

Complaints and Grievance Resolution Policy

Updated: January 2018

Responsibility: Principal and Deputy Principal

Rationale

Georges River Grammar has both a desire and a responsibility to ensure that high standards of conduct are maintained by staff and students at all times. To provide a harmonious, positive and productive school environment that aims to resolve grievances fairly, efficiently, promptly and in accordance with requirements. Most importantly, the School aims to carry out all aspects associated with complaints and grievances according to the principles of procedural fairness. The resolution of all alleged complaints and grievances associated with the school will be dealt with under this policy.

Policy

All members of the Georges River Grammar community have the right to work, learn and collaborate in a safe environment and to be treated with dignity and respect. The School provides members of the GRG community these procedures through which they can have their grievance addressed. All members of the GRG community have the right to use the procedures in this policy if they believe that they have a legitimate grievance that can be dealt with under these procedures.

Procedures:

- Georges River Grammar seeks to provide a positive, harmonious and productive environment.
- It is important that all formal complaints, grievances, ensuing procedures and outcomes are fully documented. All formal complaints and grievances that are reported to the Principal will be recorded on a Complaints and Grievance Incident Report Form (available in this section of the Staff Handbook).
- Complainants are encouraged to lodge formal grievances/complaints in serious cases or when unwelcome behaviour persists despite advice to a respondent that his/her behaviour is causing problems and must cease. Formal grievances/complaints should be lodged with the Principal, using the appropriate form, which should be completed as accurately as possible. If the Principal is an inappropriate person then the documentation should be lodged with the Georges River Grammar Board.
- The rights of complainants and respondents will be upheld at all times, including the use of fair, confidential, impartial and dignified resolution procedures.
- It is the Principal's responsibility to provide a healthy and positive school environment that is free from discrimination and harassment. In doing so, the Principal must ensure that all staff are aware of their rights and responsibilities.
- The Principal is required to use local grievances/complaints resolution procedures, where appropriate, for resolving grievances/complaints in relation to issues that fall within the school's area of responsibility. All cases of serious misconduct – sexual offences, criminal charges, or other serious incidents – must instead be referred to the appropriate authority as well.
- It is incumbent upon the Principal to act where unacceptable conduct is observed or brought to their attention.

- A complainant may at any stage choose to take their grievance/complaint directly to an external agency such as the Anti-Discrimination Board of NSW, Safework NSW, the Australian Human Rights Commission or the NSW Ombudsman.
- The Principal may choose to respond to a grievance/complaint through an informal process in cases where the grievance/complaint is minor, the complainant wishes the matter to be dealt with informally or the grievance/complaint has arisen from lack of or unclear communication.
- Formal processes will be used when informal processes haven't been successful, a complainant seeks a formal process, or the Principal believes the grievance/complaint warrants formal investigation.

The formal process involves:

1. Investigating the grievance/complaint including formal interviews, written statements, conveying the details of the complaint to the respondent in writing providing the opportunity for a written response.
2. Dismissing or accepting the grievance/complaint. Acceptance may involve verbal or written warnings, conciliation or counselling etc.
3. Preparation of a detailed confidential report.
4. Monitoring of the situation.

Parties dissatisfied with the process can appeal to the previously mentioned external agencies or the Georges River Grammar Board.

All matters must be treated with utmost confidentiality, and professional respect at all times.

Grievances/complaints occur when an employee complains that an action or decision has been taken (or not taken) that he/she believes to be a breach of a relevant Act, Regulation or Order, infringes upon the principles of merit and equity, or is otherwise unreasonable.

Undisclosed or unresolved grievances/complaints create distress and can be a violation of a person's rights.

Resolution of grievances/complaints at a local level, where appropriate, is the desired outcome.

Employees may choose to resolve grievances/complaints personally by talking with, or writing to the person whose behaviour is of concern.

Employees may choose to seek assistance in resolving grievances/complaints, including assistance from the Principal. In such circumstances the Principal may use local grievances/complaints resolution procedures including private discussions, mediation, monitoring, training or counselling.

DATE OF INCIDENT: _____ **DATE INCIDENT WAS REPORTED:** _____

LOCATION OF INCIDENT:

DETAILS OF INCIDENT: Please be as specific as possible. Include details of all persons involved in the incident; all dialogue, including what each participant said.

**TO BE COMPLETED BY PRINCIPAL/DESIGNATE:
ACTION TO BE TAKEN:**

RESULT OF ACTION:

FUTURE ACTIONS:
