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3.6.2.4 Complaints and Grievance Resolution Policy and Procedures - School Community

Policy Number (PN): 3.6.2.4

Policy Name: **Complaints and Grievance Resolution Policy and Procedures – School Community**

Last Revised: 10 August 2023

1. Purpose

The purpose of this policy and procedures is to facilitate the resolution of a dispute or complaint and to outline the principles applied to the handling and resolving of all disputes and complaints made to the School involving staff, students and parents. The staff members of the School include employees, contractors and volunteers.

A complaint or grievance is an expression of dissatisfaction made to the school about an educational and/or operational matter relating to services provided by the school or the behaviour or decisions of a staff member, contractor or volunteer, including misconduct.

Complaints may be made by a student or parent/carer. The Internal Complaints and Appeals processes are conciliatory and non-legal. The school will seek to resolve complaints informally where possible but acknowledges that in some cases a person may wish to make a formal complaint.

This policy and procedures does not extend to personal grievances between parents, guardians or other members of the School community.

2. Child Protection Allegations

of School immediately using the methods below:

Email Kate Grogan – kate.grogan@ngs.nsw.edu.au

Phone Kate Grogan – 02 4929 5811

Complaints will be handled promptly, confidentially and according to procedural fairness. Appropriate confidentiality will be maintained between parties involved and support persons (Unions or Professional Associations).

Where a person wishes to make a formal complaint concerning the Head of School, the complaint should be made in writing to the Chair of the Board, via email to chairperson@ngs.nsw.edu.au. In this situation, the references in this policy relating to the role of the Head of School should be read as references to the Chair of the Board.

The formal grievance process will commence within five (5) working days of the lodgement of the complaint or appeal to the Head of School.

Once the Head of School has made a decision regarding the complaint or appeal, the student will be informed in writing of the outcome and the reason(s) for the outcome. If the grievance procedure finds in favour

- Advise the complainant in writing, and any other relevant parties as appropriate, of the resolution decision of the Head of School and if appropriate, any proposed action to be taken.

There may be circumstances where some of the steps outlined above are not appropriate and the School will determine, on a case-by-case basis, the most appropriate method of handling the complaint.

In some cases, a senior member of staff or external investigator will be appointed by the Head of School to investigate the incident or claim. This person follows direction from the Head of School and must act according to the principles of procedural fairness. The investigator will inform the Head of School of the findings of the investigation. The Head of School will inform the claimant and the respondent of the findings. In the case of International Students a suitable interpreter will be provided for the duration of the procedures (if required).

Additionally, the Head of School will:

- Maintain confidentiality and impartiality.
- Ensure complaints are resolved.
- Create and maintain confidential records relating to the resolution of complaints.
- Ensure that procedures for resolving complaints are communicated to Staff and parents.
- Ensure complainants and respondents are aware that they can have a support person present during discussion. However, the School maintains the right to determine whether the person's preferred support person is appropriate and may not approve the attendance of a support person where they are determined by the School to be inappropriate.

7. Internal Complaints and Appeals

- Where the Internal Complaints and Appeals process is being accessed because the student has received notice from the School that the School intends to report the student for unsatisfactory course attendance, unsatisfactory course progress or suspension or cancellation of enrolment, the student has 20 days from the date of notification in which to lodge a written appeal.
- Internal Complaints and Appeals processes are usually available to students/parents at no cost. Should a cost be incurred then the student will be advised of the minimal amount involved.
- Each complainant has the opportunity present his/her case to the Head of School.
- Students or parents may be accompanied and assisted by a support person at all relevant meetings.
- The student is required to maintain normal enrolment and attendance at all classes during the appeals process unless the School determines otherwise.

8. External Appeals Process

- If the complaints procedure does not find in favour of the student or the student is dissatisfied with the result of the complaints procedure, the student will be informed of the External Complaints and Appeals process available at minimal or no cost.
- The external body used for Newcastle Grammar School's External Complaints and Appeals processes is the Association of Independent Schools NSW (AISNSW).
- International Students may also contact the Commonwealth Ombudsman for Overseas Students. More information is available at <https://www.ombudsman.gov.au/complaints/international-student-complaints>

9. Definitions

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