
Grievance Response Policy

The purpose of this policy statement is to prescribe fair and consistent procedures to resolve grievances in the school community.

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1. Related Documents

- Christian Schools Tasmania's Vision, Mission and Values;
- Christian Schools Tasmania Statement of Christian Faith
- Christian Schools Tasmania Code of Christian Conduct Policy
- Christian Schools Tasmania Conflict Resolution Policy

2. Scope

This policy applies to all employees, parents, students and volunteers of Christian Schools Tasmania (CST).

3. Definition of Terms

Where referred to in this document:

Christian Schools Tasmania (CST) means an association of Christians who through their Board of Directors are legally responsible for Calvin Christian School, Channel Christian School, Emmanuel Christian School and Northern Christian School.

The Board means the Board of Directors of Christian Schools Tasmania.

Executive is a forum including the Executive Director, Principals, Finance Manager and Business Manager.

Executive Director is the person appointed to the position of Executive Director of the Association, or a person acting from time to time in that position.

Principal means the person charged with responsibility for the operation of an Association school or a person acting from time to time in that position.

Business Manager is the person appointed to the position of Business Manager of the Association, or a person acting from time to time in that position.

4. Summary

Christian Schools Tasmania (CST) is committed to forming and maintaining harmonious and cooperative relationships at all levels our community. CST has a policy to deal with concerns, disagreements and conflicts that may arise between community members from time to time.

CST expects parents, staff, volunteers and students to take all reasonable steps to minimise any form of inappropriate and unacceptable behaviours and attitudes across the communities that make up our organisation, but realise that due to the fallenness of our humanity, there will be occasions when people feel or are aggrieved. The purpose of this policy statement is to prescribe fair and consistent procedures to resolve grievances in the CST community;

5. Biblical basis

Where there is a grievance about a matter, we firstly look to the Scriptural principles for resolution. We acknowledge the wisdom of Scripture as advanced by the following references taken from the New International Version of the Holy Bible.

- Mat 5:23-44 Therefore if you are offering your gift at the altar and there remember that your brother has something against you, leave your gift there in front of the altar. First go and be reconciled to your brother; then come and offer your gift.
- Col 3:23-4 Whatever you do, work at it with all your heart, as working for the Lord, not for men, since you know that you will receive an inheritance from the Lord as a reward. It is the Lord Jesus Christ you are serving.
- Eph 5:21 Submit to one another out of reverence for Christ.
- Mat 18:15-17 If your brother sins against you, go and show him his fault, just between the two of you. If he listens to you, you have won your brother over. But if he will not listen, take one or two others along, so that every matter may be established by the testimony of two or three witnesses. If he refuses to listen to them, tell it to the church and if he refuses to listen even to the church, treat him as you would a pagan or a tax collector.
- Mat 18:21-2 Then Peter came to Jesus and asked, "Lord, how many times shall I forgive my brother when he sins against me? Up to seven times?" Jesus answered, "I tell you, not seven times, but seventy-seven times."
- Mat 6:14-15 For if you forgive men when they sin against you, your heavenly Father will also forgive you. But if you do not forgive men their sins, your Father will not forgive your sins.
- Rom 13:8 Let no debt remain outstanding except the continuing debt to love one another, for he who loves his fellowman has fulfilled the law.

The implementation of the resolution process that follows will be tempered by these instructions about Christian love, forgiveness and reconciliation.

As Christians, we are exhorted to pray without ceasing, and that where two or three gather in God's name He will be present with them. It would therefore be encouraged that prayer be made an integral part of the process of handling differences and that meetings would normally begin and end with time spent praying.

6. Grievance Response Process

The following process is used for the resolution of grievances in the school community. It is based on Biblical precepts and in relation to staffing matters complies with the requirements of the Award. Provided the spirit of the Policy is maintained, the process allows for some flexibility in its application where circumstances warrant.

