

1. Introduction

“In the Lutheran school the gospel is to inform all programs, relationships and activities” (LCA and its School statement). The love of God in Jesus Christ is to govern all that is done, in response to this love, people in the school community are directed to their fellow human beings. Where they love others, they love Him. Christ’s promise is that whatever is done for others is done for Him. Informed and transformed by God’s creative, redemptive and sanctifying love, God’s people are concerned with the total needs of their fellow human beings (Industrial Relations and the Lutheran school).

2. Rationale

Positive, clear and effective processes for resolving grievances between members of the College assists in the building of strong relationships, dispels anxiety, and ultimately provides students with an enhanced learning environment.

The policy also enables ongoing analysis of the root causes of complaints, thereby forming part of the College’s risk management process and facilitating improvement.

3. Scope

This policy applies to all parents and guardians of College students and staff.

4. Policy Statement

“Lutheran schools seek to be places of physical, social and psychological safety for all where legal requirements are fulfilled, and where caring, cooperative and respectful relationships contribute to supportive communities that reflect the values of the gospel of Jesus Christ and where there is a focus on love, justice, compassion, forgiveness, service, humility, courage, hope, quality, appreciation and restoration” (LEA Valuing Safe Communities, 2008).

Good News Lutheran College recognises that the majority of complaints will be resolved at the first point of contact as an example of positive working relationships.

Good News Lutheran College is committed to:

- Optimal educational outcomes, preventing discrimination and provision of harmonious and cohesive working and learning environments within a culture which values people

- Responding to complaints with an attitude of grace
- Using the complaints process as a means for community members to contribute to the positive improvement of the College's services
- Managing complaints consistently, confidentially and in a timely manner, while reflecting the mission, vision and core values of the College.

5. Implementation

Complaint resolution processes rely on people acting in good faith, exercising good judgement, being honest and open, focussing on the issues not the person and communicating in a courteous and respectful manner.

All are encouraged to direct complaints related to GNLC to the College. The Grievance Policy (Parents and Guardians) can be accessed by parents via [our LMS, Schoolbox or the College website](#).

Any complaint should be received in the following manner:

- Being respectful and helpful
- Not being defensive and apportioning blame
- Remaining positive
- Not perceiving anger as a personal attack
- Reflecting the mission and vision statements and core values of the College.

6. Definitions

- A *complainant* is any person making a complaint
- A *respondent* is the person(s) alleged to have been explicitly involved in the act or acts to which the complaint relates
- A *receiver* is the person with whom the complaint is lodged
- An *expression of concern* is a comment made by a person who is not requiring a response. Action may still be required however under the terms of the policy statement.
- A *complaint* is an expression of dissatisfaction with a service provided, a decision made or action taken
- *Discrimination* is unfair treatment of others because of prejudice about ability, race, gender or religion etc.
- *Principal* refers to the Principal or their delegate

7. Process

- Please refer to [Appendix 1 for Making a Complaint](#).
- Please refer to [Appendix 2 for Processing a Complaint](#).
- Please refer to [Appendix 2 for Process for Staff](#)

8. Review

Approval date:	January 2024
Effective date:	January 2024
Next review date:	2027
Policy Owner:	Principal
Approving authority:	Principal
Related documents	
Companion documents:	Child Safety Code of Conduct
Supersedes:	PN 12.03.02 July 2020

APPENDIX 1

Making a Complaint

What is the event that gave rise to the complaint?	Who is the most appropriate person?
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Award of academic mark, grade or other recognition • Behaviour 	Classroom teacher – always first point of contact ↓ If not resolved: Year Level Coordinator/Learning Area Coordinator ↓ If not resolved: Head of Years or Head of Campus ↓ If not resolved: Principal
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Financial matters • Equipment, Resources, Maintenance of grounds 	Business Manager ↓ If not resolved: Principal
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Protection and support of children 	Year Level Coordinator Chaplain/Pastor/Counsellor ↓ If not resolved: Head of Years ↓ If not resolved: Principal
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Discrimination 	Head of Years/Head of People and Culture ↓ If not resolved: Principal
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Conflict between staff and student/parent • Conduct class volunteer 	Head of Years/ Head of Campus /Pastor ↓ If not resolved: Principal

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Staff misconduct/Conduct of specific staff member 	Principal
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Process and administration (legislation, policies, procedures and practices) 	Head of People and Culture ↓ If not resolved: Principal
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Serious Misconduct/ Reportable Conduct (includes sexual offences or sexual misconduct, assault, ill-treatment or neglect of a child or young person or any behaviour that causes psychological or emotional harm to a child or young person or any offences relating to a failure to report or failure to reduce or remove a risk of child abuse) 	Child Safety Officers / Head of People and Culture The Principal must be notified.

APPENDIX 2

Processing a Complaint

The **MOST APPROPRIATE PERSON** to deal with the complaint will then:

Step 1: Receive the complaint

- Contact the complainant as early as possible and within 3 working days, to acknowledge the complaint and proceed with complaint handling process
- Listen to the issues being raised and *identify the events* that gave rise to the complaint
- Acknowledge the complainant's feelings and thank them for communicating the issues
- If the complainant does not require a response, then the complaint is considered an *expression of concern* and then evaluated and determined whether an action is required or not
- If the complainant requires a response, and the complaint is not able to be managed immediately, arrange for a mutually agreed time to proceed

Step 2: Manage the complaint

- Summarise the issues and clarify your understanding of the situation to ensure its accuracy
- What does the complainant want to happen - Ask, "What is it you hope we can do to resolve this?"
- Dispel any unrealistic or misconceived expectations and explain any limits of your powers
- Inform complainant of their responsibilities:
 - Be honest and open throughout the process. Provide all known information at the outset
 - Maintain confidentiality
- Document complaint, discussion and subsequent action plan
- Action plans should be reassessed at a mutually agreed time
- If the complaint remains unresolved or without an agreed action plan, the complaint is referred to the next appropriate person

Step 3: Refer to Head of Years/Principal for review (if appropriate)

The Head of Years/Principal must contact the complainant as early as possible to acknowledge the complaint and proceed with the complaint handling process.

Thereafter the complainant and the respondent (if applicable) should be involved in the process and informed of the progress.

The Head of Years/Principal takes further action, which may include:

- An initial meeting to attempt to resolve the complaint. Notes of the meeting will be documented.
- An investigation of the complaint - collect and analyse information and facts relevant to the issue
- Consulting the relevant policies on issues that relate to the complaint and legal requirements
- A request that the complaint be submitted in writing by the complainant
- Making a timely decision on the complaint and informing the complainant and other involved persons
- Referring the complaint externally. Options may include:
 - Director of Lutheran Schools, LEVNT
 - An agency outside the Lutheran Schools system

All documentation to be retained by the College in accordance with the Privacy Policy and can be used to review College practices and policies.

Step 4: Review of decision

If the complainant or respondent is not satisfied with the decision/outcome, they are encouraged to:

- Discuss it further with the Principal
- Follow other formal avenues available to them

Step 5: Review of complaint handling process

All complaints that have been referred to the Principal are to be detailed on the College Complaints Register and reviewed on completion for 'lessons learnt' for best practice.

APPENDIX 3

Process for Staff

