

Complaints & Grievances Procedure

Procedure Document Information

COMPLIANCE	
Legislative Requirements	• <i>Education Act 1990</i> (NSW) • Registered & Accredited Individual Non-Government Schools (NSW) Manual
Other Document Relationships	• Complaints & Grievances Policy • Staff Code of Conduct • Anti-Bullying & Harassment Policy • Privacy Policy
KEY DATES	
Date Approved	March 2025
Procedure Review	This procedure will be reviewed in accordance with any changes made to the relating policy and/or any legislative changes.

1. Foundational Christian Principles

St Philip's Christian Education Foundation (SPCEF) provides quality education in a caring, secure and challenging learning environment based on Christian beliefs, values and practices. St Philip's Christian Education's core values of Christ First, Serve One Another, Strive for Excellence, Do What is Right and Build Community are a reflection of our 'faith expressing itself in love' (Galatians 6:5). Our faith permeates through all that we do and underpins the foundation of our lives. It is out of a demonstration of this faith that students will have the opportunity to discover the wonderful privilege of having a genuine relationship with God through His love as we seek to meet their needs in education.

As a Christian organisation, SPCEF uses Biblical principles to guide conflict resolution. The Bible clearly encourages us to seek to resolve differences between each other and to live in harmony with one another:

- **Do all you can to live in harmony with others** - Romans 12:16 says 'Live in harmony with one another'.
- **Resolve differences quickly** - Ephesians 4:26 emphasises the need to work toward resolving differences before the end of the day.
- **Deal with any issue in the proper order** – Matthew 18:15-17 describes dealing first with the person who may have offended you, then if the person doesn't respond appropriately, to take the matter to a higher authority.

Additionally, conflict resolution processes need to align with the 5 core values of SPCEF:

- **Christ first:** members of the SPCEF community are to act in a manner that is honouring to Christ by acting with humility, integrity, good will, a willingness to admit fault and a willingness to forgive.
- **Serve one another:** we should place the legitimate needs of others before personal self-interest. This involves making concessions for the greater good of many and making a conscious effort to consider the perspective of others.

- **Strive for excellence:** resolving conflict should be done in the best way possible at all times, requiring a high standard in the process of reviewing perspectives, evidence and potential mutual solutions.
- **Do what is right:** by striving to act in an ethical, honest and transparent manner with good intent at all times.
- **Build community:** by acting in a way that builds honest and trusting relationships across the whole SPCEF community.

2. Guidelines for Managing Complaints / Grievances

2.1 The Guidelines of St Philip's Christian Education are:

- 2.1.1 Follow the principles of natural justice, ensuring procedural fairness for all parties.
- 2.1.2 Ensure discretion & confidentiality for all parties involved.
- 2.1.3 Ensure parties are informed throughout the process.
- 2.1.4 Ensure parties are informed of the decision in a timely manner.
- 2.1.5 Ensure record are maintained of all complaints / grievances made in accordance with our Privacy Policy.

3. Procedure For Staff / Parents / Carers Raising a Complaint / Grievance

3.1 The Procedure for raising a complaint / grievance is:

- 3.1.1 Raise the concern / grievance with the person in person (if it is safe to do so), over the phone or via email in a courteous manner, giving specific detail about the nature of the concern and allow the person time to investigate and respond.
- 3.1.2 Treat the matter as confidential, being conscious of the emotional state of everyone involved.
- 3.1.3 Attempt to resolve the matter via informal resolution.
- 3.1.4 If the matter cannot be resolved, escalate to next level (see flowchart below) in writing. Ensure to give specific detail about the concern and any previous attempts to resolve the matter.
- 3.1.5 Each party has the opportunity to present their case in person. Parties' may be accompanied by a support person. SPCEF 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 SPCEF to be inappropriate.
- 3.1.6 The leader will consider all details provided and if required, an investigation will be undertaken pertaining to the complaint.
- 3.1.7 Investigations should be completed within 10 working dates of the lodgement of the complaint / grievance wherever possible.
- 3.1.8 Once the leader has finalised their decision, the complainant will be informed in writing of the outcome and the reasons for the decision.
- 3.1.9 If the complaint / grievance finds in favour of the complainant, St Philip's Christian Education will implement the decision and any corrective and preventative action required.

- 3.1.10** If the complainant is dissatisfied with the result and would like to appeal the matter, the complainant can appeal the decision to the appropriate leader, following the procedure in the attached flowchart, within 7 working days of the final decision.
- 3.1.11** If the complainant does not follow the flowchart, they may be referred to contact the leader in a previous step.
- 3.1.12** St Philip's Christian Education undertakes to finalise all complaints / grievance processes within 20 working days, where possible.
- 3.1.13** St Philip's Christian Education will determine whether the complaint / grievance needs to be reported to the NSW Ombudsman as 'reportable conduct', and will seek advice from appropriate leaders and external bodies.

3.2 External Third Party and Mediation:

- 3.2.1** Should the aggrieved parties' request that the matter be considered by an external third party, the request should be made to the CEO of St Philip's Christian Education via the Principal / Head of Entity.

