



Grievance Policy Parents/Students (Incl. Overseas Students)

VISION STATEMENT

GERALDTON GRAMMAR SCHOOL WILL PROVIDE OUTSTANDING EDUCATION AND A STRONG SENSE OF COMMUNITY, CULTIVATING PEOPLE OF INTEGRITY, INDEPENDENCE OF MIND AND A LOVE OF LEARNING.

Introduction	This statement outlines the Geraldton Grammar School policy on grievances by a parent/s or student/s.
Scope and application	Policy applies to all employees of Geraldton Grammar School but mainly the policy makers – members of the senior management or executive team
Related legislation and guidelines	No legislation but all AISWA guidelines are used as a format for this policy.
Related Policies	
Evaluation	3 years

Date	Action (issue, reissue, amendment, replacement of pages, etc)	Initials
25/9/02	Draft	SSW
17/10/02	Amended	SSW
14/12/06	Change name of Policy and Addendum re Overseas students	SSW
31/3/10	Revised	SSW/SPN
16/9/10	Revised	GMY
22/3/11	Revised	GMY
6/04/11	Revised	GMY
27/3/13	Crest updated	SPN
17/2/15	Reviewed and Amended	NJE
20/3/15	Amended – change of address for DES office	NJE

GRIEVANCE POLICY

1 PARENT/SCHOOL COMMUNICATION (INCLUDING GRIEVANCES)

The school holds many meetings through the year and encourages parents to attend the school and to meet the staff. The dates and times are published (if known) in the term calendar which is distributed to all parents. They are also detailed in the school's weekly newsletter. These meetings may be academic, pastoral, or purely social in nature. The school strongly encourages parents to attend them all as a means of staying informed and voicing opinions.

There will always be occasions when parents need to contact the school on an individual basis. The school prefers that, in the case of the primary school, such contact should commence with the *class teacher* or, at the secondary school, with their child's *home group teacher* or *subject teacher*. However, it must be understood that as these staff members are often in the classroom and therefore not immediately available, it will sometimes be necessary to leave a message requesting a return call. An alternative at the secondary school is to contact the relevant *Head of School* or *Head of Learning Area*. Parents are reminded that their child's homework diary is an ideal means of communication for quickly passing informal messages to teachers.

Informal Parental Concerns and Grievances

The staff members mentioned above should always be the first to be contacted, although he/she may refer a parent on to a colleague whose responsibilities are more pertinent to the issue raised. The following is a guide that a referral or approach should follow with personnel listed in priority order. The staff member mentioned first would be approached first:

Middle and Senior School

For academic issues –

- * class teacher
- * Head of Learning Area
- * Head of Senior School or
Head of Middle School

For pastoral, disciplinary issues –

- * home group teacher
- * Head of Senior School or
Head of Middle School

For administrative or organisational issues –

- * Head of Senior School or
Head of Middle School

Primary School

- * class teacher
- * Head of Primary

- * class teacher
- * Head of Primary

- * Head of Primary

Having raised an informal concern or complaint parents are encouraged to follow it through, approaching staff in the order shown above, until the issue is satisfactorily resolved.

For All Students and Parents

For enrolment issues –

- * Administration

For financial issues –

- * the Business Manager

For health issues -

- * The Head of Senior School, Head of Middle School or the Head of Primary

For sports issues –

- * the coach
- * the teacher in charge of the sport
- * Head of Health and Physical Education
- * the Head of Senior School, Head of Middle School or the Head of Primary

