

SPCEF Complaints & Grievances Policy

COMPLIANCE	
NESA	Registered and Accredited Individual Non-Government Schools (NSW) Manual, Section 2.6 (Safe & Supportive Environment) & section 3.6.2 (Student Welfare)
Legislative Requirements	• <i>Education Act 1990 (NSW)</i> • <i>Education Regulation 2017 (NSW)</i> • <i>Australian Education Act 2013 (Cth)</i> • <i>Children & Young Persons (Care and Protection Act 1988) Sect 23</i> • <i>The Ombudsman Amendment (Child Protection & Community) Act 1998</i> • <i>Anti-Discrimination Act 1977</i> • <i>Work Health & Safety Act 2011</i> • <i>National Code of Good Practice for Responding to Complaints about Vocational & Education Training Quality – Australian Department of Education, Science & Training</i> • <i>CCH School Principal's Legal Guide</i>
Other Document Relationships	• <i>Complaints & Grievances Procedure</i> • <i>Child Protection Policy</i> • <i>Staff Code of Conduct</i> • <i>Anti-Bullying & Harassment Policy</i> • <i>Whistleblower Policy</i> • <i>Privacy Policy</i>
KEY DATES	
Policy Review	This policy will be reviewed every 3 years, or as needed in line with legislative changes and the requirements of the Association of Independent Schools.

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.

2. General Statement

St Philip's Christian Education Foundation is committed to providing a respectful environment that is safe, responsive and supportive, involves close interaction between a diverse body of students, SPCEF staff and parents within our community. Such diversity brings differing perspectives and

interpretations and as a result disagreement and conflict can occur. What is important is how conflict is resolved.

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

If a complaint that concerns the behaviour of a staff member may constitute reportable conduct, the matter will be addressed by the SPCEE Child Protection Policy. A complaint about a reportable conduct matter may be current or historical. Timeframes for investigation of complaints relating to reportable conduct are dependent on the individual matter and may be over an extended period of time, particularly in the case of a historical allegation. The school is bound by privacy or other confidentiality requirements when conducting investigations of reportable conduct allegations, which may limit the information that can be shared with the complainant regarding the outcome of an investigation. Please refer to the SPCEE Child Protection Policy for information about reportable conduct. 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 or the conduct of an employee, volunteer, contractor or member of the school community may be reported under this policy.

3. Objectives

- 1.1 **The objectives** of St Philip's Christian Education Foundation under this policy are to:
- 1.1.1 Establish biblical principles for resolving conflict
 - 1.1.2 Resolve concerns and complaints in a prompt, impartial and just manner
 - 1.1.3 Develop and maintain a positive and collaborative relationship between the school and the community
 - 1.1.4 Welcome and value diversity of opinion
 - 1.1.5 Ensure parents / carers feel their opinion is valued and to raise issues without fear of repercussion.
 - 1.1.6 Provide a clear procedure for complaints / grievances (See Annexure "A").
 - 1.1.7 This policy does not extend to whistleblowing complaints which are whistleblowing disclosures. The procedure for processing whistleblowing complaints are dealt with in the school's whistleblowing policy.

5. Roles and Responsibilities

- 1.2 **The Central Office** will:
- 1.2.1 Assess and resolve any complaints / grievances or appeals on a case-by-case basis
 - 1.2.2 Where reasonable, undertake investigations and respond according to relevant policies and procedures
 - 1.2.3 Maintain reasonable confidentiality and privacy in all matters
 - 1.2.4 Advise the complainant in writing of the resolution.
 - 1.2.5 Advise the Board of active and resolved complaints and grievances

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- 1.2.6 Refer any request for review of determination of a complaint / grievance to the external body of the Association of Independent Schools NSW.
- 1.3 **The Principal / Heads of Entities** will:
 - 1.3.1 Ensure that the principles of fairness, accessibility, transparency, responsiveness, accountability and constructiveness is applied to the complaints / procedures.
 - 1.3.2 Be responsible for the effective management of suggestions, complaints and allegations.
 - 1.3.3 Ensure that the complainant has followed the procedures for raising a concern / complaint.
 - 1.3.4 Determine, based on the nature of the complaint / grievance whether it is to be addressed under this policy or is a staff grievance or reportable conduct matter, or another matter which are dealt with by the relevant policies.
 - 1.3.5 Ensure communication is provided promptly to all parties involved.
 - 1.3.6 Ensure complaints / grievances are recorded and saved, including follow-up undertaken and feedback provided in accordance with the Privacy Policy.
 - 1.3.7 Maintain reasonable confidentiality and privacy in all matters.
 - 1.3.8 Refer any appeal of the decision of a complaint / grievance to the CEO.
- 1.4 **The School Executive Leadership** will:
 - 1.4.1 Ensure all complaints / grievances are dealt with utilising the principles of fairness, accessibility, transparency, responsiveness, accountability and constructiveness.
 - 1.4.2 Assess the complaint / grievance in accordance with this policy and if reasonable, respond to the complaint / grievance.
 - 1.4.3 Provide details to immediate supervisor of complaint / grievance details.
 - 1.4.4 Ensure communication is provided promptly to all parties involved.
 - 1.4.5 Maintain reasonable confidentiality and privacy in all matters.
 - 1.4.6 Ensure complaints / grievances are recorded and saved, including follow-up undertaken and feedback provided in accordance with the Privacy Policy.
- 1.5 **Employees** will:
 - 1.5.1 Ensure all complaints / grievances are handled with in accordance with this policy.
 - 1.5.2 If contacted by a parent / caregiver / community member, provide details to immediate supervisor of complaint / grievance.
 - 1.5.3 Maintain confidentiality and privacy in all matters.
 - 1.5.4 Ensure complaints / grievances are recorded and saved in accordance with the Privacy Policy.
- 1.6 **Parents / Caregivers** will:
 - 1.6.1 Ensure all complaints / grievances are made in accordance with this policy.
 - 1.6.2 Ensure all complaints / grievances are made in a polite and respectful manner.
 - 1.6.3 Maintain confidentiality and privacy in all matters.
 - 1.6.4 Refer any appeal of a decision of a complaint / grievance within 7 days to the Principal / Head of Entity.
 - 1.6.5 Refer any request for the appeal to be considered by an external party to the CEO within 7 days from the final determination.
 - 1.6.6

