Grievance Policy

Pilgrim School

Title	Grievance Policy
Version	1.2
Current Date of Last Review	2026
Proposed Review Date	2030
Related Legislation and Regulatory Requirements	• Education and Children's Services Act 2019 (SA) • Education and Children's Services Regulations 2020 (SA) • Equal Opportunity Act 1984 (SA) • Fair Work Act 2009 (Cth) • Work Health and Safety Act 2012 (SA) • Australian Human Rights Commission Act 1986 (Cth.)
Cross Sector Guidelines (SA)	
Related School Policies and Procedures	• Pilgrim School Enterprise Agreement • Statement of Faith • Child Safe Environments Policy and Code of Conduct • Enrolment Policy • Enrolment Application Form • Enrolment Agreement • Work Health and Safety Policy • Life and Conduct Policy • Vision, Mission and Values Statements
Responsibility	Leadership Team and School Board
Status	ACTIVE
Approved by	Leadership Team and School Board

Date	**Version**	**Revision Description – Prepared/ Reviewed**
2017	1.0	Julie Wicks
2024	1.1	Andrew Edmondson
2026	1.2	Andrew Edmondson

Introduction

It is the desire of Pilgrim School that children, staff, parents and visitors to our school enjoy positive, meaningful and valued communication and relationships. This will enable children to have a safe, positive environment allowing for a greater chance of success.

Pilgrim School is committed to:

- ensuring the School is a safe, fair, and just place
- ensuring all individuals are treated fairly and impartially
- actively promoting the development of positive personal relationships with genuine Godly respect of one another
- being proactive to minimise the incidence of conflict
- supporting the right of every member of the School community to have his/her grievance listened to and understood, addressed objectively and fairly, and in a timely and responsible manner
- resolving matters in a non-threatening, respectful, and supportive manner with clarity and honesty
- bringing resolution and reconciliation.

The School sincerely seeks honest, constructive input, feedback, and suggestions for improvement. Furthermore, the School seeks the opportunity to work through and resolve any concerns any stakeholders may have about the School's services and activities.

- The School recognises the reality that errors, oversights, and misunderstandings occur and from this divisions and disputes can arise. As Christians, Pilgrim School specifically seeks to bring peace and harmony to any such situation and intentionally pursues resolution of such matters and thus reconciliation and restoration of relationships.
- The School commits to appropriate pastoral, educative, disciplinary, and legal responses to grievance related issues and incidents.
- All parties to a grievance are to approach the situation in a spirit of genuine respect, gentleness, and with the goal of resolution of the matter and reconciliation of relationship.
- All parties are expected to engage respectfully, honestly and constructively throughout the grievance process, including in written, verbal and electronic communications.

Resolution Principles

The prime resolution method adopted at Pilgrim School for grievances are the principles taught by Jesus in the Bible, specifically in Matthew 18: 15-17, in which Jesus directs us to speak first to a fellow Christian with whom we are in dispute. Within our School community we should always seek to speak directly with respect and intention to resolve the matter with any person with whom we have a difference. Then, if necessary, the matter is to be taken to the appropriate members of the School community who may be able to help assist in resolving the matter. If the matter is unable to be resolved in this manner, then more formal processes of resolution may be required, depending upon the circumstances.

In summary, complainants are encouraged to firstly and, where practicable, seek to resolve the complaint or concern informally. Formal procedures for the resolution of

such grievance matters will normally only be invoked when a matter cannot be resolved by informal means.

To constitute a formal grievance, it is a requirement that the particulars of the formal grievances be placed in writing addressed to the School representative managing the matter.

Where formal complaints occur, the School will decide the most appropriate method of dealing with the matter on a case by case basis. Any complaints against the method being applied by the School can be made to the Principal or his/her delegate, who is the final arbiter.

All parties are to act in good faith, exercise good judgement, be honest and open, focusing on the issue and not the person.

Pilgrim School seeks to develop and maintain a positive and collaborative relationship between home, school, and the community with stakeholders understanding that their opinion and any concerns are valued and can be raised without fear of repercussion. That is, complaints and concerns will be attended to with sensitively and without any threat of victimisation or discrimination.

It is highlighted that in the day-to-day life of the School, all students are free to approach their class teacher, home teacher, or Chaplain and Wellbeing staff about a grievance issue arising in day-to-day issues. Staff will make every effort to listen to and respond to any student complaints and concerns with sensitivity, objectivity, and promptness.

Pilgrim School will undertake the management of unresolved formal complaints/ grievances with integrity and objectivity. Depending on the circumstances this may involve measures including, but not limited to, honest and impartial investigation and assessment. The principles of procedural fairness i.e. natural justice – will be an important consideration throughout.

