



Arndell

Anglican College

Policy and Protocols and Guidance for Grievance

Staff and management at Arndell work collaboratively to create a high quality educational environment in a climate of trust and respect between professionals and between parents and professionals.

Implicit in a set of protocols of this kind is the responsibility of love and care that all Christian people have towards each other.

Statement of College Belief:

Arndell College is of the belief that we nurture a staff professional culture that is prayerful and relational. We believe that through our vision we create policy that is open and respectful.

Basic Assumptions / Basic Principles

This policy is based on a number of fundamental principles.

- Natural justice must be exercised in resolving any dispute or complaint. This requires that both parties receive a fair hearing and that the final decision is made without bias.
- The resolution to a dispute or complaint must exhaust all reasonable attempts at conciliation prior to an imposed arbitrated decision.
- Individual cases must be examined on their own merits.
- Resolutions must appropriately balance the principles of justice and compassion.
- Appropriate confidentiality must be respected by all parties.
- The Deputy Headmaster has the responsibility to attempt to resolve a dispute or complaint with the parties directly involved at the local level.
- Parties may appeal to the Headmaster the decision made by the Deputy Headmaster.
- On a matter relating to the Headmaster the complainant writes directly to the Chair of the College Council.

A grievance or dispute is understood to refer to a serious problem a staff member has with his or her colleague, his or her supervisor, an executive staff member or the Head of the College.

Procedures: Complaints from Parents

Implicit in this policy and procedures document is an understanding that all matters will be treated in a manner appropriate.

- Initially a phone call may take place and a parent may wish to express a concern with respect to a staff member or an issue with another aspect of the College.
- The parent will be asked to put their concerns in writing and address these to the Deputy Headmaster.
- The Deputy Headmaster will contact the parent and discuss the matter and ascertain the depth and breadth of any enquiry.
- Should an enquiry be called for open lines of communication are to be maintained informing the parent of a specific timeline.
- An investigation must take place to ascertain the severity of the complaint or if the complaint is unfounded. Procedural fairness will be expected at all times.
- If founded or within the bounds of probability the following will occur. Depending upon the nature of the complaint either the Deputy Headmaster or the Head of Department (HoD), Head of Middle School (HoMS), Head of Senior School HOSS, or Head of Junior School (HOJS) will be delegated to ascertain facts.
- When findings are collated the Deputy Headmaster will inform the staff member of these and then determine, with the Head of Department, an appropriate course of action.
- The parent will be notified that an investigation has taken place and the outcome of the investigation. This may be communicated either by email, phone or in person.
- The details of the persons interviewed or the content will not be made available to the parent. However if founded the parent will be informed of the process put in place to improve the professional standing of the staff member and his or her relationship with the child.
- An appropriate Risk Assessment will be put in place should the need arise.
- If unfounded the parent will be contacted by the Deputy Headmaster and the reasons why explained.
- A parent can, if they wish, communicate with the Headmaster if they are not satisfied with the outcome.
- If they wish to take this further then a written letter to the Chair of the College Council can be sent.
- Matters of Reportable Conduct will be investigated by qualified staff. At this time the Head of Middle School and the Deputy Headmaster are accredited to undertake these investigations. A matter of reportable conduct is investigated with the support and guidance of the Association of Independent Schools – Child Protection Unit.

Staff v Staff or Staff v Head Complaint

- The resolution of a dispute or complaint, in the first instance, should be undertaken between the immediate parties involved. All care and consideration should be exhibited between both parties even if a resolution cannot be attained.
- Should the immediate parties involved fail to reach a resolution the matter is brought in writing to the Headmaster who will direct this to the Deputy Headmaster. The Deputy Headmaster is responsible for undertaking a procedure to resolve any dispute or complaint within the school.
- This procedure will only be initiated following a written complaint addressed to the Head
- The Deputy Headmaster shall ensure that the dispute is made clear by the complainant to the staff member and in writing. Dependent on the outcome, said records may be discarded.
- The Deputy Headmaster shall ensure that records are maintained throughout the proceedings in accordance with Privacy Legislation.
- The Head may call upon an outside mediation to assist in the resolution of a dispute or complaint.
- Based on the findings of the Deputy Headmaster a recommendation is put to the Head. The Head makes a decision based on the facts established.
- Any party may appeal the Head's decision to the Chair of the College Council.
- The parties of the dispute will be notified of the findings of the appeal.
- Where a dispute or complaint involves the Head the matter shall be referred in writing directly to the Chair of School Council.

Procedures: Staff

- Concern or complaint is brought to the attention of the staff member. Depending on the nature of the concern in the first instance it could be a staff member to a staff member with no third party.
- If the concern requires intervention, in the form of a third party, then the person brings the concern to the Deputy Headmaster
- A meeting will be arranged between the Deputy Headmaster and the person concerned to outline the concern / complaint.
- A meeting will then occur between the Deputy Headmaster and the two parties. At this point it is hoped that a resolution will occur.
- If a resolution is attained then a letter will be sent to the various parties outlining the concern and the resolution.
- If there is no resolution then it may be deemed necessary by the Deputy Headmaster that an enquiry be undertaken. At this point the Headmaster is informed.

- After the enquiry the Deputy Headmaster puts in writing the findings and recommendations. This is issued to the two parties.
- A meeting is called where the findings are discussed and hopefully a resolution attained.
- If no resolution then the AIS is notified and an external mediator contracted.
- The findings of the mediation process are discussed with the Deputy Headmaster and the Headmaster and a final decision arrived at.
- If the dispute is against the Headmaster then the Chair of the College Council is informed in writing. The Chair of Council then investigates the matter.
- Where no resolution occurs then all documentation is removed.