4. Procedure For Students Raising a Complaint / Grievance

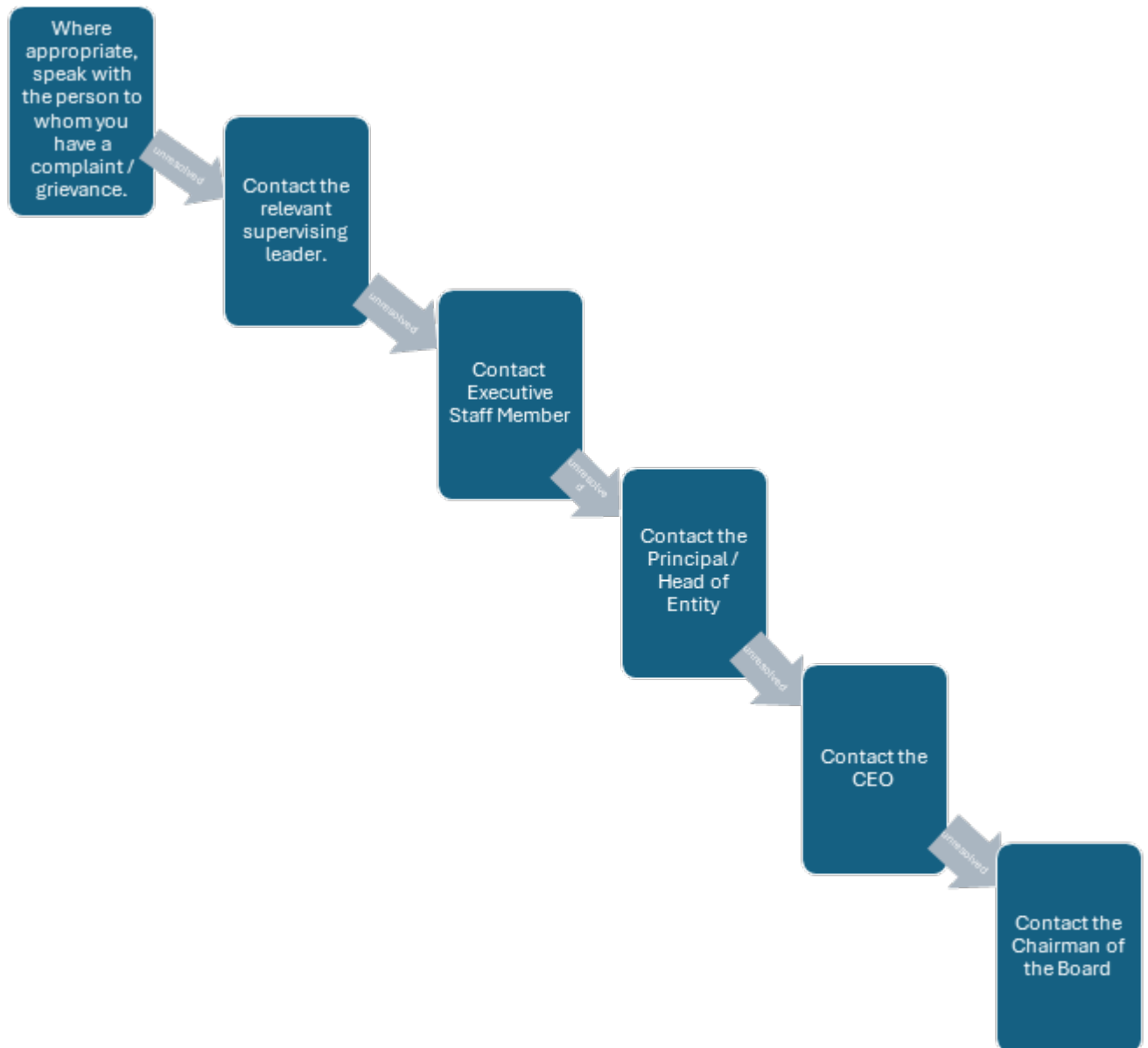
4.1 The Procedure for students raising a complaint / grievance is:

- 4.1.1** Raise the concern directly with the teacher/staff member or appropriate coordinator (if it is safe to do so), either in person, over the phone or via email in a courteous manner, giving specific detail about the nature of the concern and allow the person time to investigate and respond.
- 4.1.2** Treat the matter as confidential, being conscious of the emotional state of everyone involved.
- 4.1.3** Attempt to resolve the matter via informal resolution.
- 4.1.4** If the matter cannot be resolved, escalate to next level (see flowchart below) in writing. Ensure to give specific detail about the concern and any previous attempts to resolve the matter.
- 4.1.5** Each party has the opportunity to present their case in person. Parties' may be accompanied by a support person. SPCEF 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 SPCEF to be inappropriate.
- 4.1.6** The leader will consider all details provided and if required, an investigation will be undertaken pertaining to the complaint.
- 4.1.7** Investigations should be completed within 10 working dates of the lodgement of the complaint / grievance wherever possible.
- 4.1.8** Once the leader has finalised their decision, the complainant will be informed in writing of the outcome and the reasons for the decision.
- 4.1.9** If the complaint / grievance finds in favour of the complainant, St Philip's Christian Education will implement the decision and any corrective and preventative action required.
- 4.1.10** If the complainant is dissatisfied with the result and would like to appeal the matter, the complainant can appeal the decision to the appropriate leader.
- 4.1.11** For the duration of the appeal process, the student is required to maintain enrolment and attendance as normal, unless it is unsafe to do so.

Appendix "A"

Complaints & Grievance Process

The chart below indicates to whom and in what order complaints should be made.



Exception

There may be circumstances where some steps outlined above are not reasonably appropriate and St Philip's Christian Education maintain the right to determine each complaint / grievance on a case-by-case basis.