Complaints and Grievance Resolution Policy

Rationale:
Georges River Grammar has both a desire and a responsibility to ensure that high standards of conduct are maintained by staff and students at all times. To provide a harmonious, positive and productive school environment that aims to resolve grievances fairly, efficiently, promptly and in accordance with requirements. Most importantly, the School aims to carry out all aspects associated with complaints and grievances according to the principles of procedural fairness. The resolution of all alleged complaints and grievances associated with the School will be dealt with under this policy.

Procedures:

- Georges River Grammar seeks to provide a positive, harmonious and productive environment.

- It is important that all formal complaints, grievances, ensuing procedures and outcomes are fully documented. All formal complaints and grievances that are reported to the Principal will be recorded on a Complaints and Grievance Incident Report Form.

- Complainants are encouraged to lodge formal grievances/complaints in serious cases or when unwelcome behaviour persists despite advice to a respondent that his/her behaviour is causing problems and must cease. Formal grievances/complaints should be lodged with the Principal, using the appropriate form, which should be completed as accurately as possible. If the Principal is an inappropriate person then the documentation should be lodged with the Georges River Grammar Board.

- The rights of complainants and respondents will be upheld at all times, including the use of fair, confidential, impartial and dignified resolution procedures.

- It is the Principal’s responsibility to provide a healthy and positive school environment that is free from discrimination and harassment. In doing so, Principal must ensure that all staff are aware of their rights and responsibilities.

- The Principal is required to use local grievances/complaints resolution procedures, where appropriate, for resolving grievances/complaints in relation to issues that fall within the school’s area of responsibility. All cases of serious misconduct – sexual offences, criminal charges, or other serious incidents – must instead be referred to the appropriate authority as well.

- It is incumbent upon the Principal to act where unacceptable conduct is observed or brought to their attention.

- A complainant may at any stage choose to take their grievances/complaints directly to an external agency such as the Equal Opportunity Commission, the Human Rights and Equal Opportunity Commission or the Ombudsman.
• The Principal may choose to respond to a grievances/complaints through an informal process in cases where the grievances/complaints is minor, the complainant wishes the matter to be dealt with informally or the grievances/complaints has arisen from lack of or unclear communication.

• Formal processes will be used when informal processes haven’t been successful, a complainant seeks a formal process, or the Principal believes the grievances/complaints warrants formal investigation.

• The formal process involves:

  1. Investigating the grievance/complaint including formal interviews, written statements, conveying the details of the complaint to the respondent in writing providing the opportunity for a written response.

  2. Dismissing or accepting the grievance/complaint. Acceptance may involve verbal or written warnings, conciliation, or counselling etc.

  3. Preparation of a detailed confidential report.

  4. Monitoring of the situation.

    • Parties dissatisfied with the process can appeal to the previously mentioned external agencies or the Georges River Grammar Board.

    • All matters must be treated with utmost confidentiality, and professional respect at all times.

    • Grievances/complaints occur when an employee complains that an action or decision has been taken (or not taken) that he/she believes to be a breach of a relevant Act, Regulation or Order, infringes upon the principles of merit and equity, or is otherwise unreasonable.

    • Undisclosed or unresolved grievances/complaints create distress and can be a violation of a person’s rights.

    • Resolution of grievances/complaints at a local level, where appropriate, is the desired outcome.

    • Employees may choose to resolve grievances/complaints personally by talking with, or writing to the person whose behaviour is of concern.

    • Employees may choose to seek assistance in resolving grievances/complaints, including assistance from the Principal. In such circumstances the Principal may use local grievances/complaints resolution procedures including private discussions, mediation, monitoring, training or counselling.
Complaints & Grievance Incident Report Form

DATE OF INCIDENT: ____________  DATE INCIDENT WAS REPORTED: ____________

LOCATION OF INCIDENT:
____________________________________________________________________________________
____________________________________________________________________________________

DETAILS OF INCIDENT: Please be as specific as possible. Include details of all persons involved in the incident; all dialogue, including what each participant said.
____________________________________________________________________________________
____________________________________________________________________________________
____________________________________________________________________________________
____________________________________________________________________________________

TO BE COMPLETED BY PRINCIPAL/DESIGNATE:

ACTION TO BE TAKEN:
____________________________________________________________________________________
____________________________________________________________________________________
____________________________________________________________________________________

RESULT OF ACTION:
____________________________________________________________________________________
____________________________________________________________________________________

FUTURE ACTIONS:
____________________________________________________________________________________
____________________________________________________________________________________
____________________________________________________________________________________
Privacy Policy

Updated July 2010

Rationale:
Your privacy is important.

