



St Saviour's Primary School Grievance Policy

(June 2014)

VISION STATEMENT

St Saviour's Primary School is an educational community living out Mercy values each day.

Our Vision is:-

- That each child is valued and respected.
- That each child's giftedness is recognised.
- That each child's potential is realised.
- That each member of the school community strives for goodness.

RATIONALE

St Saviour's Primary School has both a desire and a responsibility to ensure that high standards of conduct are maintained by students, staff and parents¹ at all times, and that grievances are managed and resolved fairly, efficiently and promptly.

Grievances occur when a student, employee or parent complains that an action or decision has been taken (or not taken) at the school that he/she believes to be in breach of a relevant Act, Regulation or Order, infringes upon the principles of merit and equity, or is otherwise unreasonable.

St Saviour's Primary School recognises the rights of its students, employees or parents to register a complaint or grievance about any decision, behaviour, act or omission that they feel is unfair, discriminatory or unjustified.

There exists in the Diocese specialised policies, guidelines and procedures to cover certain types of complaints that may occur in schools (for example, Sexual Harassment, Equal Opportunity or Antidiscrimination). This policy is not intended to replace any such specialised policies, guidelines or procedures but rather provide direction in how to deal with student, employee or parent grievances.

This Grievance Policy does not apply to complaints alleging criminal or unlawful behaviour, which shall be referred to the appropriate authorities.

VALUES

St Saviour's Primary School is a caring Catholic School, where each community member feels safe, included and respected. The issues of dignity, equity and justice in the relationships between all people within the school community are of fundamental importance.

POLICY STATEMENT

A resolution to a grievance from a student, employee or parent should be sought through **informal** discussions with the appropriate person in order to come to a mutually acceptable resolution. If this informal process is unsuccessful, a **formal** Grievance Procedure shall be followed.

Formal Grievance Procedures:

All grievances should be dealt with in a timely manner at the appropriate level before being escalated to a higher level.

1. Information for Students:

At St Saviour's Primary School we believe it is important that everyone feels happy and safe so that the best learning can take place. We believe that everyone, including students, staff and parents need to work closely together to provide the best educational opportunities for you. If you have a problem, a concern or a complaint, we encourage you to speak to someone about it.

What to do if you have a problem:

- Try to identify the problem that is upsetting you. If there is more than one problem, write them down so that you are clear about what you feel or need.
- If you feel you can, meet with the person you are having the problem with and if their behaviour is upsetting you, tell them to stop.
- Often parents can help when young people are unsure of what to do. It is a good idea to ask for support or advice when problems arise rather than keeping it all to yourself.
- If your talk with the person you are having a problem with does not solve your problem, talk to a staff member about your concerns and ask them to help you deal with it. The staff member will often be able to give you good ideas on how to cope and will help you solve the problem.
- Try to stay calm when discussing your problem. Even if you don't feel it, being calm will help you get your concerns across more clearly than if you are upset or angry. It may help to take someone with you.
- If you do not believe the problem has been resolved, make an appointment to talk to another staff member. If you still do not feel that the matter has been solved, make time to talk to the Assistant Principal, or Principal about your concern.

Remember:

- Effective management of a Grievance requires face to face, personal dialogue. All electronic forms of communication (e.g. Email, Text Messages, Twitter, Facebook etc.) are NOT acceptable.

- Sometimes the person helping you may need to speak to someone else so that the problem can be solved. You need to let that person know that you are okay with that.
- You can bring a friend, parent or teacher to support you when you need to talk about the problem.
- No one will be allowed to pick on you or hurt you because you made a complaint
- If you want to, you can write out your grievance in a letter instead of talking about it, but the person helping you will need to speak to you later.

2. Information for Staff:

The relationship between colleagues is an important part of ensuring that students are happy, secure and open to learning. St Saviour's Primary School recognises that all staff need to work closely to provide the best educational opportunities for students. If a staff member has any concerns or complaints regarding any other member of the school community, they are encouraged to work together to resolve them as promptly and efficiently as possible.

What to do if you have a problem:

- Try to identify the problem clearly before taking any action. If there is more than one problem, list them to ensure that the extent of the problem is clear to the school.
- Decide whether the problem is a concern, enquiry or a complaint, this will help in finding a solution.
- In the interest of resolving matters quickly and effectively, you are encouraged to informally discuss your problem with the person concerned.
- If informal strategies do not resolve the problem, lodge your complaint formally and in writing to the Principal. Where the Principal advises, mediation can be arranged between the parties concerned.
- If you do not believe the problem has been resolved, if your complaint is serious, or involves the Principal, send your complaint to the Director of Catholic Education stating your concerns in writing.

3. Information for Parents:

The relationship between home and the school is fundamental in ensuring that students are happy, secure and open to learning. St Saviour's Primary School recognises that parents and staff need to work closely to provide the best educational opportunities and care for their students. We encourage you to discuss your child's progress with staff and to let us know if you have any concerns so that we might work together to resolve these as promptly and efficiently as we can.

What to do if you have a problem:

- Try to identify the problem clearly before contacting the school. If there is more than one problem, list them to ensure that the extent of the problem is clear to the school.
- Decide whether the problem is a concern, enquiry or a complaint, this will help in finding a solution.
- Make an appointment to meet with your child's class teacher or staff member. The best way to do this is to contact the school office to arrange a mutually convenient time for a telephone call or a meeting.
- If you do not feel after your meeting that the problem has been resolved, or if you have a complaint about a staff member, make arrangements to meet with the Principal.
- Try to stay calm when discussing your problem. Even if you don't feel it, being calm will help you get your concerns across more clearly than if you are upset or angry. If it will help, take someone with you.
- Remember, staff are committed to resolving any issues that parents might have regarding their children and will discuss with you actions that might be taken in regard to your concerns.
- If you do not believe the problem has been resolved, or if your complaint is serious, send your complaint in writing to the Principal.
- If you do not feel that the problem has been resolved, or if the matter involves the Principal, send your complaint to the Director of Catholic Education stating your concerns in writing.

St Saviour's Primary School will document all formal grievances and any processes implemented to seek a resolution. Where a complaint is made against an individual, that person will be informed of the nature and content of the complaint and they will have the right to respond. All discussions will be kept strictly confidential. A person who has made a complaint may withdraw it at any time. No one will be victimised as a result of initiating a formal Grievance Procedure. At the formal stage, a person who has made a complaint has the right to be represented and supported by another person of his/her choice. A process of mediation may be available if a complaint is not satisfactorily resolved.

DEFINITIONS:

Reference to 'Parents' in this Policy includes Guardians and Caregivers.

REVIEW HISTORY:

Date	Event	Changes / Comments
02/2013	Rev00	Policy Revision
06/2014	Rev01	Minor formatting changes

TO BE REVIEWED: 2015