

Complaints and Disputes Policy



Purpose	Policy outlines the process involved in complaints and disputes handling.
Delegation	Principal/Leadership Team
First Written	20th June 2009
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Approved by	Board Chair on behalf of Governing Board
Review Dates	24/09/2014, 1/04/2019, 10/3/2020
Review Cycle	Yearly

Complaints and Disputes Policy and Procedures



1. Rationale:

- 1.1. At Bethel Christian School, we are a community and we recognise that circumstances will arise where students, parents, guardians or other persons may have a complaint or raise a concern;
- 1.2. Bethel Christian School takes these issues seriously and is committed to dealing with any complaints or concerns efficiently and effectively through Peacewise methods;
- 1.3. Bethel Staff are dedicated to working together with you to resolve any issues that may arise and reach resolutions in the best interests of students, reflects our School values and restores relationships between all members of the School community;
- 1.4. In the complaints process, we ask all students, parents and guardians, and other members of the Bethel community to partner with the School and deal with staff members in a respectful manner with a view to resolve issues promptly and peacefully;
- 1.5. All students, parents and guardians are required under the Conditions of Enrolment and Codes of Conduct to follow this policy and fully participate in Peacewise processes in good faith;
- 1.6. Our Complaints and Disputes Policy and Procedures are outlined below to assist and clarify how to proceed with making a complaint;
- 1.7. Bethel has developed the following complaints flowcharts in order to assist the Bethel community by clearly outlining the step-by-step procedure for students, parents, guardians, and other members of the community to follow when making a complaint:
 - 1.7.1. Complaints Flowchart for parents/guardians and all other persons;
 - 1.7.2. Flowchart for Complaints about School Leadership; and
 - 1.7.3. Complaints Flowchart for students.
- 1.8. This policy will outline the following:
 - Principles;
 - Complaints Flowchart – How to raise your complaint;
 - Requirements of Conditions of Enrolment and Codes of Conduct;

- Your conduct in the complaints process;
- Our School policy for handling complaints;
- Responsibilities;
- Conciliation Committee; and
- Compliance with Registration Standards.

2. Principles:

- 2.1. At Bethel Christian School, our approach towards complaints and disputes is informed by our School values and the following guiding principles;
- 2.1.1. The School is open to the concerns of students, parents and guardians;
 - 2.1.2. Raising a concern or complaint early and promptly is encouraged;
 - 2.1.3. Students, parents and guardians can expect to be taken seriously and can approach staff about their concerns;
 - 2.1.4. All complaints and concerns will be dealt with in line with this Policy and through Peacewise methods;
 - 2.1.5. The School will respond to concerns and complaints promptly and maintain open communication throughout the complaints process;
 - 2.1.6. The School will partner with students, parents and guardians to work through core issues and concerns with all parties involved;
 - 2.1.7. Confidentiality will be respected and maintained as far as possible;
 - 2.1.8. Confidential information will only be shared when absolutely necessary or legally required;
 - 2.1.9. The School will always aim to resolve your concern or complaint fully, peacefully, efficiently and effectively;
 - 2.1.10. We seek mutually acceptable resolutions, with the best interests and wellbeing of our students as priority;
 - 2.1.11. All staff receive regular, appropriate training on handling complaints and Peacewise methods;
 - 2.1.12. Please respect the authority, decisions and discretion of the Principal and staff;
 - 2.1.13. Healthy dispute resolution is an essential part of every student's learning and personal growth; and
 - 2.1.14. We encourage all members of the Bethel Christian School community to communicate openly, honestly and aim to maintain positive relationships with the School, and uphold the good name of the School in the community.

3. Complaints Flowchart – How to raise your complaint:

Please refer to the Complaints Flowcharts for clear step-by-step instructions.

