



Perth Waldorf School

Grievances & Concern Policy

VERSION MANAGEMENT

Version	Date Published	Changes Made	Author of Changes
1	2008	Created	
2	September 2013	Revised - 2013 Registration recommendations. Show external, independent mediation as the final step in procedures. Show procedures for complaints concerning the School Administrator.	BL
3	April 2016	Revised – College of Teachers reviewed the flowchart and some terminology changed to better communicate scope of staff covered by policy eg..Replace Teaching Staff with Education Staff (all teachers, teaching assistants etc)	COT
		Ratified	School Council
4	October 2017	Updated Page 7 and 8, minor changes in regards to the sequence of steps taken with regards to Education Staff.	SDC
5	Feb 2018	Various minor edits	BL

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1. POLICY STATEMENT

The Perth Waldorf School is committed to resolving concerns of parents. We welcome and encourage all feedback, recognizing that concerns and grievances are important pieces of information for the school. The education of our children is enhanced if the school has good communication between parents and staff. Good procedures are needed to ensure concerns are heard, recorded, and addressed in a fair, efficient and prompt manner.

2. PURPOSE

The purpose of this policy is to explain what to do if you have a concern or grievance about anything to do with Perth Waldorf School. A “concern” means any type of problem, grievance, worry or complaint about any aspect of the Perth Waldorf School including discrimination. Some examples of concerns might include bullying, how an issue has been handled, actions of another member of the school community, safety at school, financial issues, and a child’s treatment by a member of staff.

This procedure may be used by parents, guardians, staff, or members of the public. This procedure may be used by a student’s parent or guardian on behalf of a concern or grievance their child has at the school.

3. ASSOCIATED POLICIES

Behaviour Management Policy
Enrolment Policy
Health & Safety Policy
Critical Incident & Crisis Management Policy

4. KEY PRINCIPLES

Confidential – only the people directly involved in the grievance or sorting it out can have access to information. See section headed “Record Keeping” for more information about where and how records will be kept.

Impartial (fair) – all sides get a chance to tell their side of the story. No-one makes any assumptions or takes any action until all relevant information has been collected and considered. All sides have access to support if they want or need it.

Fee of unfair repercussions of victimisation – The Administrator and school council takes all necessary steps to make sure people involved in a grievance are not victimised for coming forward with a grievance or helping sort it out.

Sort out at the immediate level, if possible – we will aim to sort out all grievances at the immediate level, if possible, with the minimum of fuss. In many cases, grievances can be sorted out by agreement between the people involved with no need for further action to be taken.

Sensitivity – The Administrator and School Council will treat all concerns seriously and sensitively.

Timely – we aim to deal with all concerns as quickly as possible. The Administrator will keep you informed with the progress of the issue.

Record Keeping – The Administrator and Staff will keep written notes of:

- Their interviews with all parties to the grievance, and
- What action they took to resolve the grievance.

These notes will be kept within the Administrator’s office while the issue is being resolved. Once the matter has been finalised, the Administrator will keep all records of concern in a secure location. Systemic problems will be identified and trends reported on by the Administrator to the School Council

Support

When a meeting occurs between a member of staff and a parent, both parties are able to have a support person present.

The support person does not say anything in grievance meetings. They are simply there to provide moral / emotional support for the person/s involved. The support person is also bound by confidentiality.

5. PROCEDURES

5.1 CONCERN & GRIEVANCE POLICY FLOWCHART

WHERE DO I GO WITH A CONCERN or GRIEVANCE?

The following flow chart outlines the appropriate procedure for raising a concern.

Management staff and members of the College of Teachers or the School Council check that the procedure has been followed if a matter is brought to them.

With regard to more whole school concerns, it may be best to put them in writing to the School Administrator for appropriate action. Or attend the weekly listening circle.

PROCEDURES FOR RAISING CONCERNS OR A GRIEVANCE

FLOW CHART

All members of the school community are obliged to follow these procedures.

The Pastoral Carer works in the school to provide support to people in our community. Feel free to contact the Pastoral Carer for a confidential discussion, listening ear, mediation at meetings, referral to outside agency and support for you and your child.

With Regard to: **Education Staff**

STEP 1: Appointment with Teacher/Assistant

- Make an appointment to discuss the concern with the relevant person.

↓ If the matter is not resolved proceed to the next step.

STEP 2: Early Childhood, Primary, High School Coordinator

- Parent and/or teacher to raise the concern with the appropriate Coordinator who will arrange to mediate a discussion between the parties. A support person is welcome to join that meeting.

↓ If the matter is not resolved proceed to the next step.

STEP 3: Written Concern or Complaint Reviewed by Administrator (College of Teachers (COT) may be informed)

- The concern is to be put in writing to the Administrator by letter/email or using the “Concern and Grievance” form available from the front office and website.
- The Administrator is to mediate the dispute.
- If relevant, College of Teachers to be informed.
- A response will be provided to relevant parties regarding the substance of the concern and what actions are being taken to resolve the matter by the Administrator.

↓ If the matter is not resolved proceed to the next step.

STEP 4: School Council / College of Teachers Mediation

- A formal complaint is to be lodged with the Administrator, Council or College.
- The School Administrator in consultation or with the support of Council and/or COT will arbitrate a resolution.
- All relevant parties kept informed.

↓ If the matter is not resolved proceed to the next step.

