



## **St Peter's Coleambally**

*A Community of Faith*

### **COMPLAINTS AND SUGGESTIONS POLICY**

#### **VISION STATEMENT**

**St Peter's is a community of faith  
built on the rock of Gospel Values empowering the individual to  
contribute positively to an ever changing world.**

This Complaints and Suggestion Policy reflects the school's commitment to the Wagga Diocese Vision and Mission statement.

#### **Purpose**

The purpose of this policy is to develop procedures to help build and maintain a safe and supportive environment as it:

- Encourages early intervention in issues before they damage working relationships
- Ensures that behaviours destructive to positive relationships (such as bullying, harassment and discrimination) are identified as being unacceptable and are appropriately managed
- Ensures that complaints are dealt with consistently
- Enables a school community to identify patterns of unacceptable conduct and enables prevention strategies to be developed and implemented
- Encourages individuals, with support, to resolve issues directly without third party intervention, and reduce the likelihood that external agencies will need to be involved.

#### **Rationale**

St Peter's is committed to providing a safe and supportive environment. This is characterised by fairness, mutual trust, respect and reconciliation. A safe and supportive environment is developed when all members of a school community promote open communication, tolerance and positive relationships and embrace respectful, just and transparent processes.

To promote positive and effective relationships, all staff are encouraged to recognise the distinction between personal and professional conflict so that appropriate relationships can be maintained, even where there might be professional disagreement.

Complaints and suggestions can be opportunities for growth and improvement. Complaints, as well as compliments and other constructive feedback, create opportunities for a school to improve its services and prevent future problems.

#### **Before making a formal complaint:**

If a problem or concern that arises within a school cannot be resolved with the person involved with the issue, then it should be raised with an appropriate staff member with a view to discussing the issue and seeking resolution of any problems or concerns.

#### **COMPLAINTS HANDLING PROCEDURE**

The purpose of this procedure is to offer a process by which employees/students/parents /community members can have complaints addressed.

Some complaints, because of the seriousness of their nature, are referred immediately to the Principal.

**1 Approach the person involved**

**2 Contact the School** - Where you feel you cannot approach the person directly or you are not happy with their response or reaction, then explain the problem to the principal at the school.

**3 Contact the Catholic Education Diocese of Wagga Wagga** – if it is felt that the other party cannot be approached directly or response or reaction is not satisfactory, or it is felt that the issue cannot be raised with either the designated school person or the school Principal, then the Catholic Education Diocese of Wagga Wagga (CEDWW) can be contacted

Once a complaint has been made to the designated school or CEDWW person, that person then considers whether there are any reasons why he/she should not proceed to deal with the complaint.

The designated person interviews you or organises another appropriate person to interview you. During this interview it will be explained what will happen if the complaint is found to be supported by the evidence, or if it is found to be not supported by the evidence. Advice will be given for further assistance or support.

The designated person takes a written record of the complaint.

The designated person will speak to the person about whom the complaint is made to hear their side of the story. Any witnesses will also be interviewed.

The importance of confidentiality will be stressed to all parties and consequences of a breach of confidentiality will be outlined. The designated person will relay what the other people said and discuss what should be done to sort out the problem.

**Review**

If the complaint remains unresolved it will be reviewed by either the Principal, Service Leader or Director of Catholic Schools. A final decision as to the outcome of the complaint will be made.

**Record Keeping**

Records of complaints, interviews and other documentation relating to a complaint are kept at the school in a separate secure complaints file. If the complaint is about a person, documents are placed in a restricted access file.

A register of complaints and suggestions will be kept at the school and the CEDWW Office.

**In conjunction with this complaints procedure**, notice is taken of relevant legislation, guidelines, policies and procedures pertinent to the issue, including for instance:

- o Enrolment Policy and Procedures
- o Suspension, Exclusion and Expulsion Policy and Procedures
- o Anti-Discrimination Act 1977
- o Child Protection Legislation Amendment Act 2003
- o Children and Young Persons (Care and Protection) Act 1998
- o Commission for Children and Young People Act 1998
- o Education Legislation Amendment (Staff) Act 2006
- o Government and Relation Appeals Tribunal Act 1980
- o Occupational Health and Safety Act 2000
- o Ombudsman Act 1974
- o Protected Disclosures Act 1994
- o Firearms Act 1996
- o Prohibited Weapons Act 1989

St Peter's School adheres to the CEDWW 'Complaints and Suggestions Policy' and 'Complaints Handling Procedure' 2007

This policy was reviewed in 2018