



**St Peter's  
Woodlands**

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# Parent/Caregiver Grievance Policy



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## 1. Purpose

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This policy outlines the process for raising, addressing, and resolving grievances within the school community in a fair, transparent, and timely manner. It supports respectful relationships, contributes to a safe school environment, and ensures concerns are managed consistently, in accordance with relevant legislation, regulatory frameworks, and sector guidelines.

## 2. Scope

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This policy applies to:

- Enrolled students
- Parents and guardians of an enrolled student
- Staff (teaching and non-teaching)
- Volunteers and contractors

It covers grievances relating to:

- Educational matters
- Student welfare and wellbeing
- Staff conduct
- School policies, procedures, and decisions
- Bullying, harassment, or discrimination (where not covered by specific policies)

## 3. Guiding Principles

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St Peter's Woodlands is committed to:

- Procedural fairness and natural justice
- Timely, transparent resolution
- Respectful communication
- Confidentiality and privacy
- Protection from victimisation
- Compliance with all relevant legislation and regulatory guidelines

This policy is implemented in alignment with the National Principles for Child Safe Organisations as required for schools under South Australian law.

## 4. Definition of Grievance

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A grievance is a concern, problem, or complaint about a decision, behaviour, or situation perceived as unfair, unjust, or unreasonable.

## 5. Informal Resolution

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Where appropriate, concerns should first be addressed informally:

- Speaking directly with the relevant person (e.g. teacher, staff member)
- Request a meeting to clarify issues and seek resolution
- Use respectful and constructive communication



Most concerns can be resolved at this stage.

Formal Grievance Procedure

## 6. Confidentiality and Discretion

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- All grievances will be managed with appropriate confidentiality and on a *need-to-know* basis.
- Records will be maintained securely and in accordance with Privacy Act obligations and the ISA Privacy Compliance Manual (2025 update).
- Grievances between parents/caregivers fall outside the jurisdiction of the School and should be addressed through the Parental Code of Conduct.
- If a parent/caregiver has a grievance involving a student, they must approach the class teacher rather than the student directly.
- Nothing in this policy prevents or delays mandatory reporting obligations. Where a grievance involves concerns about child abuse, neglect or harm, the matter must be reported immediately in accordance with the Child Protection Policy, the *Children and Young People (Safety) Act 2017 (SA)*, and mandatory reporting requirements
- Not all grievances constitute formal complaints; the Principal may determine appropriate handling depending on context, severity and relevance with other policies including the Positive Behaviour for Learning Policy.

## 7. Formal Grievance Procedure

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Where concerns cannot be resolved informally, parents/caregivers should follow the **Grievance Procedure – Parents/Caregivers** provided as an appendix to this policy.

Steps generally include:

1. Submit the grievance in writing to the Principal.
2. Principal review and response, including investigation where required. Formal grievances will be acknowledged in writing within five school days.
3. Communication of findings and agreed actions.
4. Opportunity for follow-up or clarification.

St Peter's Woodlands will aim to complete investigations and provide an outcome within a reasonable timeframe, generally within 20 school days, subject to the complexity of the matter.

In some circumstances, students may be suspended, or parents/caregivers barred from site during investigation period. Any restrictions on parent/caregiver access during an investigation will be proportionate, risk-based, and applied only where necessary to ensure safety or integrity of the process.

Once the investigation has been completed by St Peter's Woodlands, if the outcome is not suitable, the matter can be escalated to School Council by sending an email to the Chair of School Council. The matter will then be dealt with by School Council.

Records of grievances, investigations and outcomes will be retained as evidence of compliance with registration standards and may be reviewed by the Education Standards Board if required.

## 8. Escalation Pathways

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### 1. Education Standards Board (ESB) — South Australia

Parents/caregivers may contact the Education Standards Board (SA) for complaints that:

- Relate to school compliance obligations
- Have not been resolved despite following the School's full process



- The Education Standards Board generally refers complaints back to the School unless they relate to regulatory compliance or serious matters requiring external oversight

## **2. Equal Opportunity Commission (SA)**

Complaints involving unlawful discrimination, harassment, or victimisation may be directed to the Equal Opportunity Commissioner (SA).

## **3. Teachers Registration Board (SA)**

Complaints relating to teacher conduct may be referred to the TRBSA.

# **9. Monitoring and Review**

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This policy is reviewed as needed and at least every five years.

# **10. Further Information**

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Further information regarding this policy is available from any member of the Executive Leadership Team.

## **Relevant Legislation**

Privacy Act 1988

Education and Children's Services Act 2019 (SA)

Education and Early Childhood Services (Registration and Standards) Act 2011

Children and Young People (Safety) Act 2017 (SA)

Australian Education Act 2013 and Regulations

Equal Opportunity Act 1984 (SA)

## **Related Policies**

PRIN-04	Child Protection
PRIN-03	Bullying and Harassment Policy
PRIN-02	Positive Behaviour for Learning Policy
PRIN-28	Privacy
PRIN-54	Parental Code of Conduct
ELC-56	ELC Grievances

## **Related Procedures & Standard Operating Procedures**

PRIN-49-01	Grievance Procedure for Parents/Caregivers (Appendix to this document)
WHS-44-02	Grievance Procedure for Staff
WHS-44-03	Grievance Procedure for Students

## **Related Forms & Checklists**

Barring Notice – Section 93 of the Education and Children's Services Act 2019 (SA)

## **Related Safe Work Practices & Guidance Notes**

None



### **Related Other Documentation**

ISA Privacy Compliance Manual (2025)

National Principles for Child Safe Organisations

### **Other**

None



## Appendix: Grievance Procedure Parents/Caregivers (PRIN-47-01)

The Procedure PRIN-47-01 Grievances – Parents/Caregivers is attached to and forms part of this Policy.

