



St Joseph's Memorial School Grievance Policy

“Catholic schools educate young people in all dimensions of life by developing the whole person”.

Definition

Grievance refers to a formal complaint made on the basis of something that somebody feels is unfair or unjust.

Rationale

At St Joseph’s Memorial we believe safety, a basic human right, is a pre-requisite for our school to be able to carry out our mission to educate.

Children have the right to be emotionally and physically safe at all times. Although the protection and safety of children is fundamentally the responsibility of families, we endeavour to support this premise.

We base our policy on the Gospel values of freedom and justice for all and an underlying belief in their dignity and uniqueness.

Catholic schools operate in a wider community context where legal requirements exist and where they have an obligation to students.

Principles

The safety and wellbeing of the child must be the paramount consideration in every situation:

- The dignity of the human person is fundamental to Catholic teaching.
- Children’s development is dependent on the quality of care provided by the significant adults in their lives.
- School must be a place where children feel safe.
- Every student has a right to request a meeting with the Principal.

Implementation

As part of our school programme we provide opportunities for children to develop and appreciate their uniqueness.

Curriculum

The spiritual focus of our school is brought to the fore in Religious Education lessons. Children are encouraged to share their thoughts, feelings and search for the truth.

At St Joseph's Memorial children are explicitly taught –

- How to solve problems.
- How to get help if needed to resolve problems.
- How to differentiate between those problems that need help from an adult and those that can be resolved without adult intervention.

GRIEVANCES FROM PARENTS

Not Sure Who to Ask?

All general enquiries and referrals can be addressed through the Front Office. Below is a list of people associated with particular areas:

Principal: Adam Slater

Assistant Principal Religious Identity and Mission Grace Vassallo-Wakefield

Leader of Learning: Nick Ryan

Inclusive Education Coordinator: Toni Benci

School Fees: Nicki Cambourn

School Front Office Staff: Antoniette Salandra and Mary Fantasia

School Board: Brett Thompson

Physical Education and Sport: Will Dacombe-Bird

School Chaplain: Mary Aquilina

Library: Julie Moore

If you have a concern

Some helpful hints from Barry Dwyer, author of “Parents Teachers Partners”

A parent may be aware of what seems to be an act of significant insensitivity or even injustice, an inappropriate punishment or inadequate learning opportunities—and feel that he or she must do something about it.

Here are some ideas that may be worth considering when about to approach the school or a teacher with a problem of some kind.

1. Keep an open mind. You may not have all the facts. The first task is to seek clarification.
2. Don't begin your search for a solution by sending an angry letter to the teacher or principal. The normal human response is to be defensive.
3. Make an appointment, or at least think carefully about the best time to make contact. For example, it would be most inappropriate to interrupt a class or to catch the teacher while he or she is busy teaching or organising learning tasks in the morning.
4. Approach the teacher or principal in a friendly manner. Adopt the attitude that there is a misunderstanding we need to clear up or a problem we need to solve together.
5. Begin by expressing an overall appreciation of the work being done, or at least, an understanding of the difficulties.
6. Remember the challenge is for two people, with shared hopes for this particular student, to solve a problem in a way which benefits everyone.
7. Try to avoid "going over people's head" with a complaint. Once you have done this it is very hard to re-establish a trusting relationship.
8. If, after a little time, it appears everything has been sorted out, you might write a note of appreciation to the teacher or principal and offer continuing support. This strengthens the partnership between home and school.

Health Programme

In our Health program, we cover Made in the Image of God (MITIOG) and may include other programs such as Feeling Safe. These programs endeavour to educate the whole child, providing them with information and strategies to support their own welfare.

Mandated Notification

As staff with children, we realise our responsibilities as Mandated Notifiers.

AGENCIES

The following organisations may be of assistance to children/families experiencing difficulties:

- Child & Adolescent Mental Health Services
- CentaCare
- Women's & Children's Hospital
- Department of Child Protection

CONCLUSION

At all times we promote models of behaviour based on respect and consideration of the child and in congruence with our Behaviour Education and Personal Responsibility policy.

Revision Record

Document Title	St Joseph's Memorial Inclement Weather Procedure
Document Type	Procedure
Document Date	May 2023
Document Status	Approved
Document Owner	SJMS Leadership
Review Date	May 2026