Resolution of Grievances Policy

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<tr>
<th>Stage</th>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Ratified</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Initiated</td>
<td>March 2011</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Review 1</td>
<td>June 2016</td>
<td>August 2016</td>
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<tr>
<td>Next Review</td>
<td>2018</td>
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Preamble

*Catholic Ladies’ College Mission Statement speaks of our educational endeavour in terms of “Community”; it recognises the essential dignity of the person and of the need for all to experience, the ‘fullness of life’ promised in John 10.10.*

Policy Statement

Catholic Ladies’ College staff and parents are partners in the education of CLC students. Effective communications play a vital role in this partnership, as does a shared commitment to addressing issues of concern in ways that are constructive, open and respectful. We acknowledge, that staff, parents and students can sometimes feel aggrieved about something that contravenes the College Mission Statement. All members of the Catholic Ladies’ College Community are expected to treat each other with dignity and respect.

Please note that specific complaint procedures are in place for matters concerning child protection, workplace bullying, harassment, enrolment and employment relations. Complaints regarding these matters will be dealt with as per the relevant College policies and procedures and related legislation.

Parents and students are encouraged to raise issues of concern directly with the appropriate member of College staff as most issues can be readily resolved through this direct contact. A guide to the most relevant staff member for the initial contact for a range of concerns is included in this document.

When a grievance is made, it will be responded to in a respectful, confidential and timely manner. The reporting, investigation and appeals procedures are set out below. A staff member, parent or student can make a complaint about any decision, behaviour, act or omission.

The following values inform our Resolution of Grievances procedures:

Impartiality
If you make a grievance, it will be investigated in a fair and impartial manner. No judgements or assumptions will be made, and no action will be taken until the investigation is complete. If a grievance is made against you, your rights will be protected and you will be given an opportunity to tell your side of the story. Our resolution process will be grounded in sound and fair procedures for information sharing, conciliation, investigation and decision making.

Confidentiality
You can feel secure that if you do make a grievance under this policy, it will remain confidential. The only people who will have access to information about the grievance will be the person making the grievance; the respondent and the person investigating. The only exception to this will be where, in the course of the investigation, another senior member of staff may need to be aware that a grievance has been received and is being investigated. In such circumstances the information revealed would be limited only to what is necessary for the proper resolution of the matter.

Timeliness
Each grievance will be finalised within as short a period as possible while allowing for thorough and fair processing of the matter. All grievances should be finalised within four working weeks.
Procedures – Resolution of Grievances

The purpose of these procedures is to assist you to take steps to resolve grievances that may occur within the College Community.

Raising the grievance

In the first instance, you may feel that you can speak with the person(s) involved regarding the impact the situation is having on yourself.

Alternatively, parents or students can contact the appropriate person as per the schedule below:

<table>
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<tr>
<th>In the case of a student</th>
<th>Teacher, Parent or Counsellor (handled within the College’s Student Wellbeing Policies and Practices)</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>In relation to a particular assessment task</td>
<td>Deputy Principal Learning and Teaching or Key Learning Area Team Leader</td>
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<td>In relation to a student’s work progress over a number of subjects, her lack of focus or motivation, peer relationships, etc.</td>
<td>Year Level Team Leader or Counsellor</td>
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<tr>
<td>In relation to VCE/VCAL rules</td>
<td>Refer to the College’s VCE/VCAL Administrative Handbook or the VCE/VCAL Learning Leader</td>
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<tr>
<td>In relation to fee charges</td>
<td>Business Manager</td>
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<tr>
<td>In relation to a teacher’s performance</td>
<td>Principal</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>In relation to train or bus travel incidents</td>
<td>Year Level Team Leader</td>
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<tr>
<td>In relation to first aid requirements</td>
<td>Deputy Principal Student wellbeing / First Aid Manager</td>
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If you are unsure about the most appropriate person to address a concern or grievance, you are encouraged to contact the College on its direct line and reception staff will refer you to the appropriate person.

Teaching staff will respond to parent grievances as soon as they are available to do so, but they may not be immediately available due to reasons such as professional development, illness, school camps or excursions.

Formalising the grievance

You may believe that the initial communication is not sufficient or has not worked. The grievance can be formalised by contacting the Principal to make an appointment. When considering this course of action, you are able to bring a parent, Counsellor or teacher (in the case of a student) or a support person (in the case of a parent or staff member) to meetings.

In formalising the grievance, the Principal will meet with you and may ask you to provide supporting evidence. The grievance will be fully documented, including any actions taken to resolve it and the outcomes of those actions to all parties concerned.

Further action will be agreed upon between you, the respondent and the Principal. We will strive to achieve the best possible outcomes for all.

The respondent has a similar right to have a support person present is assumed. The respondent has a right to know exactly what grievance has been raised and who raised it.

Witnesses may also be interviewed. All interviews will be conducted separately and impartially. The importance of confidentiality will be discussed and the possibility of consequences if confidentiality is breached.

The Principal will seek to find a resolution that is appropriate and amenable to all parties.
Outcomes

Outcomes to resolve a grievance can include the following:

- Apology – either written or verbal
- Mediation – with an internal or external mediator
- Official warning
- Counselling
- Dismissal
- Disciplinary action
- Behavioural Contract (in the case of students)
- Pastoral/Spiritual care

Appeals

If you believe that the above procedure has not been followed or that the outcome is not acceptable, then you may appeal to Catholic Education Melbourne or Mary Aikenhead Education Limited. If the Principal is involved in the grievance, then the appeal ought to be forwarded to:

The Coordinating Person
Pastoral Care Unit
Catholic Education Melbourne
PO Box 3
EAST MELBOURNE VIC 3002
Ph: 9267 0228

The Principal will examine all documentation related to the grievance and may seek further interviews. Advice may be sought from the College Board of Directors. The outcome of an appeal is to either uphold the original investigation or to reopen the investigation appointing a new investigator.

External Agency

If you are not happy with the way a grievance has been dealt with, you may wish to go to an external agency for further advice and assistance. You may consider:

Victorian Equal Opportunity and Human Rights Commission of Victoria
Level 3
204 Lygon Street
CARLTON VIC 3053
1300 292 153

Related Policies

CLC Staff (Bullying) Policy
CLC Privacy Policy
CLC Student Positive Relationships Policy: Bullying Prevention and Intervention