- 3.1. Through the complaints process, we are committed to taking your concerns seriously and we request that you seek to resolve the issue for all parties promptly and peacefully;
- 3.2. Your first step should be to directly contact the person involved with your concern or complaint, or the person responsible for that area of the school;
- 3.3. The following examples may help if you are unsure of who to speak to first:
 - o *Example 1:* If a student has an issue with another student, about an incident that happened at school, they should speak to that student informally and peacefully, if it is safe and appropriate to do so, unless it is very serious or unsafe. Then the next step is to speak to their class teacher. A student can find extra support by speaking to school's Chaplain or coming and speaking to the Principal directly if it is unsafe or a serious issue;
 - o *Example 2:* If a parent or guardian has a complaint about a teacher or another staff member, they should speak directly to that staff member;
 - o *Example 3:* If a student, parent or guardian has a complaint about something that occurred at school, not about a specific person, they should speak to the person responsible for that area of the school or the Principal;
 - o *Example 4:* If the complaint is about the Principal or Leadership Team, they should follow the Flowchart for Complaints about School Leadership and arrange a meeting with the specific person first, then the Principal and Leadership Team to raise the concern;
 - o *Example 5:* If you suspect that a student may be experiencing abuse, grooming or other harm or that their safety may be at risk, but you are unsure whether your concern rises to the levels required for external reporting to the relevant authority, you should immediately raise your concerns with the Principal Mim Butler and/or the School's Child Protection Officers, Paul Barber and Sharon Morton; and
 - o *Example 6:* If you know or have reasonable grounds to believe that: A) a student has been, is being or is likely to be abused, groomed or otherwise harmed; B) there are concerns for the student's wellbeing, for any reason; or C) a staff member, Volunteer or Contractor has breached the Child Safe Codes of Conduct; you **must** report the matter internally to the Principal; If the child safety incident or concern involves the Principal, you must instead report to the Child Protection Officers;
- 3.4. We prefer that concerns or issues be raised face to face, in a meeting setting if appropriate, especially if it is of a serious nature;
- 3.5. You should contact that person by telephone, by email, in writing, in person or in a meeting situation. At no time is it appropriate to text or online message about a complaint;

- 3.6. You must communicate openly and honestly at all times about your complaint and always deal with others respectfully, peacefully, courteously and in a manner that reflects our School values and Codes of Conduct;
- 3.7. You must maintain confidentiality at all times and must not gossip or talk about the issue with others who are not involved, whether in person or online. If you are a student, you should always speak to your parents, guardians or a safe person you trust at School if you are concerned about something;
- 3.8. If the complaint is not resolved informally, you should refer to the Complaints Flowchart and move onto the next step which may involve speaking to the class teacher, then the Principal and Leadership Team about your issue. You should make an appointment to discuss your concerns, work through the issues together and try to work towards a resolution;
- 3.9. Through the complaint process, you need to cooperate and partner with the School and do your part to work together and resolve the issues promptly;
- 3.10. You must fully participate and engage in the Peacewise processes in good faith and always aim to reach a fair, peaceful resolution for all parties;
- 3.11. If the complaint is about the School Principal, Deputy or Leadership Team you may address your complaint directly to the Board Chair;
- 3.12. If the complaint still cannot be resolved, only after all avenues with the School have been exhausted, then you may write a formal letter to Bethel Christian School Board in writing and submit it through the School Office. You should never contact an individual board member to discuss a complaint in person or on the phone, at any time; and
- 3.13. If the situation cannot be resolved, the School's Conciliation Committee may be required to resolve the dispute or other agencies such as an external arbiter may be engaged at your cost.

For students: What to do if you have a complaint:

- 3.14. If something bad happened at School and you have a problem, complaint or an issue about something or about someone, whether they are in your class, another student, a teacher or anyone else at School, you should always tell someone about it and follow the Student Flowchart. Here are the steps below:
 - 3.1. **Talk to Them:** The first thing you should do is talk to the other person or other people about it. Tell them what's wrong and ask if you can fix it together? Try to cooperate and see if you can work together to solve the problem.
 - 3.2. **Get Help – Talk to your Teacher:** Tell to your class teacher about your complaint, problem or issue. They will listen and try to sort it out with you and the other person, in a peaceful way that is fair for everyone.
 - 3.3. **Talk to the Principal:** If you have already talked to your teacher, or it is very serious or you feel unsafe, then you should talk to the Principal Mrs Butler and tell her what happened. Mrs Butler will help you to work together, sort it out and find an answer to make peace with everyone involved.

Complaints Flowchart



At Bethel Christian School, we are committed to dealing with any complaints, concerns or issues that may arise with fair, efficient and thorough Peacewise processes.

