

2017

Grievance Policy



Pilgrim School

*To challenge and inspire
children in a Christ centred
community*

“Be tolerant with one another and forgive one another whenever any of you has a complaint against someone else. You must forgive one another just as the Lord has forgiven you.”

Colossians 3: 13

INTRODUCTION

It is the desire of Pilgrim School for children, staff, parents and visitors to our school enjoy positive, meaningful and valued communication and relationships. Such an environment will in turn enable children to have a greater chance of success with their learning.

As with any community, Pilgrim School is not immune to misunderstandings, disagreements and even wrongdoing. When differences occur, the preferred pathway in solving them is by using the moral and spiritual guidelines given to us in God’s Word, the Bible. We are to live and work together in harmony, giving preference to the other and showing love and consideration towards each other. The Bible commands those who have a faith in God to “love one another” as demonstrated to us by Jesus. (John 13:34-35).

For the members of our school community to deal with issues of concern, it is important to have clear lines of communication and a defined process. The following guidelines aim to provide our school community with an avenue for grievances to be discussed and resolved.

The spirit of this policy is that we are open to discuss concerns and issues that people have. The aim is to seek suitable resolutions and outcomes and where necessary, forgiveness and reconciliation.

GUIDING PRINCIPLES

AT ALL TIMES

- Keep the circle small. Seek to rectify the grievance with the person with whom that grievance occurred. The first and usually the only step needed in solving a person-to-person problem is for one person involved to initiate a conversation that is straightforward, but lovingly and clearly presented. Most problems are solved at the two-person level, and the Bible encourages this. (Matthew 18:15-17)
- Keep the matter confidential. Share the problem only with those involved, establishing the principle of confidentiality. The Bible has much to say about those who gossip or malign others with their words. ‘With his mouth the godless destroys his neighbour, but through knowledge the righteous escape’. Proverbs 11:9
- People should be treated with respect and courtesy.
- Grievances that occur between one parent and another, fall outside our jurisdiction.
- If you, the parent, have a grievance with a student, do not approach the student as this is a breach of the Child Protection Policy.
- Not all grievances are formal and it is at the discretion of the Principal whether the information is passed on.

- Please note that neither the Minister for Education and Child Development nor the Department for Education and Child Development has any power to directly intervene in any complaints relation to the operations of Pilgrim School Inc.

BEFORE A MEETING

- Reflect on the issue – Is it really important? Are your concerns justified?
- Please be careful that you do not rely on information passed on to you by persons not officially representing the school or involved with the issue as this may be misleading and cause undue anxiety.
- Seek some advice. This should be done in such a way that confidentiality is maintained.
- Write down issues and thoughts so that it is clear as to what needs to be discussed.
- Inform the person you are meeting with of the issue or topic for discussion.

AT A MEETING

- Clearly define the issue and state your concerns and needs.
- Notes may be taken during the meeting.
- Offer possible solutions, aim for an outcome that both will be happy with, but be prepared to compromise.
- The issue may be resolved, but if not, this needs to be clearly stated and understood at the end of the meeting.
- Meetings will be stopped if any person(s) behaves in an insulting, offensive or dangerous manner.

AFTER A MEETING

- There may be the need to monitor the situation.
- Another meeting may need to be arranged.
- Decide to move to the next level if the issue is not resolved.

The following steps need to be followed in the event of a grievance occurring:

GRIEVANCE PROCEDURES

STUDENTS with a grievance should	PARENTS with a grievance with a member of staff should	STAFF with a grievance should
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Talk to the person about the problem. If this is not possible or is too difficult, then: 2. Talk to a teacher / school assistant about the problem, at an appropriate time. 3. If the issue is unresolved, you may wish to talk with your parents. 4. If the issue still exists, talk with the Principal and you may like someone else to join you. <p><i>[These steps are very similar to those that children are encouraged to follow as outlined in the school's Anti-Harassment Policy.]</i></p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Arrange to speak with the staff member concerned about the issue. Some matters will be able to be dealt with via notes in student diaries and short conversations. If a meeting is needed, please make an appointment time as it is not appropriate to enter classrooms or offices with a major grievance without prior arrangement. 2. Discuss with the staff member what the issue is and allow a reasonable timeframe for the matter to be addressed and feedback given. 3. If the issue remains unresolved, then please do not hesitate to arrange a time to meet with the Principal. 4. If you are still unhappy, then you may wish to write to the Chairperson of the School Board who will review the process and provide feedback. <p>Please note: <i>If you have a school related issue with another parent or child, please do not directly approach them. You are asked to bring the issue to the attention of a teacher or the principal and use them to determine a suitable course of action.</i></p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Arrange a time to speak with the person concerned. 2. Allow a reasonable timeframe for the matter to be addressed and feedback given. 3. If the issue remains unresolved, then arrange a time to meet with the Principal. You may seek the support of others, for example a colleague, WHS rep, or IEU rep. Such people may help you investigate your concern or act as a mediator 4. If you are still unhappy, then you may wish to write to the Chairperson of the School Board who will review the process and provide feedback.

Please note: Depending on the nature and severity of the issue, at times it may be necessary to bypass some of the above steps.