Step One – Informal Discussions

- When differences first become evident, reconciliation is sought through **private and informal steps** involving the parties concerned. The means by which CST expects to deal with such concerns, disagreements and conflicts are detailed in the Conflict Resolution Policy.
- Whilst it is expected that resolution of any grievance will be achieved through the informal and possibly formal steps detailed in this policy, the person raising the grievance will be informed at this point of their right to obtain legal advice at any time through the process if they should so wish.
- Parties are urged to keep diary notes of the event with a précis of the matters discussed and any agreements reached.
- This step may be repeated any number of times until it becomes clear that resolution will not be reached.
- Depending on the parties involved, a senior person such as a Senior Staff member, Principal or Executive Director (if the concern is with a Principal), is to be advised if it is clear that a resolution cannot be reached and a more formal approach may be required.

Step Two – Formal Discussions

- Either party to the grievance may initiate **formal discussions and/or counselling** if not satisfied with the outcomes of the informal discussions.
- Records are kept of these discussions, including any commitments or undertakings given. Both parties are encouraged to sign and keep a common record of discussions. The pro-forma at Attachment B will be used.
- At this stage, either party may involve a third person for support or mediation. Apart from this person, the discussion remains confidential between the parties involved.
- Where a mediator is involved, that person will be independent and acceptable to both parties.
- As a matter of courtesy, the Principal (or the Executive Director in the case of a dispute with the Principal, or Board Chairman in the case of a dispute with the Executive Director) is to be informed of progress toward resolution, although not necessarily the details of the discussions.
- This step may be repeated if it appears reconciliation or resolution may be reached.

Step Three – Formal Mediation

- Where a dispute cannot be resolved as above, **formal mediation** is used in an attempt to resolve the matter.
- Any party to the dispute may initiate Step Three, particularly if it becomes clear that a resolution cannot be reached by other means.
- An independent person, trusted and accepted by both parties, is asked to mediate in the dispute and document points of agreement and disagreement.
- Where relevant, (i.e. the grievance is with a Board member or an employee of the Association), the mediator will also report to the Board.
- It is expected that both parties at this stage are committed to reaching a resolution, and would therefore generally comply with any reasonable recommendations of the mediator.
- Records are kept of these discussions, including any commitments or undertakings given. Both parties are encouraged to sign and keep a common record of discussions. The pro-forma at Attachment B may be used.
- As a matter of courtesy, the Principal (or the Executive Director in the case of a dispute with the Principal, or Board Chairman in the case of a dispute with the Executive Director) is to be informed of progress toward resolution, although not necessarily the details of the discussions.
- This step may be repeated if it appears reconciliation or resolution may be reached.

Step Four – Arbitration

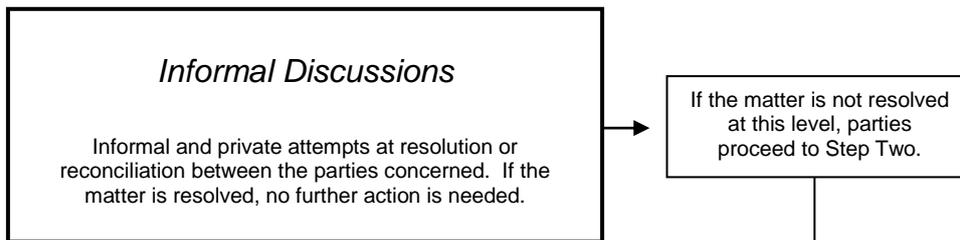
Where mediation has not succeeded, or in cases where matters relating to the Award or employment conditions are concerned, the final recourse is to external **Arbitration**, through the courts or the Industrial Relations Commission.

7. Documentation

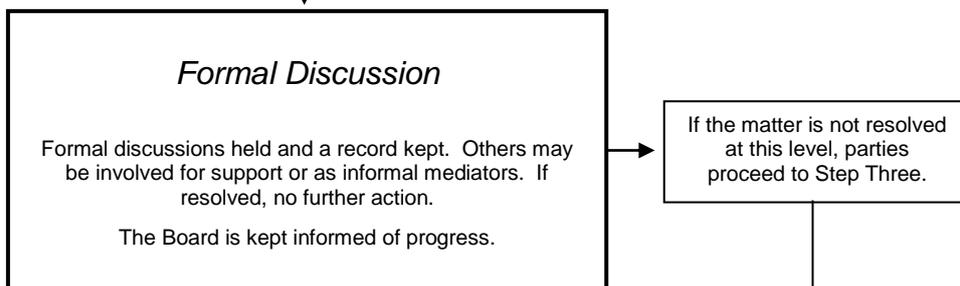
- Each person involved should keep their own informal records during Step One of the process. The use of diary notes is recommended. Parties may keep more complete records of these discussions for their own use.
- Full reports will be completed for all but Step One of the Grievance Response Process. The pro-forma at Attachment B will be used.
- Where a grievance involves an Association school, a staff member or a volunteer, a full record will be kept of the steps taken. The Board will be kept informed of the progress made toward resolution although not necessarily the details of the discussions.