We are dedicated to working with you to reach a resolution that is in the best interests of students, reflects our School values and promotes the restoration of relationships between all members of the School community.

We see healthy dispute resolution as an essential part of a student's learning and growth and we are willing to support students, parents and guardians through the Peacewise process. We provide all families with Peacewise packs and resources, and Peacewise counselling if necessary.



Flowchart for Complaints about School Leadership



At Bethel Christian School, we take complaints about School Leadership very seriously and we are committed to dealing with any complaints, concerns or issues that may arise with fair and efficient Peacewise processes.

We are dedicated to working with you to reach a resolution that is in the best interests of students, reflects our School values and promotes the restoration of relationships between all members of the School community.



Student Complaint Flowchart

What do I do if I have a complaint, a problem or an issue with someone at School? Or about something that happened at School?

If something bad happened with someone at School, whether they are in your class, another student, a teacher or anyone else at School, you should follow this flowchart.

You should always:

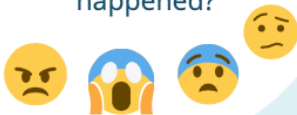
1. Talk about it and tell the truth;
2. Ask an adult for help if you need it;
3. Do your part to fix it; and
4. Try to make peace!



Start Here



Do you have a complaint, problem or issue with someone at School? or about something that happened?



YES

Is it very serious?
OR
Do you feel scared or unsafe or that it's a bad idea to talk about it with to the person or other people involved?

NO

You're all good! You don't need this flowchart. Keep being an awesome peacemaker!

YES

We can be peacemakers!
We can apologise
We can forgive each other
We can restore relationships
We can build better friendships
We can sort it out
We can make peace!

3

Talk to the Principal

If you have already talked to your teacher, or it is very serious or you feel unsafe, then you should talk to the Principal Mrs Butler and tell her what happened. Mrs Butler will help you to work together, sort it out and find an answer to make peace with everyone involved.



All sorted now? Awesome!

1

Talk to them

The first thing you should do is talk to the other person or other people about it. Tell them what's wrong and ask if you can fix it together? Try to cooperate and see if you can work together to solve the problem.



All sorted? Awesome work!



Not fixed? Get help!

2

Get Help

Talk to your Teacher

Tell to your class teacher about your complaint, problem or issue. They will listen and try to sort it out with you and the other person, in a peaceful way that is fair for everyone.



All sorted now? That's great!



Still have a problem?

4. Requirements under Conditions of Enrolment and Code of Conduct:

- 4.1. If students, parents and guardians make a complaint or have a dispute with the School, they are required to follow this Complaints and Disputes Policy and Procedures according to the School's Enrolment Policy, Conditions of Enrolment and Codes of Conduct;
- 4.2. The relevant paragraphs are outlined below for reference;
- 4.3. The Enrolment Policy states in the 'Communication, Complaints and Disputes' section that:

"Students, parents and guardians should always communicate openly and honestly with the School in all matters and follow the Complaints and Disputes Policy and Procedures and participate in Peacewise practices at all times; and

Parents and guardians should always partner with the Principal, Staff and the School to deal with any issues that may arise promptly and openly, and should do so with the view to resolve issues for all parties."

- 4.4. The Conditions of Enrolment require that students, parents and guardians must agree, accept and comply with all conditions, including:
 - o Follow the Complaints and Disputes Policy and Procedures when dealing with any issues that may arise;
 - o Support the philosophy and ethos of the School;
 - o Uphold the good name of the School in the community and respect the Principal and staff and their professional decisions;
 - o Comply with the Code of Conduct and Parent Guardian Code of Conduct;
- 4.5. The Parent Guardian Code of Conduct provides helpful information and states:

"If parents and guardians have a complaint or issue, they should always follow our Complaints and Disputes Policy and Procedures and contact the staff member responsible for that area of the School promptly, and maintain confidentiality and not discuss the issue with other parents;

We ask that, in the complaints process, parents and guardians endeavour to deal with the School in a respectful, honest and courteous way with a view to resolve the issue promptly and peacefully;

We expect parents and guardians to partner with the School and always deal with staff and members of the School community in a way that reflects our School values, including during the complaints process; and

This is important for children to witness parents and guardians practicing healthy, open communication and dispute resolution with the School."

