INTRODUCTION

As a school community we are committed to working together to meet the educational needs of our students. This occurs most effectively when staff, students and parents are working towards the same ends. This can only happen if there is trust, and open and effective communication between the people within the school community.

Staff members (including school leaders), students and parents who work well together, treat each other with respect and integrity, and act to resolve concerns and conflicts promptly and effectively enable this to happen. This promotes a productive and happy work environment as well as the social health of the school community.

The St Joseph’s School Grievance Policy is designed to provide timely resolutions of conflict while upholding the Gospel values outlined below.

This policy does not supersede or replace other relevant policy such as Child Protection, Privacy Act, Workplace Bullying and Harassment or existing employment conditions.

RATIONALE

MISSION STATEMENT

“St Joseph’s School offers a holistic education within a Catholic Christian ethos whilst developing and valuing the uniqueness of the individual as we encourage each student to become a life long learner.”

The mission statement of St Joseph’s School stresses the Catholic Christian ethos, which recognises both the benefits and implications for individual expression and pursuits. The uniqueness of the individual implies respect for individual opinion within a rapidly changing society. The expectation of wide variations of opinion brings with it the possibility of conflict. Conflict resolution is an important part of growth and development and this policy seeks to facilitate such resolutions in a way reflecting the Gospel values.

GOSPEL VALUES

Respect, personal dignity, individual worth, freedom, integrity, trust, justice, understanding, forgiveness, honesty, care, compassion.

DEFINITION

A grievance is a complaint about any type of work-related problem that is causing distress. The grievance may arise from a decision, act or omission by any person or persons within the school, which is considered by the complainant to be wrong, mistaken, unjust or discriminatory.
POLICY STATEMENT

The Grievance Policy will outline the management of grievances with consideration of

1. The Parties to the Grievance
   These may include any party related to St Joseph’s school. This may be a student, parent, staff member, consultant or service provider to the school, a neighbour, or member of a local authority such as a council or emergency service provider. As in the definition provided, a grievance can be from a variety of sources.

   The Grievance Policy indicates that procedures should be implemented that allow for a mutually satisfactory approach to resolving grievances at the lowest level and at the earliest possible time. Except where safety is an issue, education processes should remain in place as they were before the grievance during the grievance review process.

3. Timelines
   The time for resolution of a grievance will depend on the situation and the level of management required.

   Completion of a Grievance Process should be noted, communicated, and documented.

4. Appeals Process
   The grievance process is in itself a series of appeals processes. It thus is implied that appeals are not an endless opportunity and that an eventual final arbitration will need to be made.

CONSEQUENCES

The grievance policy implies

- St Joseph’s school will provide a Grievance procedure reflecting the principles of the Grievance Policy for the betterment of the school and school community.
- That parties conduct themselves in a way reflecting the Gospel values as outlined.
- Mutual respect and justice are vital to the process.
- Grievance policy procedures will follow a logical process and early resolution is the goal.
- Grievance processes are used only where a true unresolved grievance occurs and should not be seen as a means to other ends.
- St Joseph’s school will undertake to open and close a grievance process consistent with the principles above.
This policy provides the basis for mature conflict resolution. While a grievance is often a stressful event, a maturely handled grievance process should provide an opportunity for growth and learning, leading to an improvement in the issue which was the source of the grievance.

Michael McCarthy
Principal

Peter Sullivan
Board Chair

Reviewed 2011