Formal Parental Grievances

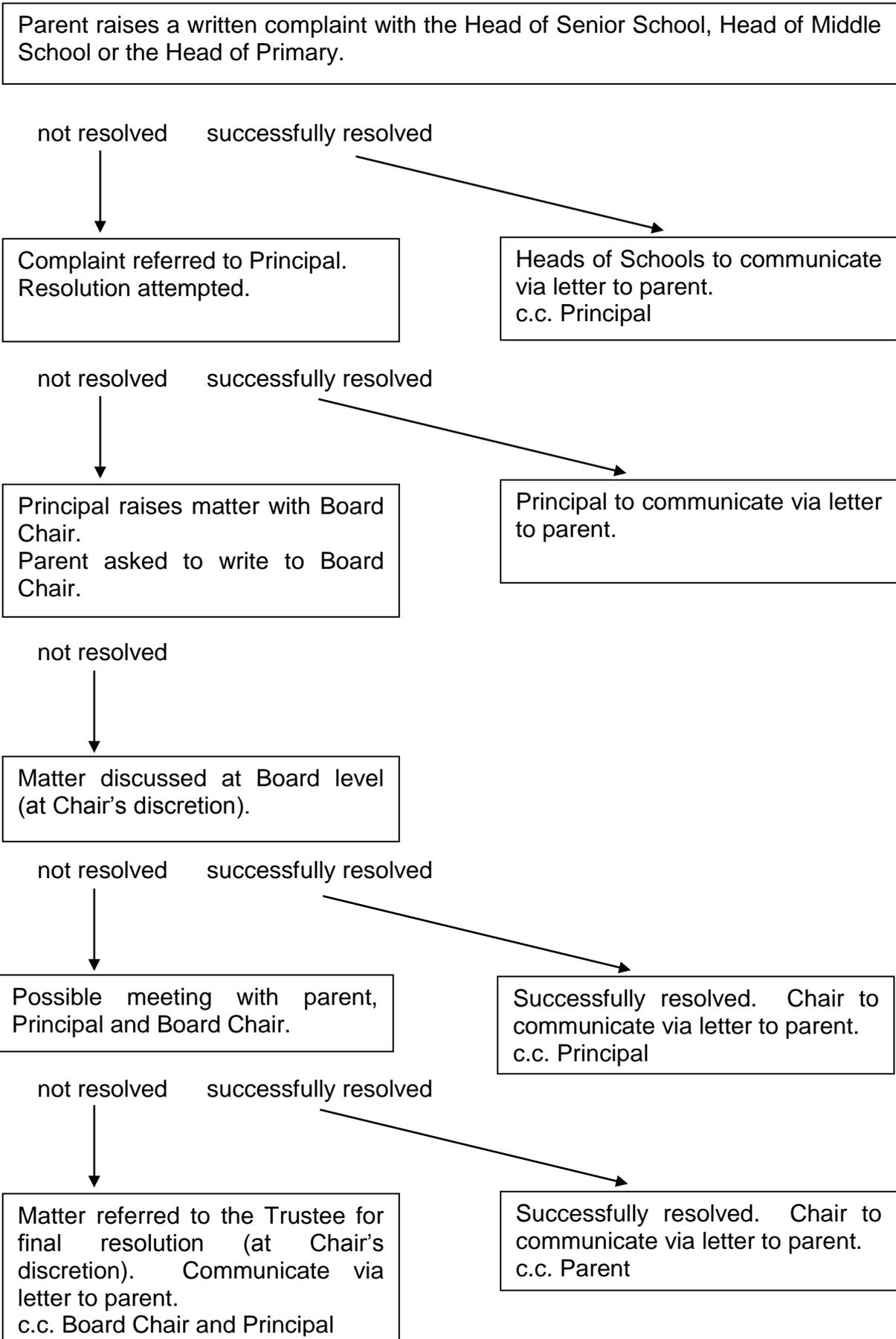
Unresolved grievances after following the above format or very serious concerns of any nature, should be addressed to the Head of Senior School, Head of Middle School or Head of Primary, if they have not already been involved. If the matter is still unresolved, the Principal should be contacted. If parents have a specific issue about a member of staff or another matter which they want the Principal to formally investigate they must ultimately put the complaint in writing and give permission for the complaint to be shared with the staff member(s) or persons concerned. Parents are advised that members of the school's Board of Governors will not act on issues unless:

- (a) they have first been discussed with the Principal and remain unresolved to the parent's satisfaction; and
- (b) the Principal has been formally advised that the parent intends to take the issue to the school's Board of Governors, and
- (c) parents write to the Chairman of the Board to formally complain. If the matter is still unresolved after discussion with the Board Chairman, parents must accept that their complaint has been heard and cannot be resolved as they could wish it to be resolved.

Grievances made anonymously will not be dealt with.

