



St Paul Lutheran School

Grievance Policy & Procedure – Parents

Created: February 2003

Updated: February 2019

Last Reviewed: August 2023

Lutheran Schools are places of loving service. Community members embrace high expectations and standards of behaviour in providing a safe and effective learning environment. We strive to be loving and forgiving in our relationships and service of others and present points of view in a clear, logical and respectful manner.

It is important that difficult or sensitive information is communicated in an honest and diplomatic way that is both sensitive and responsive to the different circumstances, background, beliefs and culture of others. (*Growing Deep, Lutheran Education Australia, 2016*)

Rationale

Issues or concerns that you, as parents, may have regarding your child's education are most effectively dealt with if they are raised in the following ways.

All personal matters such as concerns regarding student, parent or staff relationships should be realised **directly with the school** through the class teacher or Principal in a **confidential manner**.

Procedure

The following guidelines may assist you if you have a concern.

- a) **Make an appointment** to talk to the person with whom you have a concern or with whom is closely related to your concern. This may be the classroom teacher, principal or other school staff (eg. SPLASH or Canteen). Let them know what subject you wish to discuss as this will facilitate the process. This makes the most productive use of the time available - when the individual is free to give you his/her full attention.
- b) **Meet with the staff member** and use appropriate problem solving and/or conflict resolution strategies to formulate positive action for future.

That is:

Living and Learning Together in Christ

44 Audrey Avenue, Blair Athol, South Australia 5084

T 08 8260 2655 **E** admin@stpaulba.sa.edu.au

W stpaulba.sa.edu.au / ABN 84 648 346 828

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- Identify the facts
- Explore why the facts present a problem
- Share feelings
- Jointly commit to some future action and goals within the guidelines of school policy, procedure and importantly, by observing school values.

If you consider that the issue you have raised is still unresolved, it is important that you state this to the person at the conclusion of the meeting.

- a) If the issues are not resolved, **Submit a complaints/feedback form** available on our School website at [Contact Details - St Paul Lutheran \(stpaulba.sa.edu.au\)](http://stpaulba.sa.edu.au).

The form will send your grievance to the most appropriate person and you will receive contact from the most suitable leadership team member.

- b) If you are still dissatisfied with the outcome of the meeting, phone or **write to the Principal** to air your concerns. If St Paul does not receive further information it is reasonable to assume that the issue has been resolved.
- c) If after steps a) - c) you are still dissatisfied **approach the Chairperson of the School Board** via email boardchair@stpaulba.sa.edu.au who will try to resolve the situation further. The expectation of you by the Chairperson will be that the above steps have been followed.

Steps a) – c) are considered appropriate toward the resolution of all grievances. If there is the case where a parent feels uncomfortable meeting with the appropriate school staff member, then an agreed mediator should be sought. Example: another staff member, council member, pastor, or agreed professional.

In the rare event that a person feels steps a) – f) did not result in a satisfactory conclusion, the final point of call is to make contact with Lutheran Education SA, NT, WA in North Adelaide.

Neither the Minister for Education nor the Department for Education has any power to directly intervene in any complaints relating to the operations of a non-government school.

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It is important that these grievances are kept **confidential**, and although at times you may wish to seek support from friends or an advocate, it is very important to do this with discretion.

When the matter is discussed in the student's hearing, it is important that the student understands that you have **confidence** that the issue will be resolved **confidentially** at the school level.

Constructive criticism, appropriately shared and inline with this policy is welcomed.

Denigration or defamation of the school, teacher or principal, either verbally or in writing does not support the child's education as it undermines **trust and confidence**. Comments on social media are likewise not appropriate. The school can only deal with issues that are raised in the ways outlined above. If we do not receive information then we assume that all is well.

In the event that a parent persists in airing grievances in an inappropriate manner, the parent(s) will be required to attend a meeting with the principal and/or chair of council. Consultation by the principal and/or chairperson for the benefit of maintaining confidence, trust and confidentiality, will occur and this policy will be highlighted as an expectation for all.

Due to the importance that St Paul Lutheran School places on the building and maintenance of positive community relationships, repeated deviation from policy may result in the termination of enrolment from St Paul Lutheran School.

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