



## Communication/Grievance Policy

### Rationale

As a school community we are committed to working together to meet the educational needs of the students. This occurs most effectively when staff, students and parents are working towards the same goals. This can only happen if there is trust and open and effective communication.

Staff, students and parents who work together, treat each other with respect and integrity. They act together to resolve concerns and conflicts promptly and effectively. This promotes a productive and healthy learning community.

### Implementation

Good relationships within the school give children a greater chance of success. In the event of a grievance, the following protocols may be used:

- Address the problem rather than ignore it
- Follow the available protocol
- State the issue clearly, rationally and objectively
- Seek a solution that satisfies all concerned

The school's commitment when someone raises a concern is to:

- Listen to concerns with an open mind
- Maintain confidentiality
- Treat all parties involved respectfully
- Investigate all issues raised
- Attempt to resolve the issues to the satisfaction of all
- Communicate clearly, sensitively and objectively
- Establish a timeline for any mutually agreed action
- Maintain open lines of communication

Students with a grievance should direct them to their teacher or the Deputy Principal.

Parents should direct classroom related issues to their child's classroom teacher first, if there is no resolution it should then be directed to the Deputy Principal or Principal. If the issue relates to a school policy, procedure or protocol, it should be directed to either the Deputy Principal or Principal. See the table below.

### Parent Protocols for managing situations that may arise at school

#### 1. Always:

- Talk to your child first.
- Ask Questions of your child
- Obtain the whole story if possible and help your child with problem solving strategies.

- Encourage your child to be a resilient problem solver.

## **2. Then:**

- If necessary contact the teacher concerned (**this will usually be your child's classroom teacher**).
- Contact should be made via a note or a message left at the school office for the teacher concerned to call you (we will endeavour to return contact within 48 hours). Please do not enter learning areas during learning time.

## **3. Further Discussions:**

- If the situation cannot be dealt with over the phone then the teacher will organise a meeting to take place at a convenient time at school.
- It is usually beneficial for your child to be present at meetings in which their welfare is discussed.
- Notes will be recorded and filed.

## **4. If the situation is unable to be resolved:**

- Contact the office to make an appointment to meet with the Principal.
- Please note that all concerned parties need to be present.
- Minutes of the meeting will be taken/signed by all meeting participants and kept on file for reference.

## **5. If the situation can't be resolved by the school (or you have a complaint about the principal):**

- Refer to the Catholic Education Melbourne (CEM) Complaint Flow Chart below.

### **Remember:**

- Ask for clarification and find out all the facts.
- Get the big picture so that strategies and processes can be initiated.

### **Meetings:**

- Appointments must be made before a meeting can take place.
- Prior to the appointment, collect as much information as possible regarding the incident .
- Include your child in the process of resolving situations.
- Stay cool and calm during meetings – the aim is to find a solution.
- Be patient – investigations take time.
- Listen carefully to the actions that will take place.
- Arrange for follow up meetings if necessary.

### **Never:**

- Use Aggressive and accusatory language.
- Approach someone else's child regarding a 'problem' that is a school issue.
- Approach another parent regarding a 'problem' that is a school issue.
- Ask for the contact numbers or personal details of staff members or other parents.

School of the Good Shepherd Communication Policy supports **SoGS Child Safe Policy**.

## Evaluation

- This policy was reviewed in 2018 through consultation with the staff and will be reviewed again as part of the school's review cycle.

### Catholic Education Melbourne Complaint Flowchart

