



COMPLAINTS AND GRIEVANCE POLICY AND PROCEDURE

1.0 INTRODUCTION

The dignity of the human person, who is created in the image and likeness of God, is the foundation of Catholic Social Teaching. Within this context, St Joseph's Primary Schools provides a safe, supportive and secure environment that promotes respect and care and values diversity for all members of the school community. These qualities cannot be developed for individuals in isolation from the health and wellbeing of the school community as a whole.

2.0 VISION

St Joseph's Primary School is committed to providing a child safe, positive and respectful environment for all students, staff, volunteers and parents. It is acknowledged, however, that an employee, volunteer, parent or student can make a complaint about any decision, behaviour, act or omission (whether by the principal, members of the leadership team or other staff, volunteers or parents). It is important any person who feels aggrieved has an avenue to formally complain.

3.0 RATIONALE

This policy and procedure was written to demonstrate the strong commitment of the whole school community of St Joseph Primary School, leaders, staff, volunteers, students and their families to a safe, positive and respectful environment. The purpose of this document is to provide a policy and procedure by which employees, volunteers and parents can have such complaints addressed.

For Student Complaints refer to Participation and Empowerment Policy and Procedure.

4.0 POLICY STATEMENTS

Formal complaints will be investigated in a fair and impartial manner. No judgments or assumptions will be made, and no action will be taken until the investigation is complete. Individual rights and natural justice will be upheld as each person who is a party to the complaint will be given an opportunity to tell their side of the story.

All complaints will remain confidential. The only people who will have access to the information about the complaint will be the person making the complaint, any witnesses or persons named in the complaint and the person conducting the investigation. There will be a commitment to ensure a person who makes a complaint is not victimised. Each complaint will be finalised within as short a period as possible.

5.0 DEFINITIONS

Complaint

Result of any decision, behaviour, act or omission that caused a person to feel aggrieved.

Note: This policy is not referring to any report required by:

1. Responding to incidents, disclosures, allegations or suspicions of child abuse.
2. Allegations of misconduct and/or incompetence of staff [paid employees] (refer to SSEB guidelines for employers regarding allegations of misconduct and/or incompetence, June 2013)

6.0 RELATED DOCUMENTS

- Participation and Empowerment Policy and Procedure
- Responding to Incidents, Disclosures, Allegations or Suspicions of Child Abuse Policy and Procedures

7.0 REFERENCES

SSEB guidelines for employers

8.0 REVIEW

This policy is to be reviewed every three years.

Policy ratified: July 2016

Next policy review: July 2019

9.0 PROCEDURE

9.1 Approach the person involved

The first step for anyone who may feel aggrieved (complainant) is to tell the person who is the cause of the potential complaint, how it has impacted upon them. Telling the person will give that person the opportunity to know how it has impacted and allow that person a chance to stop or change the offending behaviour or decision.

9.2 Employees and Volunteers-Go to your Unit Leader

If the complainant is not able to approach the person directly, the complainant should explain the situation to their Unit Leader. If the complaint involves the Unit Leader the complainant should approach the most appropriate member of the Leadership team, Deputy Principal or Principal (refer to Appendix 1) If the complaint involves the Principal the complainant should approach the Canonical Administrator. The complainant may wish to ask a colleague or another person to assist as an advocate in the process.

9.2.1 Parents/Guardians- Go to your child's classroom teacher

If the complainant is not able to approach the person directly, the complainant should explain the situation to the Principal or Deputy Principal. If the complaint involves the Principal the complainant should approach the Canonical Administrator. The complainant may wish to ask another person to assist as an advocate in the process.

9.3 Employees and Volunteers -Proceeding with the complaint

The Unit Leader or Leadership member, Principal, Deputy Principal or Canonical Administrator will decide if s/he should be involved with the complaint. If any of the above are connected in any way (eg. directly involved in the complaint or a friend of a person involved) the investigation should be passed on to anyone of the above not involved, with the complainant's consent.

9.3.1 Parents/Guardians -Proceeding with the complaint

The Classroom Teacher, Principal or Deputy Principal or Canonical Administrator will decide if s/he should be involved with the complaint. If any of the above are connected in any way (eg. directly involved in the complaint or a friend of a person involved) the investigation should be passed on to anyone of the above not involved, with the complainant's consent.

9.4 Investigation Steps

9.4.1 The person investigating (investigator) will interview the complainant and explain the process and what is likely to happen if the complaint is found to be supported or not found to be supported by the evidence. The complainant will also be told what avenues of appeal are open to them if they are not happy with the way the complaint is being handled.

9.4.2 The Investigator will take a written record of the complaint using the Complaints Record Form (refer to Appendix II).