This statement outlines the Schools’ Policy on how a school uses and manages personal information provided to or collected by it.

The School is bound by the National Privacy Principles contained in the Commonwealth Privacy Act.

The School may, from time-to-time, review and update this Privacy Policy to take account of new laws and technology, changes to schools’ operations and practices and to make sure it remains appropriate to the changing school environment.

Procedures:

What kind of personal information does the School collect and how does the School collect it?

The type of information the School collects and holds includes (but is not limited to) personal information, including sensitive information, about:

- Pupils and parents and/or guardians (‘Parents’) before, during and after the course of a pupil’s enrolment at the School;
- Job applicants, staff members, volunteers and contractors; and
- Other people who come into contact with the School.

Personal Information you provide: The School will generally collect personal information held about an individual by way of forms filled out by parents or pupils, face-to-face meetings and interviews, and telephone calls, eg. psychologists.

Personal Information provided by other people: In some circumstances the School may be provided with personal information about an individual from a third party, eg. a report provided by a medical professional or a reference from another school.

Exception in relation to employee records: Under the Privacy Act, the National Privacy Principles do not apply to an employee record. As a result, this Privacy Policy does not apply to the School’s treatment of an employee record, where the treatment is directly related to a current or former employment relationship between the School and employee.

How will the School use the personal information you provide?

The School will use personal information it collects from you for the primary purpose of collection, and for such other secondary purposes that are related to the primary purpose of collection and reasonably expected, or to which you have consented.

Pupils and Parents: In relation to personal information of pupils and parents, the School’s primary purpose of collection is to enable the School to provide schooling for the pupil. This includes satisfying both the needs of parents and the needs of the pupil throughout the whole period the pupil is enrolled at the School.

The purposes for which the School uses personal information of pupils and parents include:

- To keep parents informed about matters related to their child’s schooling through correspondence, newsletters and magazines.
- Day-to-day administration.
- Looking after pupils’ educational, social and medical well-being.
- Seeking donations and marketing for the School.
- To satisfy the School’s legal obligations and allow the School to discharge its duty of care.
In some cases where the School requests personal information about a pupil or parent, if the information requested is not obtained, the School may not be able to enrol or continue the enrolment of the pupil.

**Job applicants, staff members and contractors:** In relation to personal information of job applicants, staff members and contractors, the School’s primary purpose of collection is to assess and (if successful) to engage the applicant, staff member or contractor, as the case may be.

The purposes for which the School uses personal information of job applicants, staff members and contractors include:

- In administering the individual’s employment or contract
- For insurance purposes.
- Seeking funds and marketing for the School.
- To satisfy the School’s legal obligations, for example, in relation to child protection legislation.

**Volunteers:** the School also obtains personal information about volunteers who assist the School in its functions or conduct associated activities, such as (alumni associations), to enable the School and the volunteers to work together.

**Marketing and fundraising:** The School treats marketing and seeking donations for the future growth and development of the School as an important part of ensuring that the School continues to be a quality learning environment in which both pupils and staff thrive. Personal information held by the School may be disclosed to an organisation that assists in the School’s fundraising, for example, the School’s Foundation or alumni organisation.

Parents, staff, contractors and other members of the wider School community may from time-to-time receive fundraising information. School publications, like newsletters and magazines, which include personal information, may be used for marketing purposes.

**Who might the School disclose personal information to?**

The School may disclose personal information, including sensitive information, held about an individual to:

- Another school;
- Government departments;
- Medical practitioners;
- People providing services to the School, including specialist visiting teachers and sports coaches;
- Recipients of School publications, such as newsletters and magazines;
- Parents and anyone you authorise the School to disclose information to.

**Sending information overseas:** The School will not send personal information about an individual outside Australia without:

- Obtaining the consent of the individual (in some cases this consent will be implied); or
- Otherwise complying with the National Privacy Principles.

**How does the School treat sensitive information?**

In referring to ‘sensitive information’, the School means: information relating to a person’s racial or ethnic origin, political opinions, religion, trade union or other professional or trade association membership, sexual preferences or criminal record, that is also personal information: and health information about an individual.

