



In partnership with parents Strathalbyn Christian College aims to make known the Lordship of Jesus Christ through excellence in education to equip students for works of service ~ College Mission Statement

Rationale

This Policy affirms our commitment to healthy and positive relationships and to effectively resolve conflict when it occurs. Our intent is to ensure that all serious complaints and grievances are handled appropriately.

It should be read in conjunction with the Peacewise Peacemaking Principles which are used extensively throughout the College as a helpful tool in responding to conflict Biblically:
<http://www.peacewise.org.au/get-help-with-conflict-2/peacemaking-principles/>

Scope

This Policy outlines the way the College will deal with disputes which may arise between any members of our College community, when the normal procedures for resolving conflict have not been successful.

The day to day management of the College is the responsibility of the Principal. The Geraldton Christian Community Schools Association Board operates out of a Policy-governance framework and should only be contacted if the normal grievance channels (refer to Appendix B) have been exhausted.

Definitions

Grievance: A grievance may exist when a member of the school community has a complaint against a person or the school or a group of persons within the school concerning an action taken, a policy, a process, structures, etc, which for whatever reason has not resolved.

Conflict: A conflict can be said to exist where two parties are in opposition to each other over an issue and are unable to resolve it by themselves.

Mediation: Mediation is a process whereby the listening and speaking between parties in a grievance or conflict situation is facilitated by an independent, skilled person or panel.

Resolution: Resolution is a stage reached between two parties who, though once in conflict, have now agreed on a course of action that is perceived by both parties to be best for themselves and for the community of the school.

Dispute: A disagreement or argument. A dispute exists where all normal channels of complaint or conflict resolution have been exhausted.

References

- Complaints Form (Appendix A)
- Who Do I Talk To Chart (Appendix B)

Related Policy and Procedures

1. Code of Conducts Policy (Staff, Students and Volunteers)
2. Bullying Policy

This Policy was adopted in May 2014 when the Dispute Resolution Policy (Parents, Students & Public) **and** Dispute Resolution Policy (Staff & Volunteers) was combined into one document.
Next due for revision in Term 1, 2015 (reviewed annually, Appendix B to be updated)

Policy

1. BACKGROUND

- 1.1 The College seeks to apply a biblical foundation in its approach to dispute resolution. Principles such as those outlined in Matthew 18:15 - 16 and 1 Corinthians 6 remind us of our duty to not be in conflict while Matt 7:5 also notes the importance of right perspective and bias. The following steps shall therefore apply in connection with questions, disputes or difficulties arising from conflict and relational breakdown.

2. HOW TO MAKE A COMPLAINT

Any community member or member of the general public who has a dispute or grievance should follow the steps outlined below:

- 2.1 Write to the Principal or Deputy Principal, using the Complaints Form available by request from the College Office, outlining the facts as you know them and request an appointment to discuss the issue.

The Principal or Deputy Principal will arrange to meet with all parties either separately and/or together as they deem appropriate.

Detailed records will be kept and signed by all parties, including any agreements that are made or if mediation is agreed to/necessary.

Further appointments will be scheduled if follow up is required.

Should the issue still be unresolved, or if the complaint involves the Principal or Deputy Principal, please follow the steps outlined in 2.2.

- 2.2 Write to the Geraldton Community Christian Schools Association (GCCSA) Board, using the Complaints Form available by request from the College Office, again outlining all facts and request that the GCCSA Board help in reaching a resolution. The GCCSA Board will determine the extent of their involvement in helping resolve the issue. The GCCSA Board is the College's final arbiter.

The Procedure for the GCCSA Board Chair to follow is outlined in Section 4 below.

Should the issue still remain unresolved, please go to step 2.3.

- 2.3 Ask for a meeting with an independent mediator.

Should the issue still remain unresolved, please go to step 2.4.

- 2.4 Seek legal advice from an outside agency.

3. GENERAL PRINCIPLES

- 3.1 All genuine complaints will be taken seriously and treated with the utmost confidentiality. It is also incumbent upon the complainant to maintain extreme discretion so that the matter does not become a source of gossip, defamation or general disharmony.

4. PROCEDURE FOR BOARD CHAIR

- 4.1 The GCCSA Board Chair should discuss the matter fully with the Principal and be provided with relevant documentation. If a briefing is required from a member of staff, this should occur in the presence of the Principal.
- 4.2 The Chairman should respond to the community member or member of the public, notifying them that they are reviewing the matter, asking them if they wish to add anything further and providing a date by which they may expect a response.
- 4.3 The Chairman may be able to offer a new approach to the matter, and this may satisfy the community member or member of the public. The Chairman's response should be clear and detailed, and should offer a meeting if the community member or member of the public remain troubled.
- 4.4 If a meeting is requested, the Chairman offers to meet the community member or member of the public at a time convenient to them.

Those involved are:

- the Chairman of the GCCSA Board
- the Principal and, at the most, one other member of staff
- the community member or member of public

The community member or member of the public should be permitted to bring with them a supportive friend who is not involved with the complaint. Legal representation is not appropriate at this stage.

APPENDIX A



COMPLAINTS FORM

This form should be used when a person wishes make a complaint against the College or a member of the College community.

