



**ST DOMINIC'S  
PRIORY COLLEGE**

EDUCATING GIRLS, INSPIRING CONFIDENCE

*inspiring confidence*

ST DOMINIC'S PRIORY COLLEGE

# STUDENT GRIEVANCE POLICY

LAST REVIEW DATE	NEXT REVIEW DATE
March 2023	March 2027
RESPONSIBLE OFFICER	College Principal

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*We acknowledge St Dominic's Priory College is situated on Kurna Land and we pay our respects to Elders past, present and future.*

## 1. INTRODUCTION

### MISSION & VISION

1.1 St Dominic's Priory College is 'a Catholic College educating girls in the Dominican Tradition.'

1.2 The vision statement of St Dominic's Priory College highlights:

*"Inspired by the Gospel of Jesus Christ, we are a girls' college committed to truth and compassion. In the spirit of St Dominic, we contemplate the possibilities and honour the sacred dignity of each person through word and action.*

### CONTEXT

1.3 In realising its mission, St Dominic's Priory College ('the College') acknowledges that at times students may be concerned about something at the College or have a grievance and wish to speak to someone about it. They may also want their parents/guardians to be involved and to make initial contact with the College. This policy is designed to provide students and families with the scope on how to resolve any issues that prevent students from making the most of their time at St Dominic's.

## 2. POLICY STATEMENT

2.1 St Dominic's Priory College is committed to maintaining an environment which is trusting, safe, welcoming, open and promotes effective communication.

2.2 St Dominic's Priory College:

- recognises that there may be occasions when a student or parent/guardian perceives that there has been an unfair or inappropriate response to a school issue;
- is committed to resolving all student and parent grievances through effective, fair and impartial procedures.

2.3 A grievance refers to a situation where an individual believes that a student, staff member, parent/guardian or any other member of the College community has acted outside of the normal policies and practices that the College promotes and expects.

## 3. SCOPE

3.1 This policy applies to all students, parent/guardians and is supported by staff working within or for St Dominic's Priory College.

## 4. PRINCIPLES

- 4.1 St Dominic's aims to create a supportive environment in which students are empowered to be young women of truth, hope and integrity. Students are encouraged to respect and support the rights of others and develop positive, respectful relationships. Particular attention is provided to nurture relationships and reconciliation within a restorative framework. St Dominic's is a place where the opportunity for learning and growth is at the heart of our student behaviour management.
- 4.2 At St Dominic's, we aim to provide a harmonious, positive and productive learning environment. When possible, we use a restorative approach when working through issues and seek to resolve grievances fairly, efficiently, promptly and in accordance with related legislation. This approach looks at what happened, who has been affected and in what way, as well as what needs to happen to make things right. It aims to educate students towards self-directed right behaviour, which respects, promotes, nurtures and protects healthy relationships. It focuses on relationships and personal accountability through reflection and is based on the following six principles:
1. Focus on the relationship and how people are affected;
  2. Restore damaged relationships;
  3. Talk about the behaviour without blaming or becoming personal;
  4. See mistakes and misbehaviour as an opportunity for learning;
  5. Accept ambiguity;
  6. Be future-focused and talk about how to make things right.
- 4.3 Students and parents/guardians who have a concern or grievance are encouraged in the first instance to raise the matter directly with the relevant staff member. If that is not appropriate or desirable, contact should be made with the student's Home Class teacher, Year Level Coordinator, or trusted adult. When unsure, we suggest parents/guardians make contact with us at College Reception, who will then direct the call to the appropriate person.

## 5. RESPONSIBILITIES

### STUDENTS WILL

- a. raise concerns with a trusted adult or staff member;
- b. maintain confidentiality;
- c. avoid using social media as a platform for grievances.

### PARENTS/GUARDIANS WILL

- a. raise concerns with a relevant staff member in a respectful and timely manner;
- b. work in partnership with the College to support good outcomes for all and promote personal responsibility;
- c. reinforce positive and responsible behaviour;
- d. provide a supportive environment for their children;
- e. avoid using social media as a platform for grievances.

**STAFF WILL**

- a. treat students' concerns sensitively and confidentially;
- b. acknowledge receipt of the complaint in a timely manner;
- c. investigate the effectiveness of outcomes;
- d. notify College Leadership when issues are ongoing, unresolved and/or serious;
- e. be a role model for all members of the community by treating others with respect;
- f. implement the College policy in a fair, responsible and consistent manner;
- g. use a restorative approach when working with student behaviour issues;
- h. educate students towards self-directed right behaviour that respects, promotes, nurtures and protects healthy relationships;
- i. be positive and authentic in their disposition towards young people and their families;
- j. follow the **St Dominic's Priory College Safeguarding Children and Young People, Professional Boundaries for Staff Employed at St Dominic's Priory College, and Student Wellbeing and Child Protection** policies;
- k. engage in ongoing professional learning;
- l. maintain accurate records as necessary.

