

# **PROCEDURES FOR RESOLVING COMPLAINTS AND CONCERNS RAISED WITHIN ST ANDREW'S CATHEDRAL SCHOOL COMMUNITY OR FROM THE GENERAL PUBLIC**

## **INTRODUCTION**

The purpose of this document is to provide the school community with both a procedure of whom to contact in case of complaints or concerns. It outlines the process that will be taken to resolve the matter(s). It also includes a procedure for dealing with complaints or concerns raised by members of the General Public.

## **BASIC PREMISE**

The core values of the School are based on the godly virtues of grace, integrity and justice. Emphasis is placed on the worth of each person individually and as a community. The procedures will be characterised by procedural fairness, mutual respect and a spirit of cooperation in resolving complaints and dealing with concerns.

## **WHAT CAN PARENTS EXPECT OF THE SCHOOL?**

The School commits itself to deal, sensitively, with parental contacts, and respond as quickly as practicable. The School will maintain confidentiality where appropriate, releasing information on a "need to know" basis to staff. For some situations, this may require all staff being advised, and often, the information will be classified, and made available to very few personnel. If parents have a specific request regarding the extent of access to information given, that request should be made known at the time of contact.

The School's commitment is to endeavour to preserve a safe learning environment where individual rights are respected, and all work together for a common purpose.

## **WHAT DOES THE SCHOOL EXPECT OF PARENTS?**

It is appreciated when parents:

- Approach matters in as calm and rational manner as possible, without strong emotions, thereby reducing possible barriers to processing complaints or concerns.
- Make an appointment in advance when parents desire personal communication with staff.
- Direct their concerns to the appropriate staff as outlined in the following pages.

The School asks that parents recognise the boundary between professional space of the School, and the private space of teachers' homes, and therefore, except in absolute emergencies direct the contact to staff at school, rather than at home.

Communications of an extremely important nature should also be committed to writing, so there is a full copy of the matter.

## SUGGESTED CONTACT POINTS FOR SPECIFIC CONCERNS

The following guide indicates the best manner in which to direct specific issues in the Secondary School:

- **Student Pastoral issues**  
First point of contact is the Year Coordinator (Years 7-9) or Head of House (Year 10-12) or student's Tutor
- **Day to day issues for specific student**  
Contact Year Coordinator or Tutor
- **Individual Subject issue**  
First point of contact, classroom teacher, followed by Leader of Learning (Head of Department)
- **Broader Curriculum issue**  
First point of contact, Leader of Learning
- **Discipline Issues**  
Academic: Leader of Learning
- **Pastoral:** Year Coordinator or Head of House

## GENERAL HIERARCHY OF CONTACT FOR MOST ISSUES

### ACADEMIC

Class teacher (sometimes parents may prefer to bypass this stage)



Leaders of Learning (Head of Department)



Director of Learning Stage 4,5 or 6



Deputy Head of School



Head of School

### PASTORAL OR WELFARE ISSUES

Tutor



Head of House or Year Coordinator



Head of Division (Middle School or Senior College)



Deputy Head of School



Head of School

Whilst it may seem quicker to go to the higher authority in a sequence it is usually more appropriate to start with the person who knows the student or the details of the incident best. Only if the matter cannot be resolved at the initial level should it progress through the hierarchy of responses. Members of staff will endeavour to return phone calls and/ or emails as quickly as possible, however, please be aware that a teacher often has extensive commitments throughout the day and after school. It is school policy that teachers will not leave classes to receive or return calls, or conduct interviews. Phone calls and emails sometimes cannot be returned on the same day.

The school is committed to attempting to resolve issues of concern speedily for parents. Often the incompleteness of information, or the multiple demands on people's time, prevents an immediate resolution. Parents are asked for their patience in following through matters, and with the School's best endeavours to deal satisfactorily with any issue arising.

### **COMPLAINTS AND CONCERNS FOR THE GENERAL PUBLIC**

If a member of the General Public wishes to complain or bring concerns about matters specifically related to St Andrew's Cathedral School they are advised to contact the Deputy Head of School, either directly by ringing 9286 9505 or through the website [www.sacs.nsw.edu.au](http://www.sacs.nsw.edu.au)

The School undertakes to reply to written complaints in a timely manner and would ask the person listing their concerns to give the School appropriate contact details to enable a response either in writing or by phone.

**Dr John Collier**  
**Head, St Andrew's Cathedral School**