Sensitive information will be used and disclosed only for the purpose for which it was provided or a directly related secondary purpose, unless you agree otherwise, or the use or disclosure of the sensitive information is allowed by law.
Management and security of personal information.
The School’s staff is required to respect the confidentiality of pupils’ and parents’ personal information and the privacy of individuals.

The School has in place steps to protect the personal information the School holds from misuse, loss, unauthorised access, modification or disclosure by use of various methods including locked storage of paper records and pass worded access rights to computerised records.

Updating personal information.
The School endeavours to ensure that the personal information it holds is accurate, complete and up-to-date. A person may seek to update their personal information held by the School by contacting the Principal of the School at any time.

The National Privacy Principles require the School not to store personal information longer than necessary.

You have the right to check what personal information the School holds about you.
Under the Commonwealth Privacy Act, an individual has the right to obtain access to any personal information which the School holds about them and to advise the School of any perceived inaccuracy. There are some exceptions to this right set out in the Act. Pupils will generally have access to their personal information through their parents, but older pupils may seek access themselves. To make a request to access any information the School holds about you or your child, please contact the School Principal in writing.

The School may require you to verify your identity and specify what information you require. The School may charge a fee to cover the cost of verifying your application and locating, retrieving, reviewing and copying any material requested. If the information sought is extensive, the School will advise the likely cost in advance. (See Request for Student File page 174).

Consent and rights of access to the personal information of pupils.
The School respects every parent’s right to make decisions concerning their child’s education.

Generally, the School will refer any requests for consent and notices in relation to the personal information of a pupil to the pupil’s parents. The School will treat consent given by parents as consent given on behalf of the pupil, and notice to parents will act as notice given to the pupil, eg. The person signing this note does so on behalf of both parents/guardians.

Parents may seek access to personal information held by the School about them or their child by contacting the School Principal. However, there will be occasions when access is denied. Such occasions would include where release of the information would have an unreasonable impact on the privacy of others, or where the release may result in a breach of the School’s duty of care to the pupil.

The School may, at its discretion, on the request of a pupil grant that pupil access to information held by the School about them, or allow a pupil to give or withhold consent to the use of their personal information, independently of their parents. This would normally be done only when the maturity of the pupil and/or the pupil’s personal circumstances so warranted.

Inquiries
If you would like further information about the way the School manages the personal information it holds, please contact the School Principal.
Privacy Collection Notice:
1. The School collects personal information, including sensitive information about pupils and parents or guardians before and during the course of a pupil's enrolment at the School. The primary purpose of collecting this information is to enable the School to provide schooling for your son/daughter.

2. Some of the information we collect is to satisfy the School's legal obligations, particularly to enable the School to discharge its duty of care.

3. Certain laws governing or relating to the operation of schools require that certain information is collected. These include Public Health and Child Protection laws.

4. Health information about pupils is sensitive information within the terms of the National Privacy Principles under the Privacy Act. We ask you to provide medical reports about pupils from time to time.

5. The School from time to time discloses personal and sensitive information to others for administrative and educational purposes. This includes to other schools, government departments, medical practitioners, and people providing services to the School, including specialist visiting teachers, coaches, volunteers and counsellors.

6. If we do not obtain the information referred to above we may not be able to enrol or continue the enrolment of your son/daughter.

7. Personal information collected from pupils is regularly disclosed to their parents or guardians. On occasions information such as academic and sporting achievements, pupil activities, photographs and other news is published in School newsletters, newspapers, magazines and on our website. If you do not wish the School to use photographs of your son/daughter you should contact the School and notify them that you have denied permission for this action. If a photograph of your son/daughter appears on the School’s website, you can request for the photograph to be removed.

8. Parents may seek access to personal information collected about them and their son/daughter by contacting the School. Pupils may also seek access to personal information about them. However, there will be occasions when access is denied. Such occasions would include where access would have an unreasonable impact on the privacy of others, where access may result in a breach of the School's duty of care to the pupil, or where pupils have provided information in confidence.

9. As you may know the School from time to time engages in fundraising activities. Information received from you may be used to make an appeal to you. We will not disclose your personal information to third parties for their own marketing purposes without your consent.

10. We may include your contact details in a class list and School directory used internally.

11. If you provide the School with the personal information of others, such as doctors or emergency contacts, we encourage you to inform them that you are disclosing that information to the School and why, that they can access that information if they wish and that the School does not usually disclose the information to third parties.
**Request for Student File**

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<th>Name of Student:</th>
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**Reason for access:**

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<th>Name of person requesting file:</th>
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**Approved by Principal:**

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