



**St Philip's
Christian College**
FOR THE WHOLE OF LIFE

St Philip's Christian College Gilibaa

Complaints Handling Procedure

RATIONALE

At times parents, guardians and carers may have a concern or complaint that they would like to discuss with the school. I have written this article to describe the process that we normally follow to resolve these issues.

The Bible clearly encourages us to seek to resolve differences between each other and to live in harmony with one another:

- Do all you can to live in harmony with others - Romans 12:16 says 'Live in harmony with one another'.
- Resolve differences quickly - Ephesians 4:26 emphasises the need to resolve differences before the end of the day.
- Deal with any issue in the proper order – Matthew 18:15-17 describes dealing first with the person who may have offended you, then if the person doesn't respond appropriately, to take the matter to a higher authority.

PROCEDURE

Step 1: Try to speak to the person involved e.g. classroom teacher, organising teacher, office staff etc.

Before beginning the process, prayerfully seek God's wisdom and direction.

If you can, speak directly to the person with whom you have the grievance to discuss the matter as soon as possible.

It is important to approach the meeting with humility and an open mind and heart.

Remember, by speaking with the person concerned you give them the chance to stop or to change what they are doing.

If you do not feel comfortable speaking with the person concerned directly, or if you find that the personal approach has not been successful, then go to Step 2.

Step 2: Speak to a Leader of the area in which you have a problem

Complaints put to one of these Leaders in conversation, in writing or via email, will be treated with respectful consideration. They will try to work through a process of mediation to assist those involved to reach a resolution.

You will not be discriminated against or victimised for bringing a complaint to their attention.

If your Leader feels that he / she can competently handle your complaint, then the Leader will:

- Confidentially interview you;
- Confidentially interview the other person(s) concerned;
- Conduct a thorough investigation into your complaint;
- Attempt to resolve your complaint or if appropriate refer the matter to the Head of School

At an appropriate point in time, the person undertaking the mediation will summarise what they have heard, and then give their decision about the way forward.

If you, as the person bringing the complaint, do not believe that to be just or fair, then you may proceed further up the line of appeal, as in the diagram below.

Step 3: Contact the Principal

Complaints put to the Principal, in writing, will be treated with respectful consideration. If the complaint is with the Principal, you may contact the Executive Principal and/or the Chairman of the Board in writing.

The principles above in terms of how the matter is treated will continue through either of these processes.

If the complaint is referred to the Principal or the Executive Principal/Chairman of the Board, he or she will have full access to any pertinent information and reserves the right to obtain confidential advice on the matter.

Step 4: Executive Principal – Right to appeal

If a matter is unable to be resolved by the Principal or the complainant feels the process has been unjust, the matter may be passed to the Executive Principal and/or the Board of Governors for review. The process and all relevant documentation will be reviewed to ensure that procedural fairness has occurred and the matter has been dealt with based on Biblical principles.

The outcome of a review process by the Executive Principal/Chairperson will be final and communicated verbally and in writing.

GENERAL COMMUNICATION PROCEDURES

Information Meetings and Parent/Teacher Interviews

Information sessions are arranged for each year level usually at the beginning of the year. Parent/Teacher interviews are organised formally after student reports are issued and this usually occurs twice each year.

Newsletters

The Parent Newsletter is sent home via email weekly as well as being available on the iLearn platform and through social media channels.

Parents/Teacher Fellowship Meetings

The PTF meets on the third Wednesday of each month at 7.00pm in the staff room. The Principal and other College executive are usually in attendance at these meetings where they present reports and bring parents up-to-date on current events and directions. This is also an opportunity for parents to ask questions and raise important issues directly with senior leaders in the College.

Making appointments

When parents have an enquiry that they wish to discuss with a staff member it is always preferable to make an appointment. Please do this by phoning the school. If the staff member is available at the time the parent rings it may be possible to discuss the matter by phone.

MAINTAIN CONFIDENTIALITY ABOUT ANY MATTERS DISCUSSED

In order to preserve the dignity of all involved please keep confidential any problems discussed. Gossip or rumours will only harm relationships and ultimately the College. If you have complaints please use the channels described above.



ST. PHILIP'S CHRISTIAN COLLEGE Gilibaa

COMPLAINTS HANDLING PROCEDURE SUMMARISED

