



ST BERNARD'S CATHOLIC SCHOOL UPPER MT GRAVATT

St Bernard's Catholic school, founded by the Sisters of St Joseph, shares in the educational mission of the church as part of St Bernard's Parish

COMPLAINTS and GRIEVANCE POLICY

STATEMENT

Our shared sense of moral purpose, the learning and welfare of the children and of each other, is supported by our mission, policies, procedures and practices. As in all community life there will be times when a member of our school community has a genuine grievance in relation to one or more of these elements.

Such times are an opportunity for information gathering and sharing, reflection and evaluation which leads to new knowledge and understandings, enriching the lives of individuals in particular and community life in general.

Rationale

As reflected in our Christian values, building relationships based on dignity, respect, compassion and diversity provides a foundation for children and adults to relate well with one another in all aspects of schooling. In the spirit of our Vision and Mission statement, Charism, Vision for Teaching and Learning and our whole school-wide Positive Behaviour 4 Learning policy, everyone will work to build, develop and sustain relationships between school, families, parish and community. In responding to grievances the dignity of all concerned is respected while leading to accountability for our actions.

Guiding Principles

- It is recognised that each of us may perceive the same reality differently
- People's feelings about what happened are important and need to be communicated
- All parties will act in good faith, listen and understand one another's perspectives for the purpose of achieving amicable resolutions
- Each party has a right to natural justice at all times
- Confidentiality should always be respected and maintained by all parties involved
- The right to advocacy / support is respected
- Threatening, harassing, intimidating or offensive behaviours will not be tolerated.

OUTCOMES

All members of our school community are expected to:

- Promote goodwill and Dignified Relationship part of the school's Charism
- Treat others with courtesy and respect
- Act in a manner that promotes the physical and emotional safety of self and others
- Commit to the resolution of conflict in a timely manner which respects the rights and dignity of all concerned
- Be accountable for our words and actions whilst maintaining confidentiality
- Grievances will be conducted in accordance with the recommended complaints and grievance procedures documentation.

OUR VISION

Learning is child-centred, where children are prepared as life-long learners to meet challenges as compassionate Christian members of our community.

OUR MISSION

- To develop and nurture an environment where children learn about themselves, their world and God:
- By working in partnership with families, staff and the parish community
 - By valuing the diversity of all members of our community
 - By experiencing and living a Christian life in the Catholic faith.



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COMPLAINTS and GRIEVANCE PROCEDURES

Members of the school community are informed about complaints and grievance procedures. Children are taught to self-manage Stage 1.

As it is important to give a factual account of what has led to the complaint or grievance issue it is expected that such issues will be resolved at the conclusion of Stage 1.

There may be times when the aggrieved person/s judge/s that a particular stage is not appropriate to the situation and chooses to go to the next stage. These procedures apply to complaints and grievance within the following sets of relationships in the school community, namely:

- Student-student
- Student-staff member
- Staff member-staff member
- Staff member-parent
- Parent-parent

These procedures do not apply to complaints and grievance between parents and students. In instances where a complaint or grievance between a parent and a student other than their own child arises, the parent proceeds straight to Stage 2.

The term 'staff member' applies to members of staff – for example, administration team, teachers, secretaries, school officers, grounds person and any other ancillary staff.

Stage 1

The aggrieved person arranges to meet with the other party to discuss the complaint or grievance. Suggestions for this stage of the process are:

- Negotiate a mutually convenient time and place to meet
- Greet one another at the start of the meeting and state an appreciation for the time given by the other person to discuss the complaint or grievance
- The aggrieved party outlines the grievance
- The other party listens, summarises what has been said and responds to the outline
- Identify areas of agreement and disagreement
- Identify possible follow-up action
- Agree on follow-up action
- Establish a way to review the effectiveness of the agreed-upon action, e.g. another meeting or telephone call
- Thank one another for their time

Ensure that the review is followed through.

If no resolution is arrived at through Stage 1 then either party involved may contact the Principal

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Stage 2

Determine whether or not Stage 1 has been engaged. If Stage 1 has not been engaged then the Principal will refer the aggrieved person back to Stage 1, *OR*
Discern whether or not Stage 2 needs to be engaged.

To engage Stage 2 the Principal or her/his nominee will:

- Investigate the complaint or grievance
- Facilitate a resolution using BCE recommended procedures
- If no resolution is arrived at through Stage 2 then either parties involved may contact the school's BCE Senior Leader – Learning and Identity by telephone

Stage 3

The Senior Leader is telephoned. The Senior Leader, or his/her nominee, will facilitate a resolution using the BCE Complaints Procedures.

If the complaint / grievance is received by telephone and the caller has not contacted the school the caller will be directed to approach the Principal or the school.

If the complaint / grievance is delivered in person or in writing, or if the person has already approached the Principal, then the Senior Leader:

- Responds to the complainant
- Contacts the Principal and informs him/her of the complaint/grievance
- Works with the Principal to develop a strategy for dealing with the issue
- Attempts to ensure that the complainant is appropriately involved in, and informed of, the outcome and
- Files all documentation related to the grievance / complaint in the appropriate central file.

If no resolution is arrived at through Stage 3 then either of the parties involved may contact the Executive Director, Brisbane Catholic Education, in writing.

Stage 4

The Executive Director is contacted in writing. The Executive Director, or her/his nominee, will initiate a review of the management of the complaint / grievance.

Endorsement: The St Bernard's Catholic School Board, in consultation with the school staff, parent and parish community, endorses this policy. March 2018

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