Students will ordinarily pursue a formal grievance process in conjunction with their parents/guardians.

Privacy will be respected at all times. It is pointed out that obviously interaction with various parties may be required in the evidence gathering process in order to fully and reliably establish the facts of the matter including the opportunity to discuss and respond to allegations, concerns etc. Therefore, it is important to note that communications and documents provided to the School may not always be able to be kept confidential. The School reserves the right to disclose details of the matter to other persons who in our opinion need to know them in order to facilitate resolution of the grievance matter.

Basic principles of positive grievance resolution involves all parties;

- striving to be peace-makers – seek a positive resolution
- keeping the matter confidential – as appropriate, talk to those concerned
- keeping the circle small – discourage gossip and involving others unnecessarily
- being straightforward – be honest about the situation
- being self-evaluating – be humble
- being forgiving – be loving and self-sacrificing, and actively seek restoration and move forward.

Pilgrim School's overarching approach is one of love, generosity, and grace to resolve the issue as far as practically possible. The School is willing to admit fault and seek reconciliation wherever a complaint against the School is found to have legitimacy.

Equally, this is to apply where another party in the matter is at fault. A restorative approach is to be adopted with an emphasis to "right the wrong" when that has been found to occur and reconciliation of the parties involved to go forward in love and unity.

Where necessary, the School may provide chaplaincy, pastoral, and wellbeing staff support.

All parties involved in complaints handling are required to maintain appropriate confidentiality, including in relation to handling and storing records.

The Principal or his/her delegate is to be involved in determining whether the School may be required to report a matter to relevant authorities such as SAPOL, Education Standards Board, or other relevant agencies if it relates to unlawful conduct or other potentially reportable matters required by legislation.

The Principal or delegate is responsible for determining the final outcome of a grievance, following consideration of the matter in accordance with this policy. Where a grievance directly relates to the Principal, the Chair of the School Board will determine the final outcome of the grievance, following consideration of the matter in accordance with this policy and the School's governance procedures. Disagreeing with the outcome of a grievance does not in itself constitute a grievance with the Principal and as such will not involve the Board Chair.

Anonymous complaints may be followed up to the extent possible but are limited in the extent to which they can be investigated or resolved. The ability, for example, for the School to adequately and completely conduct the investigative process and bring parties together may be inherently restricted by their anonymity and thus the School's goals of bringing resolution of the particular matter and restoration of relationships may not be able to occur. Complainants are therefore encouraged to identify themselves.

Parents/Guardians are respectfully reminded that the School employs experienced educators and other professionals who are well trained in making academic, disciplinary, extracurricular, pastoral, and wellbeing decisions every day. The School, while always taking into account the interests of the parent/guardian's child, must ultimately make decisions that take into account the interests of all students and stakeholders of Pilgrim School.

It is noted that neither the Minister for Education, Training and Skills nor the Department for Education, Training and Skills has a power to directly intervene in any complaints or concerns relating to the operation of a non-Government (i.e. private) school.

The School takes into account various matters and perspectives during the grievance process, including the interests of the parent/guardian's child as well as all other affected stakeholders. Even if some may not agree with the final outcome, it is essential that the final outcome/s resulting from the grievance process are respected, followed and adhered to by all parties.

Where a grievance process identifies ongoing concerns regarding respectful engagement, collaboration or conduct that impacts the wellbeing of students, staff or the wider school community, the School may consider whether those concerns have implications for the ongoing feasibility of enrolment, in accordance with the School's Enrolment Policy and Enrolment Agreement.

Definitions

A complaint or grievance is an expression of dissatisfaction made to the School about an educational and/or operational matter relating to services provided by the School or the behaviour or decisions of a staff member, contractor or volunteer, and may include misconduct.

A complaint can arise if a member of the School community believes, in good faith and with supporting documentation, that the School has, for example,

- Done something wrong.
- Failed to do something that it should have done.
- Acted unfairly, unreasonably, inappropriately, or unprofessionally.
- Significantly breached a School policy or procedure.

A complaint that concerns the behaviour of a staff member which may constitute reportable conduct will be addressed in accordance with the School's Child Protection Policy.

Complaints may also be in the form of a grievance between staff members about work matters.

Pilgrim School encourages the resolution of concerns at the lowest appropriate level through respectful, direct communication. The pathways below outline the usual process for raising and resolving grievances involving students, parents and staff. While most concerns are resolved informally, more formal processes may be used where necessary. In serious or urgent matters, steps may be bypassed in accordance with School policy.

