

Concerns, Complaints and Appeals Policy



Centenary Parade,
Nambucca Heads, NSW, 2448

*A Ministry of the Nambucca River Pastoral Charge
of the Presbyterian Church of Australia in NSW*

DOCUMENT CONTROL

REVIEW	COMPLETION DATE
School Review	16 February 2018
Board Annual Review	25 March 2019

Concerns, Complaints and Appeals Policy

Vision Statement

The purpose of Nambucca Valley Christian Community School is to provide a Christian educational community as a centre of teaching and learning excellence, founded on Biblically-based beliefs, values and behaviour.

Rationale

The purpose of the School's Concerns, Complaints and Appeals Policy is to provide a student or parent(s)/legal guardian with the opportunity to access procedures to facilitate the resolution of a dispute or complaint. These internal procedures are a conciliatory and non-legal process.

Policy

The School recognises that it is good and fitting that members of communities have opportunity to express disappointment or disapproval and seeks to engage with such situations with the intent of clearly reaching mutual understanding amongst the parties involved.

Principles

- Resolution of issues of concern and preservation of relationship should be the intent of all communication regarding a concern of a parent.
- Parents and Caregivers have a recognised right to seek access to information about and clarification of circumstances relating to the education and welfare of children in their care.
- The School retains full responsibility for protecting members of the community, including staff, from circumstances that might be harmful to the individual's well-being or reputation.
- Concerns of parents should be communicated to the school according to the accompanying procedures. Guidelines have been set in place to protect both staff and parents from unnecessarily escalating issues of concern whilst ensuring that matters of concern for a parent are heard openly and responded to appropriately.
- When processing any Parent Concern all parties are to show the utmost respect for the privacy of students, parents and staff. No other communication about the matter should be entered into by anyone involved.
- All communication by staff and by parents should conform to the Communication Policy of the school and be characterized by courtesy and respect.
- Staff are designated with hierarchical responsibility for resolving parental grievances in a manner that is in keeping with School policy and procedure.
- All issues of parent grievance should be resolved at the lowest level of hierarchical responsibility as is possible to the mutual satisfaction of the School and the parents.
- A record of communication should be kept for all formal interviews.
- A formal written communication of the resolution of the grievance should be distributed to those involved in the process.
- Concerns relating to the Principal should be directed to the Board Chair.

Procedural Guidelines

- In the first instance, the School requests there is an attempt to informally resolve the issue. If this is unsatisfactory or does not result in a resolution of the matter, the School's Grievance policy will be followed.
- The process of this grievance procedure is confidential and any complaints are a matter between the parties concerned and those directly involved in the complaints handling process.
- Grievances brought by a student against another student will be dealt with under the School's Behaviour and Student Management Policy.
- For conditions which apply to the handling of a complaint or appeal arising from the Schools' suspension or cancellation of a student's studies refer to the School's Grievance policy.

1) Students

- a) Students should contact the subject teacher or relevant Head of School in the first instance to attempt mediation/informal resolution of the complaint.
- b) If the matter cannot be resolved through mediation, the matter will be referred to the Principal.
- c) At this point, the student should notify the school in writing of the nature and details of the complaint.
- d) Each complainant has the opportunity to present his/her case to the Principal. Students may be accompanied by a support person.
- e) The formal complaints process will commence within 10 working days of the lodgement of the complaint with the Principal.
- f) Once the Principal has come to a decision regarding the complaint, the student will be informed in writing of the outcome and the reasons for the outcome.
- g) If the complaints procedure finds in favour of the student, the School will immediately implement the decision and any corrective and preventative action required.
- h) The School undertakes to finalise all grievance procedures within 20 working days.

2) Parent(s) / Legal Guardians

- a) Parent(s)/legal guardians should contact the subject teacher in the first instance, then the Head of Welfare or Head of Primary to attempt mediation/informal resolution of the complaint.
- b) If the matter cannot be resolved through mediation, it will be referred to the Principal.
- c) At this point, parent(s)/legal guardians must notify the school in writing of the nature and details of the complaint.
- d) Each complainant has the opportunity to present their case to the Principal. Parent(s)/legal guardians may be accompanied by a support person.
- e) The formal complaints process will commence within 10 working days of the lodgement of the complaint with the Principal.
- f) Once the Principal has come to a decision regarding the complaint, the parent(s)/legal guardian will be informed in writing of the outcome and the reasons for the outcome.
- g) If the complaints procedure finds in favour of the parent(s)/legal guardian, the School will immediately implement the decision and any necessary corrective and preventative action.
- h) The School undertakes to finalise all grievance procedures within 20 working days.