



Complaint and Grievance Procedures for the School Community

IGS seeks to address complaints raised by members of the School community in an effective manner.

1. Introduction

1.1 Purpose and scope

IGS aims to provide a School community in which grievances can be raised and resolved in an effective manner.

This procedure applies to complaints in respect of services provided by the School or against staff members, which includes employees, contractors and volunteers.

This procedure does not extend to personal grievances between parents, guardians or other members of the School community.

1.2 Related policies

If the complaint is an allegation about reportable conduct then it will be addressed in accordance with the School's Child Protection Policy. The definition of reportable conduct under the *Children's Guardian Act 2019 (NSW)* is set out in the School's Child Protection Policy.

This procedure does not extend to complaints which are whistleblowing disclosures. The procedure for processing whistleblowing complaints are dealt with in the School's Whistleblower Policy. Information about qualifying disclosures is set out in the School's Whistleblower Policy; a copy can be accessed from the School's website.

Complaints regarding a grievance between staff members about work matters, including work relationships and decisions made by other staff members which impact on their work, are addressed in accordance with the School's Grievance Procedures for Staff.

Complaints regarding unlawful discrimination, harassment or bullying between staff are generally addressed in accordance with the School's Discrimination, Harassment and Bullying Protocol.

1.3 Confidentiality

All parties involved in complaints handling are required to maintain appropriate confidentiality.

2. Complaints/Grievances

A complaint or grievance is an expression of dissatisfaction made to the School about an educational and/or operational matter relating to services provided by the School or the behaviour or decisions of a staff member, contractor or volunteer, including misconduct.

If a parent/carer or student has a concern about the conduct of a staff member, they should raise their concern with the school in accordance with Section 3 of this procedure.

If a complaint that concerns the behaviour of a staff member may constitute reportable conduct, the matter will be addressed in accordance with the school's Child Protection Policy which can be accessed from the School's website. Complainants are not required to assess whether their concern meets the threshold of reportable conduct before making a complaint. Any concern about a child's wellbeing may be reported under this policy.

Complaints may be made by a parent/carer or student.

The School will seek to resolve complaints informally where possible but acknowledges that in some cases a person may wish to make a formal complaint.

3. Raising a complaint

3.1 The complainant

Informal complaints may be raised by a complainant directly with the person involved. However, if the complainant does not feel comfortable doing so or the matter is one where it may not be appropriate to do so a complaint can be made to either the Deputy Principal Wellbeing or the Deputy Principal Teaching and Learning.

Should the matter not be resolved through informal processes, the complainant may raise the matter formally with the School. A formal complaint can be raised in writing to the Deputy Principal Wellbeing via email or Deputy Principal Teaching and Learning via email

If the complaint is about the Deputy Principal, then it should be raised with the Principal. If the complaint is about the Principal's conduct then it should be raised with the Chair of the School Board. This is not a general right of review of decisions made by the Principal. This only applies where the complaint is about the Principal's conduct (as opposed to a decision that you do not agree with). In this situation, the references in this procedure relating to the role of the Deputy Principal should be read as references to the Principal or Chair of Board (as applicable).

3.1 The School

The School will generally acknowledge receipt of a formal complaint in writing as soon as practicable.

4. Handling complaints

4.1 Assessing a complaint

The Deputy Principal, Wellbeing generally will assess the complaint and determine:

- a) whether the complaint is one to be addressed under this policy or is a staff grievance or reportable conduct matter which are dealt with by the relevant policies, see section 1.2; and

- b) the priority of the complaint in accordance with the urgency and/or seriousness of the matter raised; and
- c) whether the School may be required to report the matter to the Children's Guardian, Police, Department of Communities and Justice (previously known as Family and Community Services) or other relevant authorities should the complaint relate to possible unlawful conduct or other reportable matters.

4.2 Managing a formal complaint

The Deputy Principal generally will manage a formal complaint by:

- a) advising the complainant of the likely steps that will be undertaken by the School in relation to the complaint;
- b) if appropriate, advising the relevant parties of the complaint at the relevant time and providing them with an opportunity to respond;
- c) collecting any additional information the School considers necessary to assess the complaint;
- d) making a decision about how the complaint will be resolved ("resolution decision"); and
- e) advising the complainant in writing, and any other relevant parties as appropriate, of the resolution decision of the Deputy Principal and if appropriate, any proposed action to be taken.

There may be circumstances where some of the steps outlined above are not appropriate and the School will determine, on a case-by-case basis the most appropriate method of handling the complaint.

A complainant and the relevant parties that the complaint is about may choose to have an appropriate support person present at any meeting with representatives of the School about the complaint. However, the School maintains the right to determine whether the person's preferred support person is appropriate and may not approve the attendance of a support person where they are determined by the School to be inappropriate.

The School will endeavour to deal with the complaint within a reasonable time frame (taking into account the nature of the complaint and the particular circumstances). Where appropriate, the School will communicate with the complainant and other relevant persons about the likely time frame for dealing with the complaint.

5. Contact

If you have any queries about this procedure, you should contact the Deputy Principal Wellbeing for advice.

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