GRIEVANCE RESPONSE PROCESS

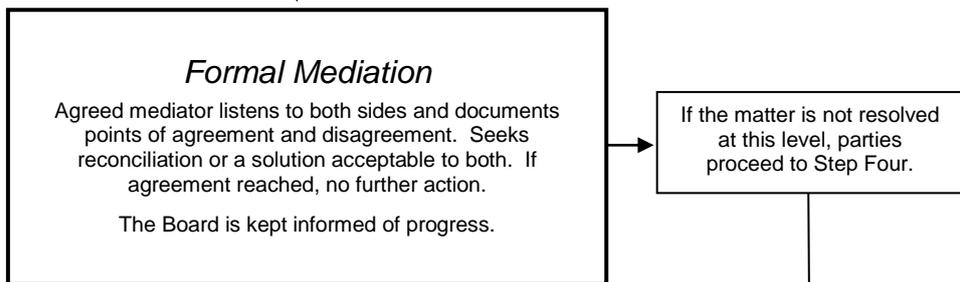
Step One



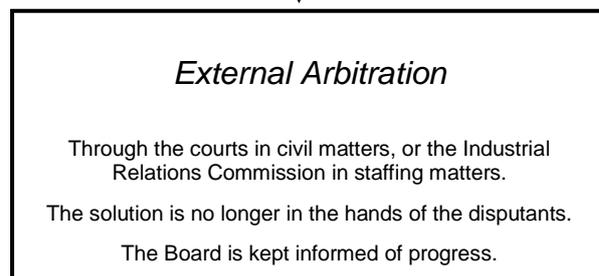
Step Two



Step Three



Step Four

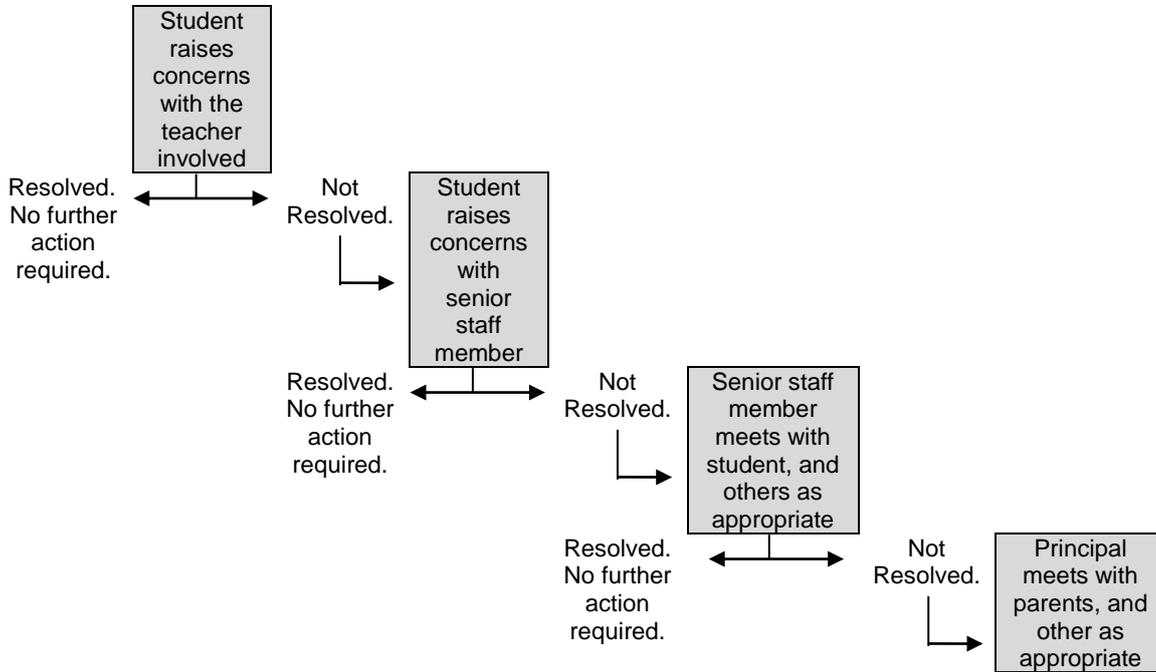


This is a summary only of the process. Please refer to the full policy statement for fuller explanation and implementation.

