

Grievance Policy and Procedure

Reviewed: 12 March 2024



Pacific Lutheran College values each of its members and believes that a clear process for the resolution and monitoring of conflict, complaints and grievances is in the best interests of all.

1. Preamble

1.1 Purpose

1.1.1 The purpose of this document is to provide parents, students, employees and other community members with the opportunity to have a grievance dealt with formally through the most appropriate channels, speedily and flexibly.

1.1.2 The objectives of these procedures are to promote the prompt resolution of grievances at the lowest level possible by consultation, cooperation and discussion, and to promote efficiency, effectiveness and equity in the College.

1.1.3 The process followed will be confidential and all related documentation securely stored. Any complaints are a matter between the parties directly concerned and those involved in this procedure. However, the College may be required to release confidential information under legal requirement and/or to ensure the safety or welfare of others.

1.2 Scope

1.2.1 Subject to 1.2.2, these procedures extend to grievances brought by any College parent, student, employee or other College community member.

1.2.2 Some grievances are better handled under other policies and procedures of the College. The College has specific policies and procedures in place for issues such as child protection, workplace discrimination, complaints by or against staff covered by the *Queensland Lutheran Schools Single Enterprise Agreement 2020* (as amended or replaced from time to time) amongst others.

1.3 Authorisation

The College Council is responsible for authorising this policy.

1.4 Responsible Officer

The Director of Staff is responsible for reviewing this policy and its procedures.

1.5 Communication

This policy and its procedures will be communicated via staff email, staff meetings, newsletters, the parent portal and College website.

1.6 Storage

This policy and its procedures will be stored in the Staff Handbook on the College network.

1.7 Linked documents

This policy and its procedures is linked with the *Queensland Lutheran Schools Single Enterprise Agreement 2020*.

1.8 Review Date

This policy and its procedures are to be reviewed on a biennial basis as recorded in the Policy and Procedures register. The initial Grievance Policy was adopted by College Council on 5/09/05 and has been reviewed on 11/09/07, 09/03/09, 05/04/11, 12/03/13, 11/08/15, 08/08/17, 10/09/19, 12/10/21 and 12/03/24.

2. Procedure

In the event of a grievance, any employee, parent, student or other College community member (**Complainant**) may seek resolution through following the steps below. As stated in 1.1.2 above, the objective (where appropriate) is to resolve the grievance at the lowest level possible.

2.1 Level 1: INFORMAL DISCUSSIONS

The College recognises that often grievances are simple misunderstandings that are easily resolved via effective communication.

- 2.1.1** If at all possible and appropriate, the parties directly involved should first seek to resolve the grievance in a timely manner by way of informal discussion personally and in a spirit of goodwill and commitment to the maintenance of a safe and harmonious environment.
- 2.1.2** If the grievance cannot be resolved satisfactorily, within a mutually acceptable time frame, or the seriousness of the matter is not suitable for resolution informally, the Complainant may process to Level 2.

2.2 Level 2: THIRD PARTY TO ASSIST RESOLUTION

At this level, the Complainant refers their grievance to a third party facilitator to help the parties to identify the disputed issues, understand the perspective of the other, develop options, promote co-operation, consider alternatives and endeavor to reach a mutual agreement the parties are prepared to abide by.

- 2.2.1** A Complainant may refer the grievance to a staff member's immediate supervisor who shall consult with the parties and attempt to facilitate resolution of the grievance by negotiation. The following staff would be contacted in this instance:
- Head of Learning K-5 (teaching and learning issues K-5)
 - Head of Staff and Students P-5 (staff and student issues P-5)
 - Heads of Department (key learning issues Years 6-12)
 - Heads of House (student pastoral and behaviour Years 6-12)
 - Head of Learning Middle College (teaching, learning and academic issues Years 6-9)
 - Head of Learning Senior College (teaching, learning and academic issues Years 10-12)
 - Head of Middle College Students (students pastoral and behaviour Years 6-9)
 - Head of Senior College Students (students pastoral and behaviour Years 10-12)

Should the supervisor be the source of the grievance or the issue not be resolved at this level, the Complainant shall refer the matter to the Director of Students (pastoral care and behavioural issues P-12), Director of Learning (Teaching and Learning P-12), Director of Staff (routines, procedures or staff issues) or Business Manager (business practices, support staff) to facilitate the negotiation.

- 2.2.2** If the grievance cannot be resolved satisfactorily at this level, within a mutually acceptable time frame or the seriousness of the matter warrants, the Complainant may proceed to Level 3.

2.3 Level 3: REFERRAL TO PRINCIPAL

At this level, the Complainant refers their grievance, in writing, to the Principal (or Principal's delegate) for resolution. Grievances in writing may be sent or handed into the College Administration, addressed to the Principal and marked strictly confidential or be emailed to principal@pacluth.qld.edu.au. However, should the grievance involve the Principal, it shall be referred to the Chair of the College Council. .

Reference to the Principal (or Principal's delegate) should resolve most, if not all grievances. However, if the grievance is still not resolved at this level, then the Complainant may properly refer a matter to the Chair of the College Council. Grievances in writing may be handed or posted in writing to the College Administration or emailed to the College Council Chair councilchair@pacluth.qld.edu.au.

