



St Michael's
Lutheran Primary School

GRIEVANCE POLICY

JANUARY 30 2017

Version	2	
Publication Date	Feb 2012	
Review Date	January 30 2017	
Responsibility	Principal	
Approved by	School Council	Date: 28 March 2017

Related School Policies and Procedures

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Bullying and Harassment Policy • Codes of Conduct: Staff, Volunteers, Students 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pastoral Care Program
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1. Scope

Lutheran Schools are Christ-centred where individuals should feel safe to express their points of view openly, honestly, constructively and in a spirit of love. St Paul’s analogy of the church as a human body (1 Cor 12:12-27) serves well as a picture of all members actively working together for the common good.

From time to time concerns regarding educational, behavioural or school environment issues may arise. For this reason, St. Michael’s Lutheran School has developed this policy to work through unresolved situations, or where an action or decision is considered to be unfair or inappropriate. This is the reality of sin and our inability to live in perfect harmony with one another. However, through God’s grace and forgiveness, and by the guidance of the Holy Spirit, we strive to reconcile differences and resolve all conflict amicably.

Therefore, it is important to us that issues or concerns that parents may have regarding their child’s education are discussed and a positive resolution reached by all parties concerned.

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

This policy guides all grievances within the school environment and should be viewed in light of the existing LSA Enterprise Bargaining Agreement when relating to staff grievances.

Furthermore, the Minister for Education nor the Department for Education has any power to directly intervene in any complaint relating to the operations of a non-government school.

2. Definition

A **grievance** is generally considered to be a more formal complaint about any act, behaviour, omission, situation or decision that someone thinks is unfair or unjustified.

Grievances can occur when a person complains that an action or decision has been taken (or not taken) at the school and may contravene a relevant Act, Regulation or Order, infringe upon the principles of merit and equity, or is otherwise unreasonable.

A **concern** is generally considered to be less formal than a grievance. Schools may have in place appropriate mechanisms, and have provided guidance to students on how to effectively deal with any concerns that they may have.

3. Guiding Principles

The following principles and practices help guide the resolution of this grievance policy at St Michael's Lutheran School

- A Grievance Policy is underpinned by a commitment from all parties to maintain good pastoral relations.
- The focus for resolution of the concern and grievance is to be upon an issue, not an individual.
- All individuals are to be treated fairly and impartially.
- All individuals have the right to present their case fully and openly, and without fear of retribution.
- Concerns and grievance issues are to be dealt with one at a time.
- Resolution of any concern or grievance are to be achieved as quickly as possible.
- Grievance resolution involve the minimum number of people.
- Parties are encouraged to resolve the matter together in the first instance.
- No one will be victimised as a result of lodging a formal grievance.

4. Procedure

The following process is to be used to address concerns:

1. The preferable first action is to make an appointment to talk to the person whom the grievance concerns. Make sure the relevant facts are available. When making the appointment let the person know what subject you wish to discuss, as this will facilitate the process. This meeting will aim for resolution or a plan for ongoing dialogue to reach a satisfactory conclusion. If the issue raised is still unresolved, it is important that this is stated at the conclusion of the meeting.
2. If the issues are not resolved, make an appointment with the Principal or the delegated authority. Let them know the grievance to be discussed, as this will facilitate the process.
3. Meet with the Principal or the delegated authority. Results of this meeting may include the following.
 - the situation is monitored or resolved
 - further discussions with the people involved (eg. Principal and teacher)
 - outside support for the child, family or staff member may be sought.
4. If there is still dissatisfaction with the outcome of the meeting, phone or write to the Principal to express concerns. If the school does not receive further information it is reasonable for the issue to be considered resolved.
5. If after steps 1 - 4 you are still dissatisfied, inform the Chairperson of School Council in writing who will work to resolve the situation. The expectation of the Chairperson of School Council will be that the above steps have been followed.

5. Trust and Confidentiality

Grievances are best dealt with when there is a high level of confidentiality and trust between the parties involved. Criticism of the parties concerned undermines trust and confidence and could adversely affect the resolution of the grievance. The school can only deal with grievances that are raised in the ways outlined above.