



SEYMOUR GRIEVANCE POLICY FOR PARENTS AND CARERS

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Policy owner:	Principal

1. Statement of Context and Purpose

The purpose of this policy is to provide parents and carers with an outline of the process for addressing matters of concern expeditiously, and sensitively, to provide for the resolution of grievances.

2. Application

This policy applies to all parents and carers of students.

3. Reference Points / Background Papers

- Seymour Vision and Values
- Seymour Code of Ethics
- Seymour College Code of Conduct
- Seymour College Privacy Policy

4. Policy Commitments

Seymour College is committed to:

- providing a safe and fair environment for its students, staff and families.
- actively promoting positive, respectful personal relationships.
- being proactive in minimising conflict.
- supporting the right of all parties to have their concerns listened to and addressed in a supportive manner.

5. Guiding Principles

- (a) As in any organisation, grievances may arise from time to time by parents and carers. The College encourages an informal and amicable resolution of grievances through discussions, mediation and/or conciliation to achieve an agreed course of conduct and behaviour.
- (b) Formal procedures will typically only be invoked when a matter cannot be resolved by informal means.
- (c) The health, safety and wellbeing of all parties remain a high priority.
- (d) Parents and carers are entitled to lodge a grievance.
- (e) Grievances should be lodged in good faith and should not be vexatious.
- (f) Confidentiality will be respected by all parties. However, in certain circumstances, information may need to be shared to help effect a resolution, address wider issues highlighted by the grievance, or where statutory or legal requirements demand that matters be reported.

6. Grievance Resolution Process

Seymour College is committed to providing a safe environment free from unjust processes and practices. As such the fundamental components leading to a successful resolution are to:

- ascertain the facts of the situation.
- outline possible responses.
- determine an appropriate outcome.
- explain that determination to all parties.

6.1 Information for Parents and Carers when raising a grievance

- (a) When considering raising a grievance, it is important that you identify the issue noting the facts and the details and consider what course of action to take and what resolution is possible.
- (b) Raise the concern or complaint as soon as possible after the issue has occurred.
- (c) Be respectful and avoid personal insults, inflammatory statements or intimidating comments.

6.2 Options for the resolution of grievances

- (a) Each party to a grievance is entitled to personal and/or professional advice, support or representation.
- (b) A person may elect to deal with a grievance in one or more of the following ways:
 - (i) Personal and informal resolution with direct discussion between the parties, conducted in a private location.
 - (ii) Involving a contact person or mediator who will, in consultation with the complainant, assist in determining an appropriate and reasonable course of action.
 - (iii) Lodging a formal grievance with the Principal or delegate. *N.B. Asking a Seymour manager or member of the CLT to act as a contact person or mediator is not to be interpreted as escalating the concern to a formal grievance.*
- (c) Neither the Minister for Education and Child Development nor the Department for Education and Child Development has any power to directly intervene in any grievances / complaints relating to the operations of a non-government school.
- (d) An outline of the grievance procedures can be viewed in Appendix A.

6.3 The role of the College Board

- (a) In the first instance, the Chair and members of the College Board are not involved with the receipt, investigation or resolution of parent grievances.
- (b) Where a grievance is raised with the Principal, a person may, only if the matter cannot otherwise be resolved, lodge a formal complaint with the Chair of the College Board, who will determine subsequent action.

6.4 Withdrawal of a grievance

- (a) Should a parent/carer who has raised a grievance wish to withdraw their allegations/concern, they may do so at any time and at any stage of the resolution process. If a grievance is withdrawn, the matter will be deemed to be closed.

6.5 Record keeping

- (a) Accurate, appropriate and secure records will be kept by the Principal/ delegate.

6.6 Outcomes

- (a) A matter is dealt with successfully if all parties find the outcome(s) acceptable. Should any party not be satisfied with the result, s/he can choose to pursue the matter further.
- (b) All agreed outcomes will be documented.
- (c) Each grievance is dealt with on its particular circumstances and merits and any outcome reached will not constitute a precedent for future grievances.
- (d) The outcome of any grievance raised may be confidential in which case it will not be discussed with anyone outside of the grievance process.

7. Implications for Practice

7.1 At Principal Level

To properly implement this policy, the Principal must ensure:

- that this policy is reviewed and endorsed every two years;
- that copies of this policy are made available to College carers and parents, for example on the Seymour College intranet and internet sites;
- that this policy is incorporated into the Principal's record of current policies;
- that this policy is incorporated into Seymour College's induction program, to ensure that all employees are aware of the policy, have read and understood the policy, and acknowledge their commitment to comply with the policy;

7.2 At Other Levels

To properly implement this policy, all Seymour College's employees must ensure:

- that they will abide by this policy and assist Seymour College in the implementation of this policy;

This policy and procedure is available on the College's intranet (SOCS) in the Policies section

and on the Seymour College Website

Appendix A - Process for Resolving a Parent/ Carer Grievance

Appendix A

Process for Resolving Parent/Carer Grievance

