



**ST DOMINIC'S
PRIORY COLLEGE**

EDUCATING GIRLS, INSPIRING CONFIDENCE




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ST DOMINIC'S PRIORY COLLEGE

COMMUNITY 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.



PREFACE

COMMITMENT TO SAFEGUARDING CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE

St Dominic's Priory College ('the College') has zero tolerance to children and young people coming to harm of any kind. The safeguarding of our children and young people is intrinsic to our Dominican identity, and College Vision Statement:

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. We aspire to provide an innovative, rigorous and inclusive education that leads girls and young women to achieve excellence in their studies and confidence in their future.

As Dominicans, the College is actively invested in fostering a community of safeguarding that recognises and upholds the dignity and rights of all children and young people. In alignment with the *Child Safety (Prohibited Persons) Act 2016*, the *Children & Young People (Safety) Act 2017*, the National Principles for Child Safe Organisations, and the National Catholic Safeguarding Standards, the College is further committed to creating and maintaining a child safe environment, wherein:

- Every person within the College who interacts with children and young people commits to establishing safe and supportive relationships.
- Diversity within our community is respected, and each child and young person is valued and treated equitably.
- Children and young people are well-informed of their right to feel safe and know who to talk with if they have concerns or are feeling unsafe.
- Activities with children are proactively planned, organised and reviewed; with potential risks duly considered, reduced and eliminated where possible.
- Our Community of Staff and Volunteers actively seek to become, and remain informed, of the causes and signs of harm or risks of harm to children and young people, and the strategies to prevent, safeguard against, or respond effectively.

Further information about the College's principles and objectives can be found within the [2021 – 2025 Strategic Plan](#).

To read the College's **Safeguarding Commitment Statement** in full, and access *College Policies, Procedures* and other resources, please [click here](#).

GOVERNANCE

Dominican Education Australia (DEA) is the governing authority of St Dominic's Priory College, an independent Catholic School. A Board of Directors, established in 1987, governs the College which is incorporated under the *Corporations Act 2001 (Cwlth)*. The Trustees of DEA and the College Board of Directors assures our Catholicity, fidelity to the Dominican charism, formation of Board members, excellence in teaching and learning and financial stability.

For more information about DEA visit: <https://dominicaneducationaustralia.com/>

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1. PURPOSE

- 1.1 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.

At St Dominic's Priory College, we are committed to creating and maintaining a child safe community. We encourage students, staff, parents and caregivers to contribute to forming an inclusive environment for all. We adopt strategies and educational programs that act to inspire positive relationships and acknowledges each Community Member as a unique individual with rights and responsibilities.

- 1.2 The College recognises the rights of its students, parents and caregivers, staff, or visitors to the College to lodge a Grievance.

2. POLICY STATEMENT

- 2.1 St Dominic's Priory College is governed by Dominican Education Australia and a College Board of Directors. As a Catholic College founded in the tradition of the Dominican Sisters of North Adelaide, the College is committed to ensuring that high standards of conduct are always maintained by its Community Members, and that Grievances are managed and resolved fairly, efficiently and swiftly, in accordance with applicable legislation.

- 2.2 As a College steeped in the values of St Dominic, St Dominic's Priory College believes:

- that God has made us all equal in human dignity and in our potential for friendship and for good
- that Christian beliefs must be put into practice in our relationships with each other and show respect for the dignity of individuals
- that we have the RIGHT to feel safe and comfortable
- that we have the RESPONSIBILITY to keep ourselves and our environment safe
- that we have the RESPONSIBILITY to show respect for ourselves, for others and for property.

- 2.3 St Dominic's Priory College is committed to:

- providing an environment where all Community Members feel safe and valued
- respecting the dignity and rights of each Community Member
- resolving Grievances fairly, efficiently and swiftly, in accordance with applicable legislation.
- when appropriate and accessible, resolve the matter at the local level, with the individuals concerned; and
- addressing and resolving Grievances in a mutually satisfying way.

- 2.4 Notwithstanding the commitments set out in Clause 2.3, St Dominic's Priory College acknowledges that it is not always possible to resolve problems in a manner where there is mutual acceptance of the outcome.

3. PRINCIPLES

- 3.1 Upon receipt of a Grievance by the College, due process will be followed in working towards a resolution, which will include:
- the rights of Complainants and Respondents being upheld at all times, including the use of fair, confidential and dignified resolution procedures;
 - enacting consequences which are consistent, fair and commensurate with the seriousness of the Grievance and which are guided by principles of Restorative Justice; and procedural fairness;
 - having an appeal system in place as set out in Clause 4.2 below.
- 3.2 Parties will be encouraged to resolve the matter together (on a local level) in the first instance.
- 3.3 This Policy is informed by the **SACCS Complaint Response and Resolution Procedure**. However, to the extent of an inconsistency between these documents, this policy prevails.

4. DEFINITIONS

Staff – includes employees and volunteers engaged by the College.

