committed to working with students, parents/caregivers and staff in a manner which upholds the importance of building and maintaining positive relationships. An integral part of this process is providing an environment where each community member is recognised and respected as a unique individual with rights and responsibilities.

The College recognises the rights of its students, staff members and parents/caregivers to register a complaint or grievance about a decision, behavior, act or omission that they feel is unfair, or discriminatory.

Our Christian heritage provides the basis for our philosophy of seeking to provide opportunities for people to resolve problems in a pro-active and mutually acceptable manner. As such, we have a clearly stated method and structure for the resolution of grievances. Wherever possible restorative processes will underpin our approach.

2. Aims

- Create a College environment where a lived reality of the Gospel message, *'To love your neighbour as yourself'*, is experienced.
- For all College members to recognise that reconciliation is an integral part of restoring relationships and building community.
- Provide clear structures for the resolution of grievances.
- Provide clear expectations in relation to managing possible conflict.

3. Definition of Grievance

For the purposes of the College's Policy and Procedures, a 'grievance' refers to a situation where an individual believes that students, teachers, parents/caregivers or any member of the College community have acted outside of the normal policies or practices that the College promotes and expects.

4. Guidelines for Grievance Resolution

In general, if a problem exists within the College community, the best way to attempt resolution is for the individuals concerned to discuss and to seek resolution directly with one another. If a resolution is not possible at that level, then it is important to seek support.

5. Outcomes

The College will do its best to address and satisfactorily resolve grievances in a mutually acceptable way. However, it is not always possible to resolve all problems in a manner where there is mutual acceptance of the outcome.

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6. Roles

Role of College Council

- Ensure that a Grievance Policy and Procedures are in place.
- Review the Grievance Policy and Procedures on a regular basis.
- Support the Principal in ensuring that resources are in place to support grievance procedures.

Role of Principal

- Ensure that the Grievance Policy and Procedures are implemented appropriately within the College.
- Provide information to students, staff and parents/caregivers in relation to the procedures contained within the Grievance Policy.
- Review the policy and procedures from time to time with the Leadership Team, providing direction to the College Council.

Role of Students

- Seek the support of staff when needed to ensure that grievances are appropriately dealt with.
- Follow the procedures that are laid out in the policy in relation to addressing grievances.
- Act responsibly in relation to the resolution of problems that may occur with peers, teachers or other staff.

Role of Parents/Caregivers

- Actively engage in promoting a positive environment by seeking to resolve difficulties in a positive and proactive manner.
- Act in a manner which is conducive to the building of relationships.
- Ensure that problems/concerns/grievances are dealt with according to the procedures outlined in the Guidelines for Problem Resolution.

Role of Staff

- Ensure that the Grievance Policy and Procedures are understood and implemented where appropriate.
- Provide information to students in relation to the Grievance Policy and Procedures.
- Actively engage with the grievance procedures in relation to resolving problems with students, parents/caregivers and other staff members.

7. Formal Grievance Procedures

All grievances should be dealt with in a timely manner at the appropriate level before being escalated to a higher level.

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7.1 Information for Students

We believe it is important that everyone feels happy and safe so that the best learning can take place. We believe that everyone, including students, staff members and parents/caregivers need to work closely together to provide the best educational opportunities for you. If you have a problem, a concern or complaint, we encourage you to speak to someone about it.

Student seeking a resolution of a problem that relates to a staff member

Where a problem exists between a student and a staff member it is important that the issue is addressed and that appropriate support procedures are in place.

Students are encouraged to:

- Advise your parents/caregivers of the concern.
- Speak with someone (parents/caregivers, counsellor or teacher) to work through a possible strategy to assist you to resolve the problem.
- Arrange a time to speak with the staff member (with a support member if required) who can best support and resolve the problem.
- If the problem is not resolved, arrange a time to speak with the Head of School.
- If the problem is not resolved, advise the Head of School that you will speak with the Deputy Principal or Principal.
- Arrange a time to speak with the Deputy Principal or Principal as soon as possible.
- At any point in the process a student may consult with a College Counsellor or Chaplain for support.
- If the problem is not resolved, then a letter outlining the concern should be sent to the Chairperson of the St Columba College Council at chairperson@stcolumba.sa.edu.au
- Remember effective management of a grievance requires face to face dialogue. Communication by email or social media is not acceptable.