3. General Guidelines

3.1 General

- 3.1.1** Grievances should be assessed as soon as possible.
- 3.1.2** Grievances will be addressed in accordance with principles of natural justice and procedural fairness.
- 3.1.3** Investigations (where deemed appropriate) will be conducted thoroughly, with care, and with sensitivity to the privacy of individuals.

3.2 Employees

- 3.2.1** During discussions an employee can have their union representative or other support person present.
- 3.2.2** While the Grievance Procedure is being followed, normal work is to continue where appropriate.

3.2.3 For all parties, it is useful to make diary notes of dates and discussions.

3.3 Parents

3.3.1 During discussions an individual may elect to have a support person present.

3.4 Students

3.4.1 During discussions a student can have a support person present.

3.4.2 If students take a grievance to Level 2 of the Grievance Procedure, parents may be advised.

3.5 Senior Staff and the Principal

3.5.1 The College acknowledges that Complainants are entitled to raise a grievance in good faith.

3.5.2 A grievance/s shall be assessed and, if deemed appropriate, investigated in a thorough, fair and impartial manner.

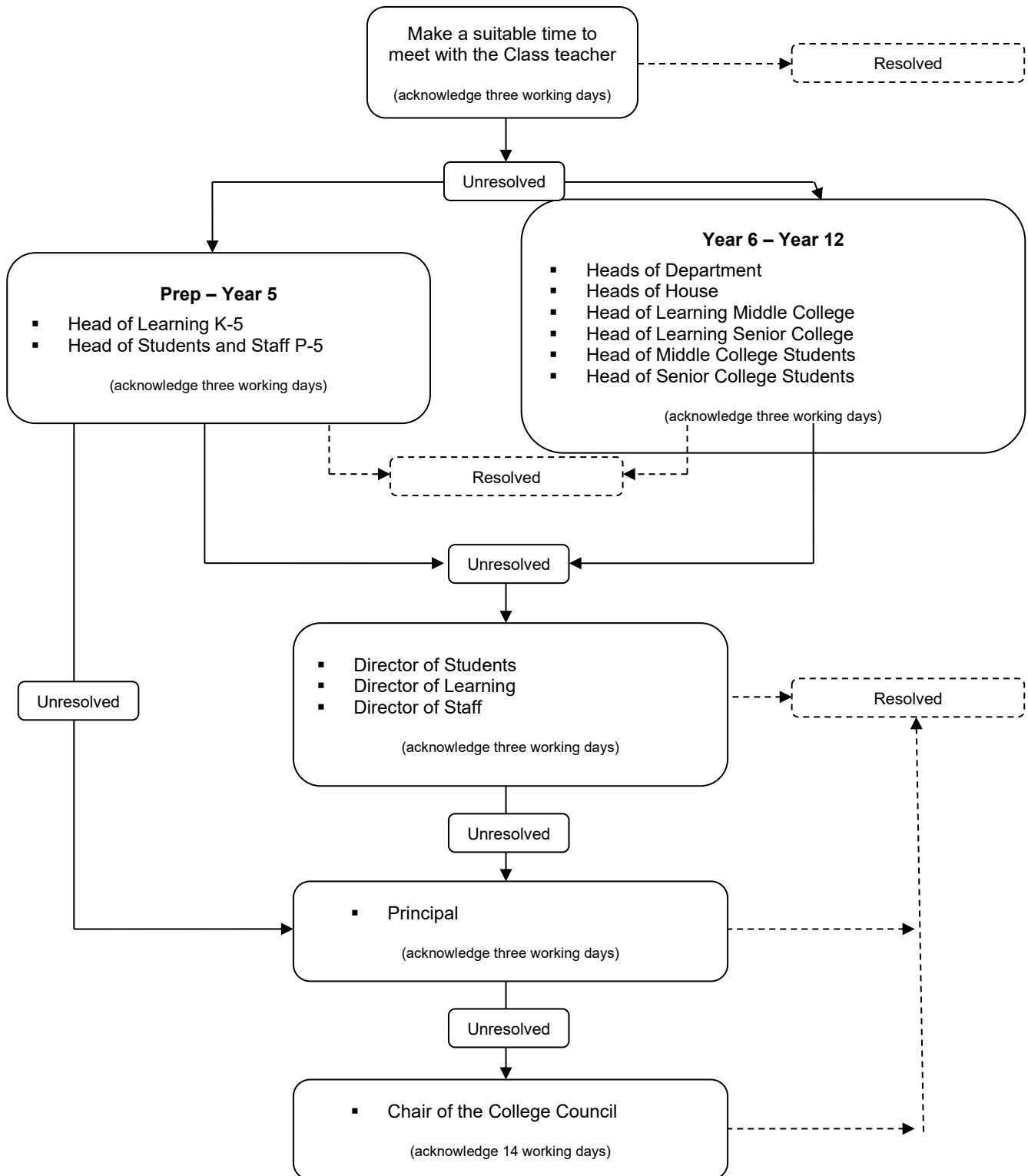
3.5.3 A senior staff member/ Principal can have a support person present during discussions.

3.5.4 If a member of Senior Staff or the Principal is unable to resolve the issue, they are to advise the Complainant to take the grievance to the next step of the process.

3.5.5 The Principal (or delegate) should advise the parties directly concerned, in writing, at Level 3 of:

- the decision taken by the College;
- a summary of the reasons for the decision made; and
- what and when follow up action, if any, is to be taken.

Summary of Grievance Procedures



Prayer and reflection support perspectives throughout the process.