

Grievance Procedures and Guidelines for Parents and Community Members



LORETO
COLLEGE

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Overview

Loreto College is committed to providing a safe and supportive work and learning environment for all within our College community. Loreto College is also committed to developing a culture based on mutual trust and respect.

We acknowledge that during your daughter's school years, at times, there may be a complaint/concern that you wish to raise about a decision, behaviour, act or omission that you consider to be unacceptable or unreasonable. Loreto College will ensure that all grievances are addressed in a fair and equitable manner and the following procedures will guide parents/guardians and community members in addressing grievances as quickly as possible.

Scope

The Grievance Procedures and Guidelines applies to all parents/guardians, visitors, volunteers and community members.

The Grievance Procedures and Guidelines does not address complaints relating to the following:

- child protection issues
- occupational health and safety issues
- enrolment issues
- staff employment issues

These issues are managed through appropriate statutory and Enterprise Agreement provisions and policies.

Related Documents

- Student Personal Responsibility and Personal Behaviour Guidelines
- Privacy Policy

Definitions

Grievance: a complaint/concern that a parent has in relation to their child's education

Grievance Process: step by step process a parent must follow to have his or her complaint addressed satisfactorily

Complainant: the person making a complaint

Respondent: the person about whom the complaint is made

Parties: refer to both complainant and respondent

Complaint Responder: the person responding to the complaint

Witness: persons who directly witness an alleged incident

Guiding Principles

The complainant is encouraged to raise their concern appropriately and as soon as possible so a timely resolution can be achieved. Grievances are responded to as a matter of priority with the intention of restoring mutual trust and respect. Grievances should be lodged in good faith and without frivolous, malicious and vexatious intent.

Every reasonable effort will be made by the College and its representatives to ensure that a parent/guardian or community member who lodges a complaint or anyone dealing with or involved in the complaint will not be treated unfairly, victimised, coerced or intimidated. Personal information collected as part of the grievance process remains confidential.

In responding to a complaint, informally or formally, every reasonable effort shall be made to ensure that natural justice and procedural fairness are afforded to all parties. This will mean that:

- all parties are entitled to be treated with respect and to be heard;
- all parties should participate fully in the resolution process to achieve an outcome that is realistic and reasonable;
- a person who is the subject of a complaint should be informed of the substance of the complaint and given a full opportunity to present their perspective;
- all parties have a right to seek advice and support;
- investigations and proceedings must be conducted fairly, thoroughly and without bias or undue delay;
- parties should provide all relevant material, complete and factual information, documents or other evidence relating to the complaint.

How do I resolve a grievance?

There are informal and formal options for making and resolving grievances. Where appropriate, the aim is to resolve grievances informally.

Informal

In many circumstances, the most appropriate step is to raise the grievance directly with the person concerned (unless the person is a child, in which case, it is more appropriate to contact the relevant teacher or member of Leadership). Approaching the person who may be the cause of the grievance and letting them know the impact of their actions may be the most appropriate action. This provides them with a chance to stop or change what they are doing and/or explain their actions.

Informally resolving a grievance

Use of informal options to resolve grievances may prevent escalation to conflict and achieve resolution of the concern. An informal option is usually appropriate when:

- the complainant wants to resolve the grievance informally;
- the allegations are less serious and are best resolved at school level;
- there is a chance of quickly stopping the concern before it develops.

Unable to informally resolve grievance

If the problem or concern is unable to be resolved by a direct personal approach, it should be raised with a member of Leadership in order to discuss the issue and seek resolution.

Formal

If the complainant is not satisfied with the outcome of informal attempts to resolve their concern, they should proceed to addressing their grievance using a formal process. A formal complaint may be made when:

- a complaint cannot be resolved informally;
- where you cannot approach the person directly or remain dissatisfied with their response;
- the seriousness of the issue warrants a higher level of formality;

When a formal complaint is related to a specific area within the College, the complaint should be directed toward the Leader of that area.

Area	Leader
Teaching, Learning and Curriculum – Senior School	Head of Learning and Innovation
Teaching, Learning and Curriculum – Junior School and ELC	Head of Junior School and ELC
Pastoral and Wellbeing – Senior School	Leader of Student Wellbeing and Academic Care and/or Deputy Principal
Pastoral and Wellbeing – Junior School and ELC	Head of Junior School and ELC and/or Deputy Principal
Boarding	Deputy Principal

Concerns from community members, visitors or volunteers should be directed to the Director of Staff, Deputy Principal or Principal.

Formally resolving a grievance

In circumstances where it is inappropriate or not possible to resolve a matter informally, the following steps will be implemented:

- once you have made the complaint to the relevant Leader, that person will consider whether there are any reasons why they should not proceed to deal with the complaint.
- once the relevant Leader has decided to proceed, the Leader will
 - (a) interview the complainant.
 - (b) take a written record of the complaint;
 - (c) speak with the other parties involved to hear his or her side of the story;
 - (d) interview any witnesses. These interviews will be conducted separately and impartially. Written reports about the grievance may be requested. The importance of confidentiality will be stressed to all parties and they will be

warned of the consequences if there is a breach of confidentiality (e.g. possible defamation action, initiation of a complaint for harassment);

- (e) tell the complainant what has been stated by the other party (parties) involved.
- (f) discuss what should be done to resolve the grievance.

Possible outcomes

If the complaint is upheld, or sustained, the following are possible outcomes depending on the nature of the complaint:

- a meeting to form a resolution between the parties
- any other action as deemed appropriate by the Leader

If a complaint is not upheld, or sustained, (e.g. there is insufficient evidence) but some issues come out of the investigation that are required to be addressed then possible outcomes include:

- relevant training for staff;
- monitoring of behaviour of employees;
- individual counselling for the respondent;
- review and/or change of College processes and procedures;
- any combination of the above.

The Leader is primarily responsible for initiating whatever outcome is determined.

Review

If the issue remains unresolved, or the complainant is dissatisfied with the outcome, the complainant may direct the issue to the Principal for further consideration.

Other Complaints

Complaints concerning the Principal should be raised directly with the Loreto College Board Chair.

Document Control

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History

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