- 4.6. This means that all students, parents and guardians are required to comply with School procedures in this document as a condition of the student's

enrolment at Bethel and must follow the steps below in the complaints process.

5. Your conduct in the complaints process:

- 5.1. The School does not wish to be in conflict or disputes with any members of the community and we aim to address any complaints or concerns appropriately and reach resolutions peacefully and promptly;
- 5.2. In order to avoid unnecessary tension, escalation or adversarial behaviour, we ask all complainants to comply with the following expectations throughout the complaints process:
 - 5.2.1. Respect and maintain confidentiality at all times;
 - 5.2.2. Act in a civil and respectful manner towards others during the complaints process and after the resolution of any complaints;
 - 5.2.3. Communicate honestly, openly and promptly with the School, the Principal and staff at all times;
 - 5.2.4. Conduct yourself with the aim to resolve the dispute peacefully, not escalate or exacerbate conflict unnecessarily;
 - 5.2.5. Refrain from gossiping or discussing issues, concerns or School-related matters with others, whether they are other students, Bethel parents or guardians, or other members of the community, whether in person or online;
 - 5.2.6. Refrain from using social media to discuss or comment on the School, staff, students or any School-related issues in a negative or defamatory manner;
 - 5.2.7. Refrain from any conduct that may intimidate, bully, harass, undermine, threaten or negatively deal with the School, staff, students, parents or guardians or other members of the community;
 - 5.2.8. Uphold the good name of the School in the community;
 - 5.2.9. Respect the decisions of the Principal, School Leadership and staff;
 - 5.2.10. Act in a way that reflects our School Values of respect, courtesy, dignity, personal responsibility, integrity, tolerance and inclusion;
 - 5.2.11. Do your part to fix the problem; and
 - 5.2.12. Treat others in the way you would expect to be treated.

6. Our School policy for handling complaints:

- 6.1. At Bethel, we use Peacewise methods and this Complaints and Disputes Policy and Procedures to help our Bethel community resolve any complaints or disputes as they arise, and ensure they are dealt with appropriately;
- 6.2. At Bethel every person involved in a complaint is to be given the opportunity to respond or speak to the complaint;
- 6.3. Bethel Christian School abides by the *The Education Act 1999* by having and implementing thorough dispute resolution procedures;
- 6.4. At Bethel Christian School, our approach and procedures for handling complaints and dealing with disputes are as follows:
- 6.5. Staff training:
 - 6.5.1. All staff are required to comply with this policy when made aware of or dealing with any complaints that have been made by students, parents, guardians or other members of the community;
 - 6.5.2. All staff receive training in Mandatory Reporting and Peacewise methods in order to ensure all staff handle complaints professionally and appropriately; and
 - 6.5.3. All staff are responsible for ensuring they comply with this policy and aware of the importance of dealing with conflict well and using Peacewise methods in all School-related issues.
- 6.6. Preventative measures:
 - 6.6.1. The School also take several proactive steps to support students, parents and guardians and the Bethel community in this area, and we provide:
 - 6.6.2. All Bethel families with Peacewise packs and resources in order to help and encourage them to deal with conflict and disputes in healthy and restorative ways;
 - 6.6.3. Age-appropriate Student Complaints Flowchart around the school grounds which clearly outlines the steps for students to follow if they have a complaint, concern or issue;
 - 6.6.4. Complaints Flowcharts which clearly outline the procedure to follow with step-by-step instructions for parents, guardians, and other members of the community to follow, including for general complaints and complaints about School Leadership;
 - 6.6.5. Students with Pastoral Care and students, parents or guardians with Peacewise counselling if necessary;
 - 6.6.6. This policy which is accessible and available on the Bethel website; and
 - 6.6.7. Students with teaching in class about Peacewise methods and strategies for how to deal with issues or disputes in healthy, peaceful ways through open communication.

6.7. Handling complaints:

- 6.7.1. All complaints will be handled seriously whether a gentle expression of concern or a simple query;
- 6.7.2. The vast majority of issues causing concern in schools can be handled quickly and in an informal manner. In most cases these issues can be resolved through informal discussions with appropriate staff members;
- 6.7.3. If the complaint cannot be resolved informally, the complainant should follow the procedure set out in the complaints flowcharts for step-by-step instructions for how to proceed and who to raise your complaint with at each stage until the complaint can be resolved; and
- 6.7.4. The School will always handle complaints and concerns with a view to resolve them promptly and peacefully in line with this policy and our Peacewise methods.

