



ST. JOAN OF ARC
CATHOLIC PRIMARY SCHOOL

Grievance Policy

Introduction

In a Catholic school, partnerships between students, teachers and parents are important to educational success. An atmosphere of trust and openness is essential. We need to be able to talk to each other when we have concerns, so that a solution can be worked out.

While we accept our responsibility to consult, and to communicate both clearly and effectively with the community, community members also have an obligation to read notices and newsletters, to attend Parent Nights, and to seek clarification when required.

St Joan of Arc want to work in partnership with all stakeholders. If a person has a current complaint, criticism or concern, they are expected the follow the guidelines below.

Guidelines

Concerns or complaints will be able to be resolved by following the process below:

Concerns regarding issues with children

1. The concern or complaint shall be discussed with the teacher.
2. The concern or complaint shall be discussed with the Principal.
3. The concern or complaint shall be put in writing to the Parish Priest.
4. If no progress, the concern or complaint will be put in writing to Catholic Education Melbourne.

Concerns regarding issues with staff members

1. The concern or complaint shall be discussed with the teacher.
2. The concern or complaint shall be discussed with the Principal.
3. The Principal shall investigate, and the teacher or staff member shall be told of the concern or complaint.
4. The staff member shall be given the opportunity to reply.
5. The concern or complaint shall be put in writing to the Parish Priest.
6. If no progress, the concern or complaint will be put in writing to Catholic Education Melbourne.

Concerns regarding the Principal

1. The concern or complaint to be discussed with the Principal.
2. The concern or complaint shall be put in writing to the Parish Priest.
3. The Principal shall be given the opportunity to reply.
4. If no progress, the concern or complaint be put in writing to the Catholic Education Melbourne.

When raising a concern, you have a responsibility to:

- provide complete and factual information in a timely manner
- deliver your complaint in a non-threatening manner
- not make frivolous or vexatious complaints or include deliberately false or misleading information.

Classroom Issues – Make an appointment

If the matter involves your child or an issue of everyday class operation, an appointment to see the classroom teacher noting the reasons for the appointment is required.

Under no circumstances is it acceptable to:

- interrupt classes or “catch” the teacher on the yard or in the car park or in the shopping centre etc. to discuss the issue;
- reprimand another child anywhere on the school premises;

Professional Reputation of Staff

- The school has a responsibility to maintain a safe workplace for all employees, which protecting teachers from personal attack and abuse.
- The professional reputation of teachers is directly linked to their livelihood and ongoing employment opportunity. While teachers are responsible for maintaining professional standards they are also subject to the same rights as any citizen in respect of a personal attack on their professional reputation, such attacks constitute defamation.
- Where a teacher’s professional standards are the subject of serious concern, the matter will be referred to the Victorian Institute of Teaching, an independent representative professional body established to recognize, promote and regulate the profession of teaching. Within its charter this body investigates and makes findings on instances of serious misconduct to protect the integrity of the profession.
- Where there is evidence of defamatory statements made against any members of St. James staff, the school will refer the matter to be fully investigated by the Legal Officer of the Catholic Education Office of the Archdiocese of Melbourne. Individual staff also have the option to seek legal advice and action through the (VIEU) Victorian Independent Education Union (for members) and / or a private solicitor.
- The Principal will provide you with appropriate Catholic Education Office contact names and numbers if issues cannot be resolved at the school level.

Documentation

- All formal discussions and processes involving complaints will be documented

Confidentiality

- All grievances are to be kept confidential