



1. INTRODUCTION & PURPOSE

From time to time misunderstandings between students and/or between employees or dissatisfaction with the College's policies, procedures, employees or quality of educational program will arise. This policy seeks to provide a mechanism for dealing with these issues which is consistent with our vision.

2. PURPOSE

To function as a Christian community in supporting families by providing quality education to develop the whole person in a Christ-centred, caring environment for life and eternity.

3. DEFINITIONS

The following terms have the following meanings:

- **Complainant:** A person with a grievance.
- **Grievance:** A behaviour or action of another person or the College which in the reasonable opinion of the complainant:
 - has, or is likely to have, an unreasonable negative impact on the complainant to undertake their duties: or
 - has, or is likely to have, an unreasonable negative impact on the complainant and their child/family: or
 - has or is likely to have, an unreasonable negative impact on the relationship between the complainant and /or other staff members/College Community: or
 - is illegal or inconsistent with the Biblical values and principles underlying the College's operation.
- **Dispute:** A grievance that is unsatisfactory pursued or resolved.
- **Reportable Conduct:** Sexual misconduct, ill-treatment and behaviour causing psychological harm (Section 25A Ombudsman Act 1974 and as amended).

4. POLICY

Toongabbie Christian College (TCC) is committed to resolving any grievances that may arise in a formal manner following biblical principles.

In Matthew 18:15-20 there is a God given process which seeks to bring resolution/reconciliation when there is a real or perceived offence. This policy incorporates those principles which:

- Informs a process to follow
- Exhibits procedural fairness
- Is confidential
- Is thorough in uncovering the truth
- Deals with the complainant in love
- In the light of the evidence reaches a just and fair decision, and
- Has the aim of restoring Christian Community.

Guidelines

TCC recognises the need to be fair to the Complainant, to the College and others within the College Community.

We recognise that parties to a Grievance have the right to:

- Be heard:
- Provide and request all relevant material to support the Grievance:
- Be informed of the criteria and processes, including the avenues for further review applied by the College in dealing with Complaints (a copy of the Grievance Policy);
- Be informed of the College's decision and the reason for that decision where appropriate subject to legal requirements; and

- Maintain confidentiality.

Additionally, the College has the right to:

- Amass sufficient detail about the Grievance to enable the College to properly investigate and respond to the Grievance;
- Place all relevant material before the person investigating the Grievance.
- Make an informed decision based on the investigative evidence and communicate this decision to the complainant.

Possible Outcomes

The goal of the process is to seek restoration/reconciliation but TCC's provision of outcomes will reflect what is fair and on the balance of probabilities seems reasonable in the circumstances based on the investigation.

The following remedies could be provided:

- Agreed solution or
- a College decision involving:
 - Correction;
 - Assistance; or
 - Apology; or
- Dispute unresolved.

Grievance Resolution Processes & Procedures (Refer table next page)

Note: If a Grievance involves possible reportable conduct, reference should be made to the College's Child Protection Policy.

- STEP 1** At TCC it is preferable to handle any grievance with careful and prayerful consideration and reflection on the issues involved according to the principles outlined in Matthew 7:3-5, which reflects God's love and seeks to bring resolution/reconciliation.
- If this is not possible, the process outlined in Matthew 18:5-20 is as follows:
- STEP 2** If there is a concern or a grievance, the second step is for the one who has been offended to talk privately to that person and seek to deal with the matter in a Christ- like fashion, ensuring that all of our actions are driven by motives that would bring honour to God before taking it further.
- The aim is to determine whether the complainant has a real concern or if there has been a misunderstanding. If, and only if, this does not result in the grievance being resolved the matter may, after prayerful consideration, be taken to step 3.
- STEP 3** The third step is to take two or three witnesses, so their very word may be established. The complainant is to bring their immediate Supervisor/Coordinator to help work through any issues that might have occurred.
- If, and only if, this does not result in the conflict being resolved within 14 days the matter may, after prayerful considerations, be taken to step 4.
- STEP 4** If the situation has not been resolved after 14 days then the Deputy Principal is involved in this step. If there is still no resolution, then the matter will proceed to the next step.
- Note:** If the grievance is against the principal the Board is involved after Step 4.
- STEP 5** If the situation has not been resolved after 14 days then the Principal is involved in this step. If there is still no resolution, then the matter will proceed to the next step.
- STEP 6** The Board Chair will be given all information. The Board will review the process of the investigation.
- In reaching a decision on any matters before it the College Board will consider all the available information and act in the best interest of the College as a whole. This may result in decisions being made for reasons that cannot be fully explained because of the need to maintain confidentiality. While it is intended that a response will generally be made to matters raised with the College Board this will not usually include details of any discussion and may consist only of acknowledgment that the issue has been raised and the decision.