Possible responses to this situation may include:

- Listen to the student and staff member.
- Provide an opportunity for those involved to meet in a Formal Restorative Conference to resolve the matter.
- Provide opportunities for the student to meet with the Counsellor.
- Report the matter to SAPOL, Department of Child Protection and/or other agencies.

Student/s seeking resolution of a problem that relates to another student/s

Where a problem exists between students, it is important that the issues are addressed and that appropriate support procedures are in place.

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Students are encouraged to:

- Advise your parent/caregiver of the concern.
- Speak with someone (parents/caregivers, counsellor or teacher) to work through a possible strategy to assist you to resolve the problem.
- Speak directly to the person/s involved in the problem (if it is safe to do so).
- If the problem is not resolved seek the support of a teacher, House Leader, College Counsellor or the Head of School.
- If the problem is not resolved the parents/caregivers contacts the appropriate staff member.
- It is imperative that a parents/caregivers does not confront someone else's child.
- If the problem relates to a serious act of violence or ongoing serious bullying/harassment parents are encouraged to report to SAPOL.

Possible responses to this situation may include:

- Listen to the student/s and investigate with others.
- Provide an opportunity for students to meet in a Formal Restorative Conference to resolve the matter.
- Provide opportunities for the student/s to meet with the Counsellor.
- Report the matter to SAPOL, Department of Child Protection and/or other agencies.

7.2 Information for Parents/Caregivers

The relationship between home and school is fundamental in ensuring that students are happy, secure, and open to learning. St Columba College recognises that parents and staff need to work in partnership to provide the best educational opportunities and care for students. Parents/caregivers are encouraged to speak with staff promptly so that we can work together to resolve the problem.

Parents/caregivers seeking resolution of a problem that relates to their child and a staff member

Where a problem exists between a student and staff member, it is important that the issue is addressed and that appropriate support procedures are in place.

Parents/caregivers are encouraged to:

- Arrange a time to speak with the teacher who you believe can best resolve the problem. Normally this will be the child's class/kinship teacher or subject teacher.
- If the problem is not resolved, advise the teacher that you will speak with the relevant Head of School.

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- Arrange a time to speak with the Head of School as soon as possible.
- If the problem is not resolved, advise the Head of School that you will speak with the Deputy Principal or Principal.
- Arrange a time to speak with the Deputy Principal or Principal as soon as possible.
- At any point in the process student/s may consult with a College Counsellor or Chaplain for support.
- If the problem is not resolved, then a letter outlining the concern should be sent to the Chairperson of the St Columba College Council at chairperson@stcolumba.sa.edu.au

It is important that all meetings are approached in a manner that is conducive to finding resolution. Therefore, it is expected that offensive or abusive language, harassment, physical intimidation or violence will not be an aspect of any communication. The College reserves the right to exclude people who use any form of intimidation.

Possible responses to this situation may include:

- Listen to the student, parents/caregivers and staff member.
- Provide opportunities for a parents/caregivers to meet with a teacher, staff member, Head of School, Deputy Principal or Principal.
- Provide an opportunity for those involved to meet in a Formal Restorative Conference to resolve the matter.
- Provide opportunities for students to access counselling where appropriate.
- Report the matter to SAPOL, Department of Child Protection and/or other agencies.

Parents/caregivers seeking resolution with another parent/caregiver within the College

If a serious problem exists between parents/caregivers within the College community and it is likely that the matter will cause an issue during the course of the school day, then it is appropriate that the College be notified. The College at all times needs to remain neutral and all adults are expected to behave safely within the school grounds.

Where a problem exists between parents/caregivers, it is important that the issue is addressed and that appropriate support procedures are in place.

Parents/caregivers are encouraged to:

- Inform the Head of School, Deputy Principal or Principal that a serious problem exists.
- All those involved should avoid discussing the issue with other parents/caregivers.
- All adults are expected to behave safely at all times within school grounds.