6.8. Anonymous complaints:

- 6.8.1. Anonymous complaints will be recorded and dealt with at the Principal/ Board Chairs discretion as to what action to take, if any, depending on the nature and likely validity of the complaint;
- 6.8.2. All complainants are encouraged to identify themselves so they can meet with School staff and the complaint can be raised and dealt with appropriately and effectively; and
- 6.8.3. Anonymous complaints should be discouraged;

6.9. Communication methods:

- 6.9.1. All communication about complaints should be made by telephone, in writing or in a meeting situation; and
- 6.9.2. At no time from either side should a person text another person about a complaint or issue.

6.10. Response from the School:

- 6.10.1. School Leadership will acknowledge receipt and respond to all complaints within a reasonable and appropriate amount of time, depending on the nature and circumstances;
- 6.10.2. The School will maintain communication with the complainant and keep records of all communications;
- 6.10.3. The School will seek to resolve any complaints fully and will ensure that complainants receive a full response to any complaint that addresses the necessary steps that will be taken to resolve the issues; and
- 6.10.4. If the complaint related to staff conduct, allegations of misconduct, breaches of the Staff Code of Conduct or serious misconduct, the School

will respond in line with the Staff Conduct and Discipline Policy and Procedures;

6.10.5. If the complaint or allegation relates to grooming, child abuse and breaches of the Code of Conduct or student code of conduct, School Leadership will respond in the best interests of students and in accordance with policies and procedures which at least require that:

(a) the complainant is informed about the services, including pastoral care and support services, which may be available; and

(b) the matter is reported promptly to the responsible government authorities and their direction is sought and complied with as to when, what and by whom information related to the matter and its investigation may be given to the person against whom the complaint or allegation is made, the complainant and his or her parents/guardian, other affected students and their parents/guardians, and the wider school community.

6.11. Records:

6.11.1. All Bethel staff are required to make and maintain records of all complaints, and report them to the Principal and School Leadership team, or Upline Managers, including allegations and findings related to grooming and child abuse, whether involving former or current staff or students:

6.11.2. All staff will keep accurate and comprehensive records of all communications relating to complaints;

6.11.3. All records must:

(a) contain as much detail as possible;

(b) be stored securely and appropriately;

(c) be protected from misuse, modification, unauthorised access or disclosure; and

(d) for those relating to grooming and child abuse, must not be destroyed without the approval of the Director General or, where their retention becomes impracticable or unduly onerous, are forwarded to the Director General with her permission for retention in accordance with the State Records Act 2000.

6.12. Reporting:

6.12.1. Bethel Christian School complies with reporting obligations to act and report relevant conduct internally and externally;

6.12.2. The School complies with all reporting requirements and will inform the Police, Department of Education in line with our Child Protection Policy;

6.12.3. Reporting the matter internally within the School **does not** release you from other legal, regulatory and police obligations. These obligations

apply even if a staff member or a Board Member advises you not to report externally;

- 6.12.4. If you have concern for the immediate safety of a child, contact the Police on 000;
- 6.12.5. In addition to reporting internally, you **must** also follow and cooperate with any appropriate external reporting or other procedures listed below:
- Failure to Protect;
 - Mandatory Reporting (of Sexual Abuse) to CPFS;
 - Non-Mandatory Reporting to CPFS;
 - Reporting to Police;
 - Child Safety Incidents or Concerns At or Involving the School or its Staff, Volunteers or Contractors; and
 - Teacher Misconduct that is Reportable to the Teacher Registration Board of WA;
- 6.12.6. If the School receives a complaint or or allegation of child abuse, including but not limited to sexual abuse, committed against a student –
- (a) by a staff member or another student; or
 - (b) by another person on the school premises or during a school-related activity; whether the abuse is alleged to have occurred recently or in the past;
- 6.12.7. then this is a reportable critical incident, dealt with in our Critical and Emergency Incidents Policy and Procedure, and must be reported to the governing body and the Director General of the Department of Education, who must be notified as soon as practicable and in any event, within 48 hours of the receipt of the complaint;
- 6.12.8. If the School issues a formal warning to or ceasing the employment of a staff member for a breach of the Code of Conduct suspected to have involved grooming behaviour, then this is a reportable critical incident, dealt with in our Critical and Emergency Incidents Policy and Procedure, and must be reported to the governing body and the Director General of the Department of Education, who must be notified as soon as practicable and in any event, within 48 hours of the receipt of the incident.