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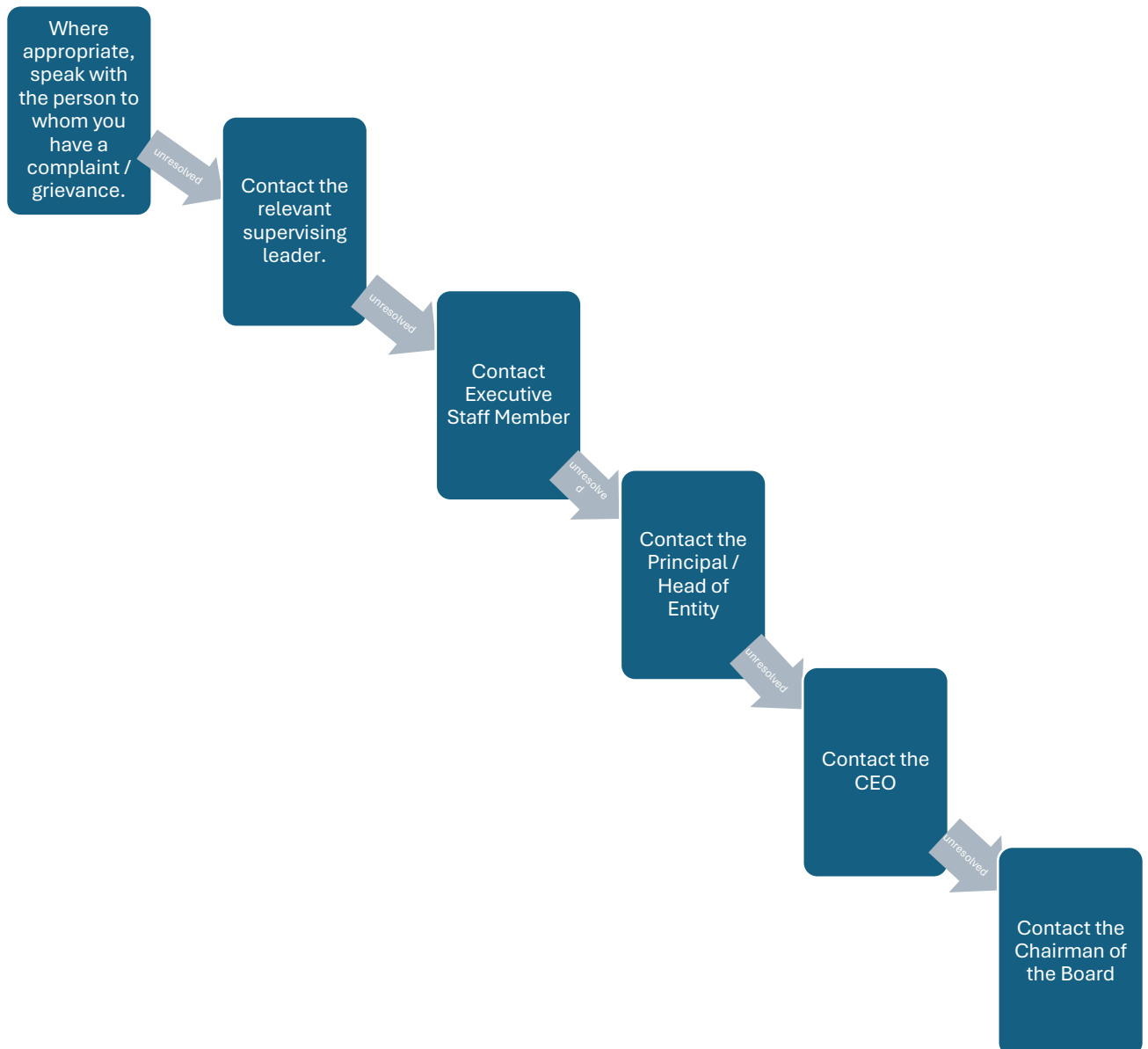
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1.7 **Students** will:

- 1.1.1 Ensure all complaints / grievances are made in accordance with this policy.
- 1.1.2 Ensure all complaints / grievances are made in a polite and respectful manner.

Appendix "A" Complaints & Grievance Process

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



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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.