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GRIEVANCE AND COMPLAINTS POLICY FOR YANGINANOOK SCHOOL

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1. Objective

To provide a step by step process for resolving complaints or grievances. This is to ensure they can be dealt with in a confidential, timely and appropriate manner thereby ensuring matters are resolved to the satisfaction of the individual and the School community as a whole.

2. References

This policy should be read in conjunction with the School's [Positive Guidance and Behaviour Management Policy](#), [Anti-Bullying Policy](#) and [Child Protection Policy](#).

3. Definitions

Complaint or Grievance

Includes complaints or grievances relating to the curriculum, extra curricular activities, the method or manner of teaching, conflict or other issues between students, and/or issues involving parent helpers.

Staff Misconduct or Reportable Conduct

Includes complaints raised by stakeholders (including parents and carers) about staff misconduct and reportable conduct. Please refer to our [Child Protection Policy](#) for the specific complaints that this refers to (section 6: Reportable Conduct, pgs. 13-21)

Board

Board means the Board of Directors of Yanginanook School as elected from time to time.

4. Implementation

Complaint or Grievance

The following steps will be followed:

1. A complaint or grievance should be raised as soon as realistically possible in person with the Teaching Principal of the School. The Teaching Principal or the complainant may decide to include a Board Member in that discussion if required.
2. If for any reason it is not possible or appropriate to raise the complaint with the Teaching Principal, the complaint or grievance should be raised with a Board member.
3. Under no circumstances is a parent to approach another child directly with a complaint.
4. Any complaint or grievance discussed with the Teaching Principal or Board Member will need to occur outside school hours in a confidential location to ensure the efficient running of the School and the ability to hear the complaint properly. An appointment will need to be made at a time that is suitable for both the parent/carer and Teaching Principal and/or Board Member.
5. The Teaching Principal or the Board Member listening to the complaint will either request the problem be documented in writing or make written notes themselves if deemed necessary.
6. If the Teaching Principal or Board Member is unable to resolve the grievance or complaint to the satisfaction of the complainant, then the matter should be referred to the entire Board for consideration. The issue will be addressed at a special Board meeting convened to discuss the grievance or complaint. The Board, in its absolute discretion, may require any documentation to be provided to the Board prior to the special Board meeting to provide background and clarity about the grievance or complaint. If the matter cannot be resolved at such a Board meeting, the Board will seek advice from Christian Schools Australia (CSA) or the Australian Independent Schools Association (AIS).
7. All documentation relating to complaints and meetings about complaints will be kept in a secure, lockable location.
8. The complainant's right to privacy will be respected subject to the School's duty of care and legal responsibility to report student behaviours and concerns to parents/caregivers and reportable events/criminal behaviour to the relevant child protection authorities.
9. The School reserves the right to decline to make changes requested by a complainant which may disadvantage others or interfere with the delivery of the curriculum to any student or cause hardship to the School or is not in accordance with the School's ethos and values.

Staff Misconduct or Reportable Conduct

The following formal steps will be followed:

1. Please refer to Yanginanook's [Child Protection Policy](#) (section 6: Reportable Conduct, pgs. 13-21) to ensure that the complaint about a staff member refers to reportable conduct/misconduct, rather than other types of complaints that can be taken more informally to the Teaching Principal (or Chairman of the Board, if the complaint is about the Teaching Principal).
2. If the complaint is deemed to be reportable, it is recommended that the complaint be made in writing. The complaint should be handed in person to or emailed directly to Ann Russell, the Teaching Principal ann.russell@yanginanook.nsw.edu.au. If the complaint is about the Teaching Principal, the complaint should be handed in person to or emailed directly to Caroline Berriman, Chairman of the Board admin@yanginanook.nsw.edu.au. All email addresses are updated and distributed to families and carers at the beginning of the year.
3. The School will acknowledge, consider and follow-up the complaint.
4. The School will determine how the complaint will be responded to. Please note that the handling of a formal complaint could take substantially longer than a general complaint, if a reportable conduct investigation needs to take place.
5. If the complaint is to be investigated, the School will update the complainant on the School's progress, as deemed appropriate.
6. The complainant will be emailed personally to inform him or her of when the complaint has been finalised. Please note that there may be limitations under the Ombudsman's Act and privacy legislation regarding disclosure of information about the investigation and the outcome of the investigation.
7. The complainant's and accused's right to privacy will be respected subject to the School's duty of care and legal responsibility to report staff misconduct to the relevant child protection authorities.