Pilgrim School – Grievance Resolution Pathway

Purpose

Pilgrim School's Grievance Resolution Pathway supports respectful, timely and collaborative resolution of concerns at the lowest appropriate level.

All parties are expected to engage respectfully, honestly and constructively throughout the grievance process.

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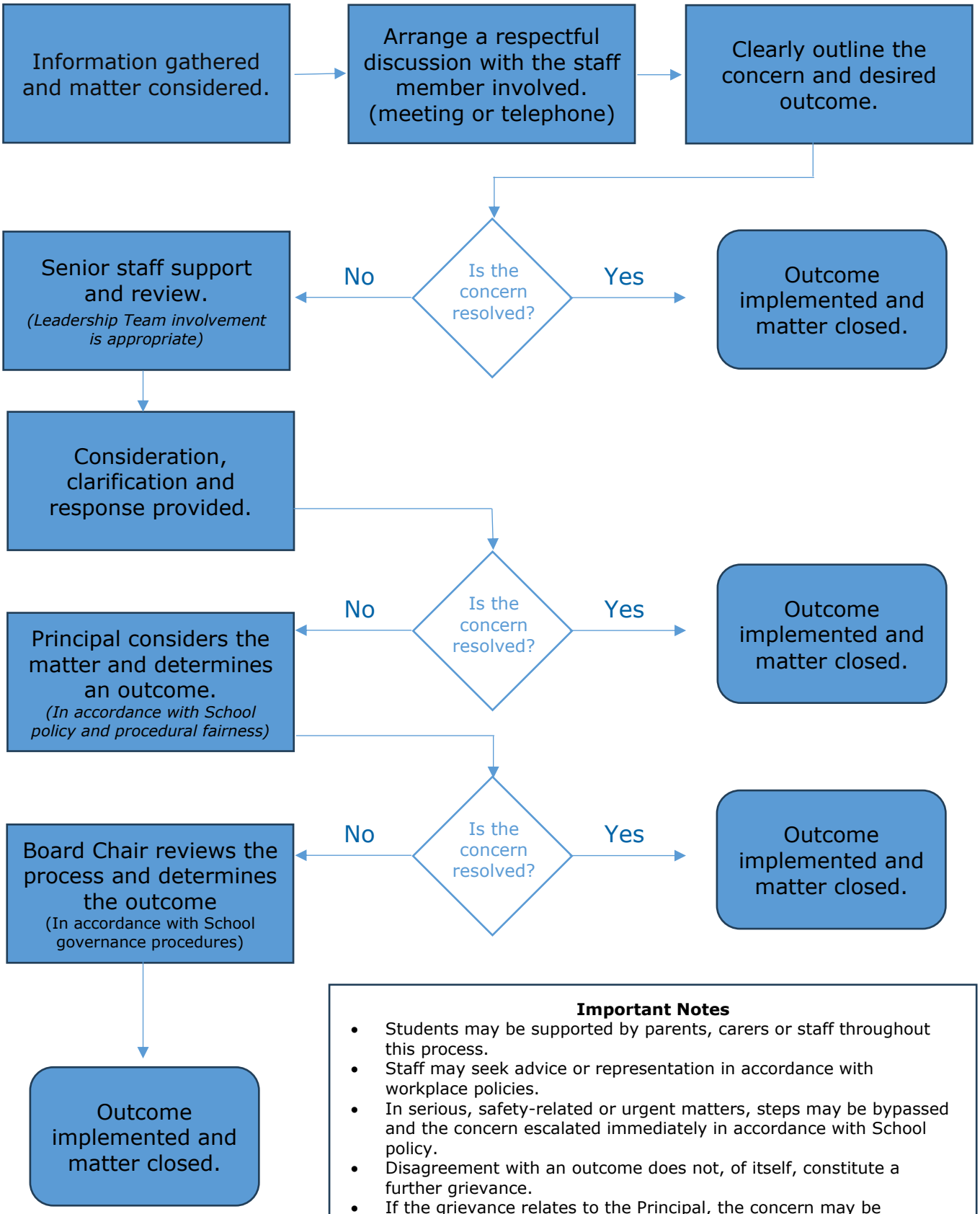

Important Notes

- Students may be supported by parents, carers or staff throughout this process.
- Staff may seek advice or representation in accordance with workplace policies.
- In serious, safety-related or urgent matters, steps may be bypassed and the concern escalated immediately in accordance with School policy.
- Disagreement with an outcome does not, of itself, constitute a further grievance.
- If the grievance relates to the Principal, the concern may be escalated directly to the Board Chair.