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Possible responses to this situation may include:

- Listen to the parents/caregivers.
- Speak individually to parents/caregivers concerned regarding College policy and procedures.
- Provide information for support from other agencies or authorities.
- If behaviour is unsafe instruct parents/caregivers to leave the premises and report to SAPOL.

In a situation where problems between adults result in 'problem behaviours' being displayed during school hours and on school grounds, the outcome may include the following:

- The adult(s) concerned being excluded from College premises and/or attending College functions.
- Appropriate legal proceedings being implemented.
- Report the matter to SAPOL.

7.3 Information for Staff

The relationship between colleagues and members of the community is an important part of ensuring that students are happy, secure and open to learning. St Columba College recognises that all staff need to work closely with others to provide the best educational learning opportunities for students.

Any concerns relating to bullying and harassment in the workplace, staff are encouraged to seek information from the SACCS Procedures for Responding to Bullying and Harassment in the Workplace.

Staff member seeking resolution with a colleague, student or parent/caregiver

Staff members are encouraged to:

- Arrange a time to speak with the person who you believe can best resolve the problem.
- If the problem is not resolved, advise the person that you will speak with the relevant Head of School.
- Arrange a time to speak with the Head of School as soon as possible.
- If the problem is not resolved, advise the Head of School that you will speak with the Deputy Principal or Principal.
- Arrange a time to speak with the Deputy Principal or Principal as soon as possible.
- At any point in the process staff members may consult with ACCESS Counselling or Chaplain for support.
- If the problem is not resolved, then a letter outlining the concern should be sent to the Chairperson of the St Columba College Council at chairperson@stcolumba.sa.edu.au

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Possible responses to this situation may include:

- Listen to the staff member and investigate as appropriate.
- Provide an opportunity for those involved to meet in a Mediation or Formal Restorative Conference to resolve the matter.
- Provide opportunities for the staff member to access counselling where appropriate.
- Report the matter to SAPOL, Department of Child Protection and/or other agencies.

Staff member seeking resolution with a member of leadership team

Staff members are encouraged to:

- Arrange a time to speak with the person who you believe can best resolve the problem.
- If the problem is not resolved, advise the person that you will speak with the Deputy Principal or Principal
- Arrange a time to speak with the Deputy Principal or Principal as soon as possible.
- At any point in the process staff members may consult with ACCESS Counselling or Chaplain for support.
- If the problem is not resolved, then a letter outlining the concern should be sent to the Chairperson of the St Columba College Council at chairperson@stcolumba.sa.edu.au

Possible responses to this situation may include:

- Listen to the staff member and investigate as appropriate.
- Provide an opportunity for those involved to meet in a Mediation or Formal Restorative Conference to resolve the matter.
- Provide opportunities for the staff member to access counselling where appropriate.
- Report the matter to SAPOL, Department of Child Protection and/or other agencies.

Staff member seeking resolution with the Principal

Staff members are encouraged to:

- Arrange a time to speak with the Principal and with a support person if needed.
- If the problem is not resolved, then a letter outlining the concern should be sent to the Chairperson of the St Columba College Council at chairperson@stcolumba.sa.edu.au
- At any point in the process staff members may consult with ACCESS Counselling or Chaplain for support.

Possible responses to this situation may include:

- Listen to the staff member and investigate as appropriate.
- Provide an opportunity to meet in a Mediation or Formal Restorative Conference to resolve the matter.
- Provide opportunities for the staff member to access counselling where appropriate.
- Report the matter to SAPOL, Department of Child Protection and/or other agencies.

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8 Documentation and Process

St Columba College will document all formal grievances and any processes implemented to seek a resolution. Where a complaint is made against an individual the person will be informed of the nature and the content of the complaint and they will have the right to respond. All discussions will be kept strictly confidential. A person who has made a complaint may withdraw at any time. The College will endeavour to ensure that no one will be victimised as a result of making a complaint. The person who has made a complaint has the right to be supported by another person of his/her choice. A process of mediation may be available if a complaint is not satisfactorily resolved.

9 Associated Policies

- Student Personal Responsibility Policy
- Bullying and Harassment Policy
- Child Protection Policy
- Adult Responsible Behaviour Policy
- Student Driving Policy
- SACCS Procedures for Responding to Bullying and Harassment in the Workplace