



# Arndell

## Anglican College

### **Policy, Protocols and Guidance for Grievance**

#### **Parents, Students and Staff**

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## 1 Policy

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.

## 2 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.***

## 3 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 Head of School 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 Head of School the decision made by the Deputy Head of School.
- On a matter relating to the Head of School 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.

## 4 Procedures: Complaints from Parents

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

The College holds many meetings throughout the year and we encourage parents to attend these and to meet with staff.

There will be times when parents need to contact the College on an individual basis and we also encourage parents to follow the simple process.

#### **4.1 Informal Parental Concerns and Grievances**

- In the Prep to Year 6 area the class teacher would be your first point of reference.
- Years 7 – 12 the Homeroom Tutor or the Subject teacher would be your start point.
- If urgent then in the Prep to Year 6 area the Stage Co-ordinator would be next.
- In years 7 – 12 the students Head of House or in relation to a subject specific concern then the Head of that Department.
- Clearly matters that require significant intervention in the Prep to Year 6 area would be addressed with the Deputy Head or Head of Junior School.
- In Years 7 – 12 matters would be addressed initially by the Head of Middle School (Years 7 – 9) or the Head of Senior School (Years 10 – 12)

#### **4.2 Formal Parental Grievances**

Matters of reportable or significant risk or those unresolved should be addressed to the Deputy Head (Prep – 12) or the Head of School.

If the grievance is against the Head of School then the matter must be referred to the Chair of The College Council

**Note: Grievances made anonymously, whilst noted, will not be dealt with.**

#### **5 Parental Complaint Process:**

- 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 Head of School.
- The Deputy Head of School 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 Head of School 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 Head of School 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 Head of School and the reasons why explained.
- A parent can, if they wish, communicate with the Head of School 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 Head of School 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.

## **6 Student Concerns and Grievances:**

### **6.1 Informal Process**

The College recognizes the right of an individual student to feel free to make a complaint and will ensure that every effort to resolve the complaint in an open and fair manner.

Students should bring concerns to staff members they are comfortable with noting that, depending on the concern, it may be looked at by more senior staff.

Primary School Prep to Year 6

- Class Teacher
- College Chaplain or Assistant
- Stage Co-ordinator
- Head or Deputy Head of Primary

High School Year 7 to Year 12

- College Leaders
- Class Teacher

- Homeroom Tutor
- Head of House
- Head of Department
- College Nurses
- Head of Middle School
- Head of Senior School
- Deputy Head of School
- Head of School

## **6.2 Formal Process**

A formal complaint in a detailed written form. A full account of the nature of the complaint. Addressed to the Deputy Head of School.

The matter will be investigated fully and a resolution found.

If mediation is required then that process will be undertaken by the Deputy Head of School

## **7 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 Head of School who will direct this to the Deputy Head of School. The Deputy Head of School 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 Head of School 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 Head of School 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 Head of School 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.

## **8 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 Head of School
- A meeting will be arranged between the Deputy Head of School and the person concerned to outline the concern / complaint.
- A meeting will then occur between the Deputy Head of School 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 Head of School that an inquiry be undertaken. At this point the Head of School is informed.
- After the inquiry the Deputy Head of School 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 Head of School and the Head of School and a final decision arrived at.
- If the dispute is against the Head of School 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. The Head of School will then refer parties to the Code of Conduct and there will be an expectation that this is adhered to.



## COMPLAINTS FORM

This form should be used when a person wishes to make a complaint against the College or a member of the College Community.

Please complete the Complaints Form and return it marked:

For the private attention of:  (please circle)	Head/Deputy Head of Junior School	Head of Middle School	Head of Senior School	Deputy Head of School	Head of School
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Acknowledgement of this complaint will be sent within 2 working days (during College terms).

Date you are lodging this form:		
Your details: Please only provide the contact details that you are happy for our staff to use to contact you		
Family Name:		
Given Name/s:		
Address:		
Phone Numbers:	Mobile:	Home:
Email:		

Relationship with the School (please tick)

- Current Student                      Current Parent/Guardian   
 Former Student                      Former Parent/Guardian   
 Other (please specify) \_\_\_\_\_

*If you are a part of our School Community, have you (please tick)*

- Read the Protocols and Guidelines for Grievance    Yes                       No   
 Discussed the issue with those directly involved    Yes                       No