Dispute Unresolved

In the event that an issue is raised with the College Board and in the view of the complainant is not satisfactorily resolved it would be appropriate for issues to be discussed outside the framework that is discussed in this policy. If this occurs the College Board may decide that, after following the procedure set out in this policy, it is in the best interests of the College that the staff person's employment or the student's enrolment is terminated.

The Board may seek legal advice.

The final decision rests with the Board.

The Complainant must be advised in writing of the Board's decision within 30 days of the Board making its decision.

All decisions must satisfy conditions of appropriate Staff Multi Enterprise Agreement's and student enrolment conditions.

Grievance Resolution Processes & Procedures

Important Note: If a grievance involves possible reportable conduct reference should be made to the College's Child Protection Policy.

Step	Biblical Basis	Parties Involved (as applicable)	Processes Involved (as applicable)	Possible Outcomes (as applicable)	Indicative timeframe for this stage
One	<i>"Why do you look at the speck of sawdust in your brother's eye and pay no attention to the plank in your own eye? How can you say to your brother, 'Let me take the speck out of your eye,' when all the time there is a plank in your own eye? You hypocrite, first take the plank out of your own eye, and then you will see clearly to remove the speck from your brother's eye."</i> Matthew 7:3-5	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Complainant 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Careful and prayerful consideration and reflection on the issues involved. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Decision not to proceed with grievance Forgiveness for minor wrongs Greater sense of perspective regarding the issues 	As applicable
Two	<i>"If your brother sins against you, go and show him his fault, just between the two of you. If he listens to you, you have won your brother over."</i> Matthew 18:15	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Complainant Person involved in action or behaviour 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Meeting between parties to clarify issues and understandings 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Resolution of issues Clarified understanding 	As applicable
Three	<i>"But if he will not listen, take one or two others along, so that every matter may be established by the testimony of two or three witnesses."</i> Matthew 18:16	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Complainant Person involved in action or behaviour Immediate Supervisors 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Investigation of facts Meetings and discussions Obtaining advice 	Agreed solution or a College decision possibly involving: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Correction Assistance Apology 	14 days

Four	<i>"But if he will not listen, take one or two others along, so that 'every matter may be established by the testimony of two or three witnesses."</i> Matthew 18:16	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Complainant • Person involved in action or behaviour • Deputy Principal (if applicable) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Investigation of facts • Meetings and discussions • Obtaining advice 	Agreed solution or a College decision possibly involving: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Correction • Assistance • Apology 	14 days
Note: If the grievance is against the Principal, the Board is involved after Step 4.					
Five	<i>"But if he will not listen, take one or two others along, so that 'every matter may be established by the testimony of two or three witnesses."</i> Matthew 18:16	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Complainant • Person involved in action or behaviour • Principal 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Investigation of facts • Meetings and discussions • Obtaining advice 	Agreed solution or a College decision possibly involving: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Correction • Assistance • Apology 	14 days
Six	<i>"If he refuses to listen to them, tell it to the church; and if he refuses to listen even to the church, treat him as you would a pagan or a tax collector."</i> Matthew 18:17	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Complainant • Person involved in action or behaviour • Principal • Board 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Review of investigation • Meetings and discussions • Obtaining advice 	Agreed solution or a College decision possibly involving: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Correction • Assistance • Apology • Dispute unresolved 	30 days

Note

Anonymous complaints involving unsigned letters or unsubstantiated rumours are not pursued.

Acknowledgements

V. Danvers, Executive Officer, CSA NSW