**COLLEGE LEADERSHIP WILL**

- a. ensure policies and procedures are in place;
- b. ensure student and staff resources reflect current practices, policies and procedures;
- c. ensure that all grievances will support and uphold procedural fairness and be addressed in a timely and confidential manner;
- d. promote models of behaviour between school personnel and students based on mutual respect and consideration;
- e. ensure that the College is adequately resourced;
- f. ensure that all grievances are dealt with from a position of empathy and impartiality;
- g. ensure that the College's policies, procedures, systems and processes enable the development of personal responsibility;
- h. be involved in the management of instances which may involve suspension / mandatory notification / police notification;
- i. support Year Level Coordinators and staff with persistent breaches of policy by students;
- j. maintain accurate records as necessary.

Year Level Coordinators, Pastoral Care teachers, and/or a member of College Leadership may become involved to help resolve a concern or offer further advice on support available. The College Principal may become involved when issues are ongoing, unresolved and/or serious.

## 6. SPECIFIC GRIEVANCES

6.1 Notwithstanding this procedure, a Complainant or the Principal may determine that some Grievances should be lodged under an alternative framework or procedure. As such, a Complainant may choose to use one of the following procedures, or the Principal or their delegate may invite a Complainant to use one of the following procedures.

### DISCRIMINATION, BULLYING AND HARASSMENT

6.2 For Grievances relating to discrimination, bullying and harassment by a staff member, the **Safeguarding Children and Young People**, and **Student Wellbeing and Child Protection** policies apply.

### CHILD ABUSE

6.3 For Grievances relating to child abuse or neglect by a staff member, the [SACCS reporting Harm of Children and Young People Procedure \(2020\)](#) applies.

### MISCONDUCT OR SERIOUS MISCONDUCT

6.4 For Grievances relating to alleged misconduct or serious misconduct (not involving child abuse or neglect) by a staff member, the [Managing Allegations of Misconduct Guidelines \(2019\)](#) applies.

6.5 For Grievances relating to alleged misconduct or serious misconduct of a sexual nature by a staff member, the [Managing allegations of Sexual Misconduct in SA Education and Care Settings \(2019\)](#) applies.

### GRIEVANCES ABOUT A PRINCIPAL OR A DECISION BY A PRINCIPAL

6.6 Grievances about a Principal by a parent or guardian, student, visitor, volunteer or contractor, should follow the process in Clause 5 and in particular, Clause 6.2 above.

6.7 Grievances by a staff member about the Principal, or a decision they have made relating to a matter arising under the South Australian Catholic Schools Enterprise Agreement (EA), the National Employment Standards or an industrial matter affecting or relating to employment rights, privileges or duties, Clause 10 (Dispute Resolution) of the EA applies.

## 7. EXTERNAL AGENCIES

7.1 Nothing in the Grievance Policy or this Procedure is intended to prejudice the right of a Complainant to seek advice from and/or to lodge a Grievance with:

- Equal Opportunity Commission;
- Department for Child Protection – Child Abuse Report Line (CARL) 131 478;
- Fair Work Commission;
- Human Rights Commission;
- Independent Education Union of Australia;
- Dominican Education Australia; or
- Other external agencies which a Complainant may choose to engage with.

7.2 If a formal Grievance is lodged with an external agency, any internal process underway may be placed on hold, pending the outcome of the external process.

## 8. ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

- Professional Boundaries Policy for Staff Employed at St Dominic's Priory College
- Code of Conduct for Staff Employed at St Dominic's Priory College
- Parent Code of Conduct

## 9. REVISION RECORD

Document Title	Student Grievance Policy		
Document Type	Policy		
Document Date	March 2023		
Process Owner	College Principal		
Contact	Dr. Helen Steele ( <a href="mailto:hsteele@stdominic.sa.edu.au">hsteele@stdominic.sa.edu.au</a> )		
Approval Authority	College Board		
Review Date	2027		
Distribution	Website	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	SEQTA <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Sharepoint <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
History	Edition	Date	Description of change
	1.0	2023	Drafted

# PROCEDURE FOR REPORTING A GRIEVANCE



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## STEP 1: GRIEVANCES ARE DEALT WITH DIRECTLY (OR INDIRECTLY)

### *Indirectly*

- Ignored and monitored and the cause of grievance stops of its own accord.
  - No further action

### *Directly*

- The person(s) causing the grievance is asked to stop, and does so
  - No further action

## STEP 2: CAUSE OF GRIEVANCE DOES NOT STOP + ACTION (INFORMAL / FORMAL) IS TAKEN

### *Informal Report*

- The person(s) causing the grievance may be contacted or interviewed by a staff member.
- Documentation is noted in SEQTA.
  - (Grievance stops) No further action

### *Formal Report*

- The person(s) causing the grievance will be contacted and interviewed by a staff member.
- Parents / Guardians contacted and informed.
- Documentation noted in SEQTA.
- May result in mediation, counselling and/or disciplinary action.
  - (Grievance stops) No further action

## STEP 3 GRIEVANCE CONTINUES AFTER STEP 2 ABOVE

### *Immediate disciplinary action*

- Parents/Guardians contacted.
- Meeting with Principal or Delegate.
- Documentation is noted in SEQTA and in student file.

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