



ORANGE ANGLICAN GRAMMAR SCHOOL

GRIEVANCE POLICY & PROCEDURES

Policy

Orange Anglican Grammar School recognises the right of all staff, students and parents to express their concern about school related issues and to have their grievances acknowledged through a fair hearing. It will hear and attempt to resolve all complaints fairly, efficiently, promptly and in accordance with relative legislation.

Implementation

The School seeks to be clear, open and consultative in its communication in order to achieve a harmonious, positive and productive school environment. While the School accepts responsibility to consult and to communicate both clearly and effectively with the school and wider community, members of those communities also have an obligation to read notices and newsletters, to attend meetings or briefings and to seek clarification when required.

On Campus

- It is the responsibility of the Headmaster to provide a healthy and positive school environment that is free from discrimination and harassment.
- The Headmaster must ensure that all staff are aware of their rights and responsibilities.
- The Headmaster is required to use local complaint resolution procedures for issues that fall within the School's area of responsibility.
- It is incumbent upon the Headmaster to act where unacceptable conduct is observed or brought to his/her attention.
- All cases of serious misconduct - sexual offences, criminal charges or other serious incidents must be referred to the appropriate authorities. The Chairman of the Orange Anglican Grammar School Council must also be informed.
- For minor cases where the complainant wishes the matter to be dealt with informally, or the complaint has arisen from a lack of or unclear information, the matter can be dealt with informally.
- The formal process will be used when the informal process has not worked or when the complainant seeks a formal process or where the Principal believes the matter warrants a formal process.

The formal process involves:

- Investigating the complaint, including formal interviews, written statements, conveying the details of the complaint to the respondent in writing, providing the opportunity for a written response.
- Dismissing or accepting the complaint.
- Acceptance may involve a verbal or written warning, conciliation, or counselling, referring the matter to seek advice.
- Preparation of a detailed confidential report.



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Monitoring of the situation

Parties dissatisfied with the process can appeal to external agencies such as the Equal Opportunities Commission.

All matters must be treated with utmost confidentiality, and professional respect at all times.

The Headmaster and Chairman of the Orange Anglican Grammar School Council will be kept informed of all complaints.

If there are occasions where members of the school community including staff, students and/or parents and the wider community are confused or disagree then the following procedures should be followed to resolve grievances.

Within the School Community

If there is a grievance it is important to:

- Establish the facts clearly.
- If it involves your child, contact the Headmaster to make an appointment.
- All grievances are to be kept as confidential as possible.
- All formal discussions and processes involving grievances will be documented.
- The Principal will exercise his/her judgement as to whether he/she will act on anonymous complaints.
- The Chairman of the Orange Anglican Grammar School will be kept informed of unresolved or serious grievances.

Headmaster and Procedures

- Confidentiality, privacy and impartiality must be maintained wherever possible and appropriate.
- Complaints will be dealt with as quickly as possible.
- In the first instance, all efforts should be made to resolve the complaint directly between the parties involved.
- Grievance resolution should be approached in a relatively informal manner. This should usually involve a discussion with the staff member most directly concerned where a genuine attempt should be made by both parties to resolve the issue.
- If the grievance cannot be resolved at this level then students and/or parents/guardians should take their concern to their class teacher or a more senior staff member, still in an informal manner.



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Contact Persons for Grievance Resolution, in the First Instance

General concerns/welfare	Class teacher/School Welfare Co-ordinator
Christian life of School	Chaplain/Headmaster/Deputy
Sport	Sports Coordinator
Business/Finance/Facilities	Headmaster

If the grievance is still not resolved the staff member, student and/or parent/guardian should refer the grievance to the Headmaster.

Complaint

- The resolution of a dispute or complaint, in the first instance, should be undertaken between the immediate parties involved. All care and consideration should be exhibited between both parties, even if a resolution cannot be attained.
- Should the immediate parties involved fail to reach a resolution the matter is brought in writing to the Headmaster. The Headmaster is responsible for undertaking a procedure to resolve any dispute or complaint within the School.
- This procedure will only be initiated following a written complaint addressed to the Headmaster.
- The Headmaster shall ensure that the dispute is made clear by the complainant to the staff member or parent and in writing. Dependent on the outcome, said records may be discarded.
- The Headmaster shall ensure that records are maintained throughout the proceedings in accordance with Privacy Legislation.
- The Headmaster may call upon external mediation to assist in the resolution of a dispute or complaint.
- The Headmaster makes a decision based on the facts established.
- Any party may appeal the Headmaster's decision to the Chair of the School Council.
- The parties of the dispute will be notified of the findings of the appeal.
- Where a dispute or complaint involves the Headmaster the matter shall be referred in writing directly to the Chair of School Council.



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Procedures:

- Concern or complaint is brought to the attention of the staff member or parent. Depending on the nature of the concern in the first instance it could be a staff member to a staff member with no third party.
- If the concern requires intervention in the form of a third party, then the person brings the concern to the Headmaster.
- A meeting will be arranged between the Headmaster and the person concerned to outline the concern / complaint.
- A meeting will then occur between the Headmaster and the two parties. At this point it is hoped that a resolution will occur.
- If a resolution is attained then a letter will be sent to the various parties outlining the concern and the resolution.
- After the enquiry the Headmaster puts in writing the findings and recommendations. This is issued to the two parties.
- A meeting is called where the findings are discussed and hopefully a resolution attained.
- If no resolution then the AIS is notified and an external mediator contracted.
- The findings of the mediation process are discussed with the Headmaster and a final decision arrived at.
- If the dispute is against the Headmaster then the Chair of the School Council is informed in writing. The Chair of Council then investigates the matter.

Responsibilities of Parties in Grievance Issues

All parties should speak and listen in a calm, respectful manner and present accurate information.

Student

- Report the issue directly to the staff member concerned in a calm way
- Not knowingly present an unjustified complaint
- Listen to advice and fair comment
- Work with the staff member on a resolution

Parent /Guardian

- Make direct contact with the staff member concerned
- Listen carefully to the response and explanation
- Work with the staff member on a resolution

Staff Member

- Be objective and fair
- Provide appropriate explanation or justification
- Re-assess issue if necessary
- Work with the student and/or parent/guardian on an appropriate pathway for proceeding if the matter still remains unresolved



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Headmaster

- Seek information from both parties
- Re-assess and recommend a course of action
- Call a meeting of all parties if necessary
- Attempt to resolve the issue or
- Make a final decision, and communicate to all parties, where appropriate

Harassment, Bullying, Abuse

Where grievance relates to matters of bullying, harassment and child protection issues the School will respond in accordance with policies and procedures relating to these areas as well as the above guidelines.

Evaluation

This policy will be reviewed annually.