Please complete the Form and return it marked:

FOR THE PRIVATE ATTENTION OF
The Principal or Deputy Principal or GCCSA Board Chair
Strathalbyn Christian College
Locked Bag 5011
Strathalbyn WA 6531

You should expect to be contacted regarding this complaint within 5 working days (during school terms)

Date you are lodging this form: ___/___/_____

Your details: please only provide the contact details that you are happy for our staff to use to contact you:

Family Name: _____
Given Name/s: _____
Address: _____
Phone Numbers: Mobile: _____ Home: _____
Email: _____

Relationship with the College (please tick)

- Current Student, Current Parent/Guardian, Former Student, Current Parent/Guardian, Other (please specify)

If you are part of our College Community, have you (please tick)

- Read the Dispute Resolution Policy? Yes No
Discussed the issue with those directly involved? Yes No

Your Complaint

Please describe as clearly as possible what your complaint is about (attach additional sheets if necessary).

It may be helpful for us to know:

What happened? Where it happened? When it happened (include dates)?

Who did it (include names of individuals involved)?

How and when you found out about it?

Any other relevant details.

How would you like to see your complaint resolved?

What action would you like the College to take to resolve your complaint?

Thank you for taking the time to explain your complaint to us. We will be in contact with you shortly to discuss the action/s being taken by our College.

APPENDIX B

WHO DO I TALK TO??

A Quick-Reference Information Chart for Parents*All Staff Names and e-mail addresses are printed in the Family Handbook*

Position	About	Responsibilities
Teacher	Student welfare, behavioural & curriculum issues	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 1st contact for any issues relating to your child & their education • 1st contact for queries relating to curriculum • 1st contact for parents regarding student welfare & behavioural matters
Year Group Coordinator	Student welfare & behavioural issues	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 2nd contact regarding student welfare & behavioural matters if issues are not resolved with Teacher • Year Group Coordinator deals with a child who has accumulated 5 or 10 Infringements. Student Welfare Team contacts parents as required
Pastoral Care	Student & Family Support	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Resource for students and parents regarding pastoral care/behavioural issues
Key Learning Area Coordinators (KLACs) <i>Primary K-2 & 3-6, Arts, Humanities, Science, Maths, PE & Outdoor Ed, Technology, Vocational Ed & Training</i>	Curriculum	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 2nd contact for parents if issues remain unresolved with Teachers • 2nd contact for queries relating to curriculum if not resolved with Teacher • Discipline issues are handled by KLAC if a child has had a Send Out. Student Welfare Team contacts parents as required
Camps Manager Mrs Sophia de Lange sdelange@scc.wa.edu.au	Camps	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Oversight of all School Camps – will refer queries to appropriate Camp Coordinator
Director of Teaching and Learning Mr Rob Jamieson rjamieson@scc.wa.edu.au	Timetabling Secondary Options Curriculum	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 1st contact for timetabling queries • 1st contact for queries relating to subject/option choices or issues for Secondary students • 3rd contact if curriculum issues are not resolved with Teacher & KLAC
Deputy Principal Mr Gavin Hirschhausen bbuckley@scc.wa.edu.au		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Responsible for Day to Day Operations of College K-12 • Contact Mr Hirschhausen's Personal Assistant, Bernadette Buckley bbuckley@scc.wa.edu.au, if K-12 issues have not been resolved with person functionally in charge
Reception Mrs Julie Fong jfong@scc.wa.edu.au	General Enquiries	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 1st contact for general enquiries • 1st contact for queries regarding event dates and times
Student Services Mrs Janet Wells studentservices@scc.wa.edu.au	Absences Student Details Computers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 1st contact for student absences – can be telephoned to College office or emailed to studentservices@scc.wa.edu.au • 1st contact for signing students out of College for appointments • 1st contact for updating student details such as health issues etc. • 1st contact for computer issues. Drop off devices with Student Services including information regarding problems. Device will then be given to the Computer Help Desk for resolution of issues.
Fees Officer Mrs Matilda Kanini mkanini@scc.wa.edu.au	Fees/Payments	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 1st contact for all queries relating to school fees • Receives all payments e.g. events, camps
Uniform Mrs Jane Beck secuniform@scc.wa.edu.au	Uniforms	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 1st contact for uniform purchases/queries - Uniform Shop opening hours are on website
Enrolments Officer Mrs Jenny Visser jvisser@scc.wa.edu.au	Enrolments	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 1st contact relating to new enrolments at the College
Development Officer Mrs Anita Kirkbright akirkbright@scc.wa.edu.au	Fundraising Out of School Activities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 1st contact regarding fundraising/event suggestions • 1st contact for Out of School Activities e.g coaching sports teams
Communications Officer, PA to Principal & Front Office Manager Mrs Fiona Davidson fdavidson@scc.wa.edu.au	Communications Family Details Office Issues Parents&Friends Principal	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 1st contact for issues relating to communications from the College • 1st contact for updating family details such as contact details, requests for multiple copies of documents to be mailed, VROs etc. • 1st contact if issues have not been resolved with front office staff • 1st contact regarding information about Parents & Friends Team • 1st contact for any queries directed to the Principal
Principal Mr Paul Arundell		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • College CEO • Contact Mr Arundell's Personal Assistant, Fiona Davidson fdavidson@scc.wa.edu.au, if issues have not been resolved with person functionally in charge

Last Updated: 20 January 2014