9.4.3 The Investigator will interview the person/s about whom the complaint is made to get their side of the story.

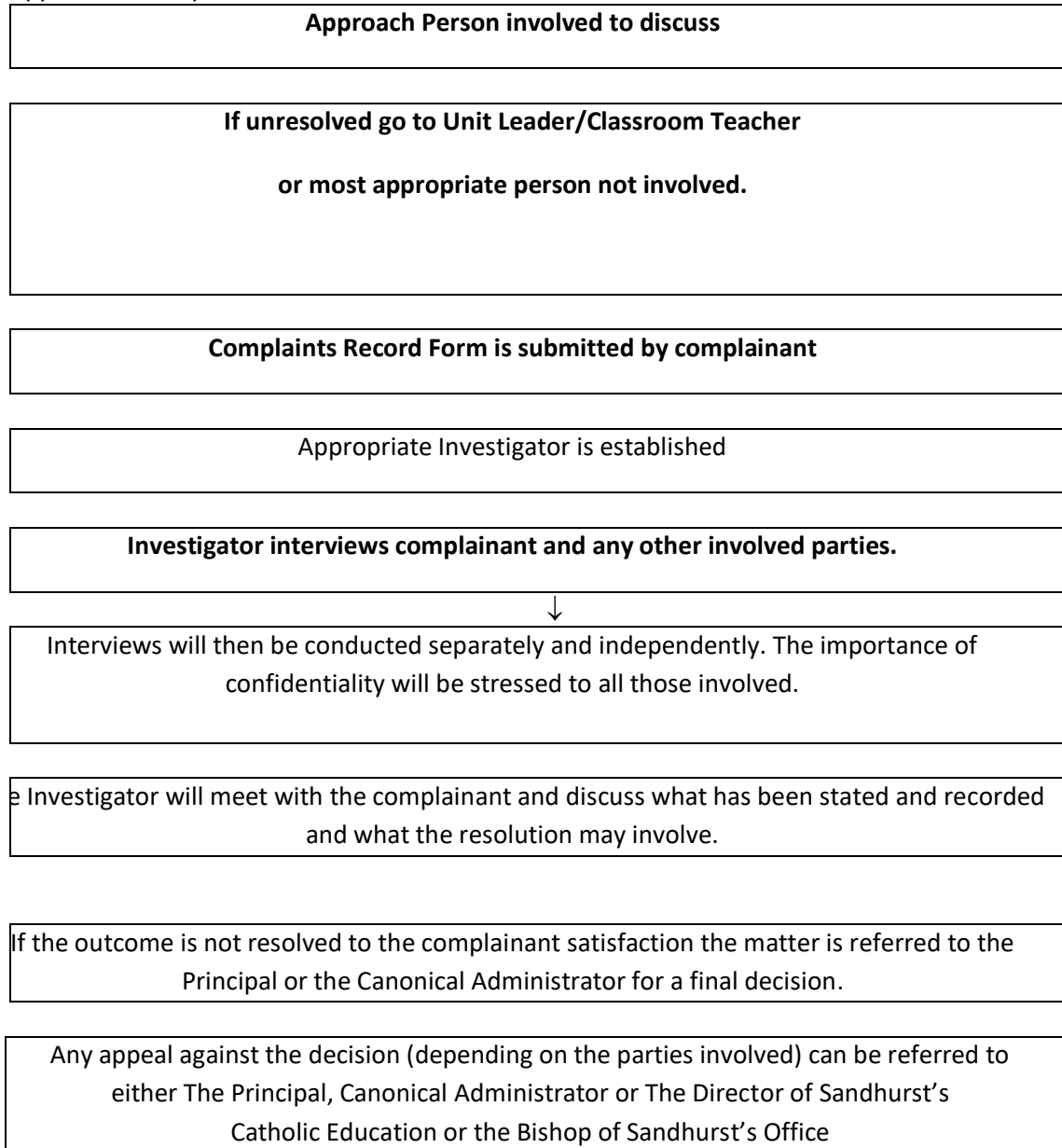
- 9.4.4 The Investigator interviews any witnesses.
- All interviews are conducted separately and impartially.
 - The interviews are recorded on Complaints Record Form.
 - The importance of confidentiality will be stressed to all parties and the consequences of breaking confidentiality will be explained (eg. possible defamation action).
- 9.4.5 The Investigator will meet with the complainant and discuss:
- What has been stated and recorded.
 - What can be done to resolve the problem (eg. apology, warning etc.)
- 9.4.6 If the outcome is not resolved to the complainant's satisfaction, the matter is referred to the Principal who makes a final decision in relation to the outcome of the complaint.
- 9.4.7 If the Principal is an involved party then the matter is referred to the Canonical Administrator.
- 9.4.8 If the complaint is unsubstantiated (not enough evidence) some possible outcomes are:
1. Relevant training for all staff
 2. Monitoring of behaviour of those involved

9.5 Appeals

- 9.5.1 Any appeal against any decision can be heard by the Principal (if Principal not party to the complaint).
- 9.5.2 If Principal is involved, the Appeal can go to the Canonical Administrator.
- 9.5.3 If the Canonical Administrator and/or School Board are party to the complaint then the Appeal can be heard by the Director of Catholic Education or the Bishop of Sandhurst's Office.

10.0 APPENDIX

Appendix I: Complaints Procedure Flowchart



Appendix II: Complaint Record Form