Community Member. Inclusive of staff, students, parents/caregivers and/or visitors students, parents and caregivers, staff, or visitors to the College.

Complainant – refers to the person who has a Grievance.

Grievance – as defined by the St Dominic's Priory College Grievance Policy, henceforth.

Respondent – refers to the person who is the subject of a Grievance.

5. LODGEMENT

PROCEDURE FOR LODGEMENT OF GRIEVANCES

- 5.1 To lodge a Grievance, a Complainant should:
- where the Grievance refers to a student concern, refer to the instructions and flowchart set out in Appendix A: 'Procedure for Reporting a Grievance' on page 8.
 - in addition to Clause 5.1a above, ensure the lodged Grievance contains:
 - clarity on the matters to which the Grievance relates;
 - sufficient details to allow the Respondent to respond to the allegation; and
 - a suggested outcome.
 - be prepared to speak further with the person subject to the Grievance to discuss the Grievance in more detail, as required.
 - allow the person who receives the Grievance sufficient time to take the steps required to resolve or address the concerns.

- 5.2 Grievances should be lodged in writing (by email or letter) to:
- a. the person identified in the flow chart set out in Appendix A: 'Procedure for Reporting a Grievance' on page 8.
 - b. a member of the College Executive Leadership Team but only where:
 - i. Clause 5.1a does not apply; or
 - ii. a Grievance has not been satisfactorily resolved on a local level; or
 - c. the Board Chair of St Dominic's Priory College, but only when a Grievance is about the Principal and the Complainant is not a staff member.
- 5.3 Nothing in this clause is intended to prejudice the rights of a Complainant to access other Grievance procedures which may be applicable under Clause 8 below.

ANONYMOUS GRIEVANCES

- 5.4 Anonymous Grievances will be responded to when the Principal deems appropriate.
- 5.5 In some situations, Grievances may not be able to be fully addressed if they are made anonymously or without sufficient detail being provided to enable an investigation or resolution of the matter.
- 5.6 To ensure procedural fairness, a Respondent has a right to know the particulars of the allegations being made against them and be given an opportunity to respond to them. This may not always be possible from an anonymous Grievance.
- 5.7 Nothing in this Policy is intended to have any bearing on the operation of the **St Dominic's Priory College Whistleblower Policy**.

6. PROCEDURE FOR RESPONDING TO GRIEVANCES

- 6.1 Grievances that relate to a student concern will be resolved according to the flowchart set out in Appendix A: 'Procedure for Reporting a Grievance' on page 8.
- 6.2 In addition to Clause 6.1 above, following receipt of a Grievance, the person responding to the Grievance will endeavour to:
- a. acknowledge the Grievance in a timely manner and make the Complainant aware of this Policy;
 - b. assess the Grievance to determine the most appropriate course of action in responding to it;
 - c. follow-up with the Complainant for more information and to further discuss the issues and preferred outcome, as necessary;
 - d. as applicable, inform the relevant senior leader of the receipt of the Grievance and provide them with the details and further assist as required;
 - e. advise the Complainant if any delays occur in the timeline; and
 - f. inform the Complainant when an outcome has occurred.

- 6.3 A person responding to a Grievance must maintain adequate written records of the Grievance and outcome, along with any supporting documentation, as applicable. Such records must be filed:
- a. on SEQTA;
 - b. with the Principal;
 - c. with a Deputy Principal; or
 - d. in another manner as the person responding to the Grievance deems appropriate, such that records can be easily found and referred to in future.

7. UNRESOLVED GRIEVANCES

- 7.1 A Complainant may, where their Grievance remains unresolved, elect to:
- a. leave their Grievance unresolved, noting that it is not always possible to resolve problems in a manner where there is mutual acceptance of the outcome; or
 - b. refer their Grievance to another party in keeping with Clause 5.2 above, and the flowchart set out in Appendix A: 'Procedure for Reporting a Grievance' on page 8.

8. SPECIFIC GRIEVANCES

- 8.1 Notwithstanding this Policy, 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

- 8.2 For Grievances relating to discrimination, bullying and harassment by a staff member, the [SACCS Responding to Discrimination, Bullying and harassment in the Workplace Procedure \(2019\)](#) applies.

CHILD ABUSE

- 8.3 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

- 8.4 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.
- 8.5 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

- 8.6 Grievances about a Principal by a parent or caregiver, student, visitor, volunteer or contractor, should follow the process in Clause 5 and in particular, Clause 5.2c above.
- 8.7 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.

9. EXTERNAL AGENCIES

- 9.1 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.
- 9.2 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.

10. 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
- SACCS Complaint Response and Resolution Procedure
- CESA Grievance Response and Resolution – Information for Complainants
- Dominican Education Australia Policy and Procedures for the Management of Complaints

10. REVISION RECORD

Document Title	Community Grievance Policy					
Document Type	Policy					
Document Date	March 2023					
Process Owner	College Principal					
Contact	Dr. Helen Steele (hsteele@stdominic.sa.edu.au)					
Approval Authority	College Leadership					
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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