7. Responsibilities:

7.1. School Leadership:

- 7.1.1. Oversee and deal with any complaints or concerns efficiently, appropriately and effectively;
- 7.1.2. Use Peacemaking methods and principles to aid the process;
- 7.1.3. Guide parties involved through the Peacemaker process and encourage them to work together to resolve the issues;

- 7.1.4. Work together with parties to resolve conflicts, reach resolutions and restore relationships;
- 7.1.5. Communicate clearly with parties by telephone, writing or meetings;
- 7.1.6. Oversee and manage the responses of staff to incidents;
- 7.1.7. Respond to complaints appropriately and promptly and communicate process and outcomes;
- 7.1.8. Act in a manner that is in the best interests of students, reflects our School values and aims to restore relationships in the School community;
- 7.1.9. Record complaints, results of investigations and make incident reports. Store these in a safe place and keep for required period of time; and
- 7.1.10. Encourage all parties to adhere to confidentiality expectations.

7.2. School Staff:

- 7.2.1. Treat all complaints seriously and follow procedures to ensure that they are resolved as quickly as possible;
- 7.2.2. Respond to the complaint either by telephone, in writing or in an arranged meeting;
- 7.2.3. Inform School Leadership of any serious complaints made;
- 7.2.4. Seek School Leadership's help in difficult situations, including sitting in on meetings that may occur;
- 7.2.5. Make and keep all records, including letters received and written, copies of incident reports and meeting minutes;
- 7.2.6. Follow Peacemaking principles and biblical values in their communication with parents and students; and
- 7.2.7. Be involved in 'Peacewise' meetings to overcome the problem to everyone's satisfaction.

7.3. Parents and Guardians:

- 7.3.1. If a parent/guardian has a complaint, they have the responsibility to:
 - Follow the Parent Guardian Complaint Flowchart (listed below);
 - Comply with the School policies and procedures;
 - Comply with the Parent Guardian Code of Conduct at all times;
 - Follow our Peacewise processes;
 - Communicate honestly;
 - Deal with others respectfully;
 - Cooperate, work together and partner with the School;
 - Avoid adversarial, aggressive or escalating behaviour;
 - Do your part to resolve the issue promptly;

- Respect the confidentiality of others involved;
- Refrain from gossiping or speaking with others not involved about the issue or the School.

7.4. **Students:**

7.4.1. If a Student has a complaint, they have the responsibility to:

- Follow the Student Complaint Flowchart (listed below);
- Comply with all School rules, policies and procedures;
- Comply with the Student Code of Conduct;
- Follow the Peacewise processes;
- Talk about it and tell the truth;
- Ask an adult for help if you need it;
- Cooperate and deal with others respectfully; and
- Do your part to resolve the issue promptly and make peace.

7.5. **Other people in the community:**

7.5.1. If others in the community, such as volunteers, have a complaint, they should put all complaints in writing addressed to the Principal and they will be dealt with in the same manner as outlined above; and

7.5.2. The School will address their concerns and aim to resolve the issue promptly.

7.6. **Board:**

7.6.1. On rare occasions, the School Board may need to be involved in complaint resolution. If so the following points should be adhered to:

7.6.2. An individual Board member should not under any circumstances be involved in one on one complaint discussions;

7.6.3. If an individual approaches a Board member in person or by phone or online to raise or discuss a concern, complaint or issue related to the School in any way, that Board member must:

7.6.3.1. State they are not permitted to discuss complaints;

7.6.3.2. End the conversation immediately before any more is raised;

7.6.3.3. Report the incident to the Principal and School Leadership to deal with the complaint within the School policy and procedures;

7.6.3.4. Refrain from sharing the disclosed information with any other Board members; and

7.6.3.5. Follow school policies and procedures

7.6.4. The Board should only receive complaints in writing;

- 7.6.5. The Board should only be presented with a complaint that has been submitted in writing in a meeting situation of the whole School Board;
- 7.6.6. The Board must maintain confidentiality and not disclose the information to others in the community;
- 7.6.7. The Board should decide collectively how to proceed with handling the complaint and should aim to resolve the issue efficiently, effectively, and in a manner that is in the best interests of the School and the other party involved;
- 7.6.8. The Board will respond to all complaints in writing; and
- 7.6.9. For serious complaints that cannot be resolved after all other avenues with the School and the Board, a Conciliation Committee may be formed from selected Board members to address the matter thoroughly.