Parents are assured that, with their permission, grievances will only be shared with the people who need to be involved, as judged by the Principal. As professional educators we would expect no recriminations for the child(ren) of parents making a complaint; the Principal should be informed immediately if parents believe that this has not been the case.

PARENT COMPLAINTS POLICY



2 STUDENT WORRIES AND GRIEVANCES

The school recognises the right of an individual student to feel free to make a complaint and will endeavour to resolve that complaint in an open and fair manner.

If a student is worried about something or wants to complain about something, then the following advice will be helpful.

The Informal Process

There are many people ready and willing to talk to students about their worries. The student can choose *anyone* from the list below (which is **not** in priority order) to go and talk to. The student should choose the person with whom they are most comfortable. A student can take another student along if he/she wishes. Hopefully, the person chosen will be able to resolve the problem.

In the primary school –

- class teacher and/or specialist teacher
- Chaplain
- Head of Primary
- Principal

In the middle and senior school –

- another student (friend, student leader, captain, etc)
- class teacher
- Home Group teacher
- Head of House
- Chaplain
- Head of Senior School
- Head of Middle School
- Head of Student Development
- Principal

The Formal Process

A formal complaint must be a detailed, written account of the nature of the complaint submitted to either the Head of Senior School, the Head of Middle School or the Head of Primary. He/she will then discuss the matter with the student, endeavour to solve the problem and offer advice about a sensible course of action. This would probably involve a consultative process with all parties concerned.

If this action fails to resolve the matter to the student's satisfaction, then the student must take the matter directly to the Principal.

Note:

If a student appeals a suspension, his/her education will continue until the appeal process is finalised within 20 days.

ADDENDUM TO GRIEVANCE POLICY FOR OVERSEAS STUDENTS

- Every effort will be made to settle any grievance between the student and the school through the normal pastoral care channels as set out in the Grievance Policy and Pastoral Care program.
- Any problem arising with the student will first be discussed between the hostel manager and a delegated representative of the school with a view to resolving the dispute at that level.
- If there is a grievance against the Principal this will automatically go to the Chair of the Board of Governors to be handled. If further assistance is required, the school Trustees will be notified. If still not resolved the matter would go into the next two processes.
- Any matter arising from discussions or any other matter may be submitted to The Independent Conciliator, at the Department of Educational Services and currently located:

Level 9, 20 Walters Drive, Osborne Park. WA. 6017

To make an appointment with the Conciliation Officer, phone or email the Department of Educational Services (94411900, conciliation@des.wa.edu.au)

- If such conciliation and mediation do not resolve the matter either the school or the student may refer it to arbitration. In that event the matter shall be submitted to the Commonwealth Overseas Student Ombudsman. The arbitration shall be conducted in accordance with and subject to the Commercial Arbitration Act, 1985. The arbitrator shall have the powers set out in Schedule 1 of that Act. The decision of the arbitrator shall be accepted by the parties as final and binding, subject to any appeal available under Section 64(3) of the Act. GGS will implement any decision and/or any preventative action required by the independent appeals body following its decision.
- A student may have his/her parent/guardian present during any formal interview process regarding deferment and/or suspension of study.
- If a student appeals a decision by the school, his/her education will continue until the appeal process is finalized within 20 days.



COMPLAINTS FORM

This form should be used when a person wishes to make a complaint against the School or a member of the school community.

Please complete the Complaints Form and return it marked:

For the private attention of: (please circle)	Head of Primary	Head of Middle School	Head of Senior School
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You should expect to be contacted regarding this complaint within 5 working days (during school terms).

Date you are lodging this form:			
Your details: please only provide the contact details that you are happy for our staff to use to contact you.			
Family Name:			
Given Name/s:			
Address:			
Phone Numbers:	Mobile:	Home:	
Email:			

Relationship with the School (please tick)

- Current Student
 Former Student
 Other (please specify) _____

- Current Parent/Guardian
 Former Parent/Guardian

If you are part of our School Community, have you (please tick)

- Read the Grievance Policy Yes No
 Read the School Community Code of Conduct Yes No
 Discussed the issue with those directly involved? Yes No