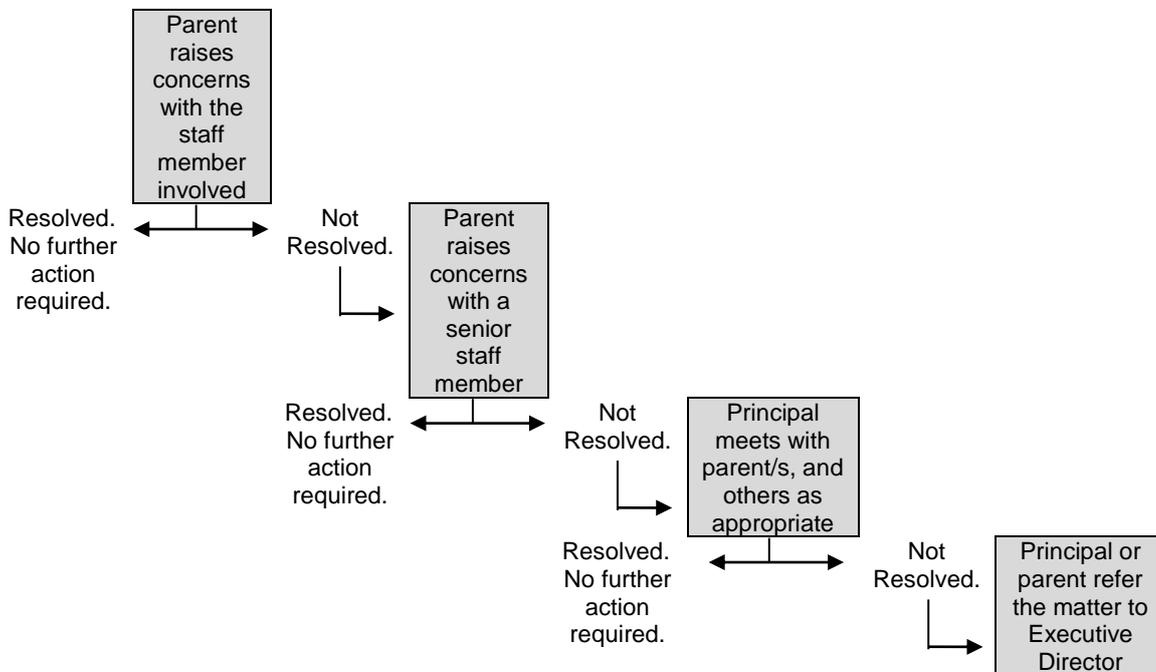
ATTACHMENT B

GRIEVANCE RESOLUTION FLOWCHART

For students:



For parents:



ATTACHMENT C

RECORD OF GRIEVANCE

This form may be used to record discussions held in connection with the Association’s Grievance Response Policy. A summary of these processes is included on the back page of this form. Please refer to the full policy document further detail or to be able to appreciate the “spirit” of the policy.

Where a record is being kept of the grievance resolution process, the report should be completed jointly and signed by all parties. Where the grievance involves an Association school or employee, the Board should be kept informed of progress.

The contents of this Record of Grievance are confidential.

DETAILS

Time:

Date:

Place:

People Present:
(Name & Position)

NATURE OF THE DISAGREEMENT

Can you agree on the nature of the disagreement, and probable causes? List them here.

STEPS TOWARD RESOLUTION

Can you agree on steps towards and resolution? If so, list them here. If you cannot agree, list the opposing views here. Where possible, set time limits for actions.

REVIEW DATE

When is the situation to be reviewed?

SIGNATURES

We agree that the above is a true and complete account of discussion held on this day.

Name.....Signature.....Date.....

Name.....Signature.....Date.....

Name.....Signature.....Date.....