8. Conciliation Committee:

In the case of a Conciliation Committee being formed the following protocols must be followed:

- 8.1.1. The Principal and the Chairman of the School Board decide when to refer a complaint to the Conciliation Committee ("the *Committee*"), after all other avenues with the School and the Board have been exhausted;
- 8.1.2. A person, other than the Chairman, must be nominated as a Convenor of the Committee by the Principal and the Chairman of the School Board;
- 8.1.3. There must be at least 4 other members on the Committee, of whom at least two are Board members, nominated based on their suitability;
- 8.1.4. Three members of this Committee form a quorum for an individual case;
- 8.1.5. Members of the committee are required to:
 - 8.1.5.1. Ensure the proceedings of the committee are confidential;
 - 8.1.5.2. Operate in a fair and objective manner;
 - 8.1.5.3. Fulfil the aim to conciliate not judge;
- 8.1.6. The Chairman has no further involvement until the Convenor reports back at the end of the Committee's deliberations;
- 8.1.7. The Committee should act efficiently, effectively and seek to resolve the issue for all parties;
- 8.1.8. When the Convenor calls a meeting, the following points must be complied with:
 - 8.1.8.1. Meetings should be attended by members of the Conciliation Committee, plus the Principal, and/or a key member of staff;

- 8.1.8.2. The Convenor should reiterate to the persons involved that their role is to conciliate and they wish to reach a mutually acceptable resolution;
- 8.1.8.3. The content or nature of the meetings should be kept confidential by all parties and not disclosed to any other parties, including other members of the board;
- 8.1.8.4. The Committee should communicate with the persons involved in the case in an appropriate and professional manner relating to conciliating and resolving the disputes, and all communication should be recorded;
- 8.1.8.5. The Convenor may invite the persons involved to provide any relevant papers etc that they would like considered in the case;
- 8.1.8.6. The Convenor may invite the persons involved to speak if it is deemed to be appropriate, necessary and beneficial to fulfilling the aim of conciliating the dispute;
- 8.1.8.7. The Convenor may ask the Principal and/or parents or guardians, or persons involved to leave the meeting to give the committee time to meet alone;
- 8.1.8.8. Additional meetings may be required to fully address and resolve the dispute;
- 8.1.8.9. When a positive solution is reached, the Convenor should provide a summary of the outcome and confirm the nature of the agreement or resolution before the meeting disperses;
- 8.1.8.10. The agreement should be recorded, copied and circulated to relevant persons as soon as possible;
- 8.1.8.11. At the end of the committee meeting, the Convenor should make a full report and submit it to the Chairman to be presented at the next possible Board meeting; and
- 8.1.8.12. The committee may seek outside advice from other sources such as AISWA Legal Services.

9. Compliance with Registration Standards:

- 9.1. Non-government schools in Western Australia, such as Bethel Christian School, are required to be registered by the Director General of the Department of Education;
- 9.2. Registration provides assurance to parents and the community that non-government schools meet the standards determined by the Minister and other requirements specified in Part 4 of the [School Education Act 1999](#) and the [School Education Regulations 2000](#);
- 9.3. The Director General of the Department of Education is responsible for ensuring that the school observes the registration standards, including the standard about its complaints handling system. Any student, parent or community member is entitled to contact the Director General with concerns about how the school has dealt with a complaint. Information is available on the Department of Education website – www.education.wa.edu.au/non-government-school-complaints. While the Director General may consider whether the school has breached the registration standards, she does not have power to intervene in a complaint or override the school's decision.

Supporting Documents:

Enrolment Policy

Conditions of Enrolment

Student Code of Conduct

Parent Guardian Code of Conduct

Staff Code of Conduct

Peace Packs