STEP 5: Right of Review

- If the matter is not considered resolved, the Administrator or School Council may seek resolution through an external, independent mediator. A request for this should be put in writing to the council.

With Regard to: **Non-Education Staff**

STEP 1: Appointment with Staff Member

- Make an appointment to discuss the concern with the relevant staff member.

↓ If the matter is not resolved proceed to the next step.

STEP 2: School Administrator

- The concern to be put in writing to the Administrator by letter/email or using the “Concern and Grievance” form available from the front office and website.
- The School Administrator will arbitrate a resolution.
- A response will be provided to relevant parties regarding the substance of the concern and what actions are being taken to resolve the matter by the Administrator.

↓ If the matter is not resolved proceed to the next step.

STEP 3: School Council Mediation

- A formal complaint is to be lodged with the Administrator, Council or College
- The School Administrator in consultation or with the support of Council and/or College of Teachers will arbitrate a resolution.
- All relevant parties are to be kept informed.

↓ If the matter is not resolved proceed to the next step.

STEP 4: Right of Review

- If the matter is not considered resolved, the Administrator or School Council may seek resolution through an external, independent mediator. A request for this should be put in writing to the council.

Confidentiality

All parties to a concern are requested to respect confidentiality in dealing with issues of concern and therefore refrain from discussing issues of concern with other members of the school community until the matter has been resolved.

Perth Waldorf School attempts to use **Restorative Justice Principles and Practices** as the main tool for managing concerns and grievances.

Perth Waldorf School

Concern and Grievance Report Form

This form is to be used when putting a concern or grievance in writing.

Please refer to the procedure outlined on the Concern and Grievance Flow Chart overleaf.

Once completed:

- Email, post or hand this form in to the front counter at the school office. It will be directed accordingly. You may ask for a receipted copy if required. (Place in an envelope marked “confidential” if necessary.)
- Concerns will be processed in accordance with the Concern and Grievance Policy. (See website or ask in the office for a hard copy of the policy and this form.)

INDICATE LEVEL OF CONCERN TO YOU (circle): MINOR MIDDLE MAJOR

- Date: ____ / ____ / ____
- Name of person filling in this form: _____
- Phone number: _____ Email: _____
- Address: _____

Person filling in this form is a (please circle, or note other):

Teacher Parent/ Guardian Teaching Assistant Other: _____

Description of concern and actions taken so far: (Add additional pages if more space is needed)

What you would like to see happen: (Add additional pages if more space is needed)

*Thank you for filling out this form. You will be contacted to let you know how your concern is being addressed.
Please feel free to follow up this report with the school administrator or school council if you feel you are not being heard.*

5.1.1 PROCEDURES FOR RAISING CONCERNS OR COMPLAINTS WITH REGARD TO EDUCATION STAFF

All members of the school community are obliged to follow these procedures.

STEP 1: Discussion with the Relevant Teacher

- The teacher is the first person a parent should speak with when a problem arises concerning his/her child.
- Please feel free to make an appointment with the teacher. This should be done directly with the teacher.

STEP 2: Discussion with the Faculty Coordinator

- If a parent or teacher feels they can't solve the concern or complaint together, the issue should be raised with the appropriate Coordinator who would arrange to mediate a discussion between the parent and the teacher. If the matter is not resolved then proceed to direct the concern to the School Administrator.

STEP 3: Written Concern Reviewed by the Administrator

- Using the "concern and grievance" form available on the website or from the school office, please submit the concern in writing to the School Administrator.
- The School Administrator is to mediate the dispute and if relevant the College of Teachers will be informed. If the complaint is about the School Administrator then the concern should be sent to the Council Chairperson.

STEP 4: Review by the College of Teachers

- If there is no resolution then the parent is advised by the School Administrator or Council Chair to put into writing a statement to the College of Teachers setting out the main details of the concern or the complaint.
- A time will be made for all those who are involved to meet with representatives of the College of Teachers who will endeavor to mediate the dispute. When a complaint is made in writing regarding the performance of a teacher, that teacher will receive documentation of the substance of the complaint.
- Concerns and complaints raised at this level will be minuted by the College of Teachers and the School Council will be informed.

STEP 5: Resolution by the School Council

- Should this process fail to resolve the matter, the complaint shall be lodged, by the College of Teachers Chairperson, with the School Council Chairperson, who shall investigate the matter, and seek resolution. If resolution cannot be achieved, then the School Council or its nominated representative shall appoint an external, independent mediator who is acceptable to the parent, the teacher and the School Council.

Confidentiality

Parents are requested to respect confidentiality in dealing with issues of concern and therefore refrain from discussing issues of concern with other members of the school community until the matter has been resolved.

5.1.2 PROCEDURES FOR RAISING CONCERNS OR COMPLAINTS WITH REGARDS TO NON-EDUCATION STAFF

All members of the school community are obliged to follow these procedures.

STEP 1: Discussion with the Relevant Staff Member

- The staff member is the first person a parent should speak with.

STEP 2: Mediation by School Administrator

- If a parent or the staff member in question feel they can't solve the concern or complaint together, the issue should be raised with School Administrator and a mediated discussion with the parent and staff member will be arranged.

STEP 3: School Council Mediation

- If the concern is not resolved in step 2 or the School Administrator is the subject of the concern or complaint, then the parent is asked to put his/her concern or complaint in writing and lodge this with the School Council who will try to seek a resolution.
- If a resolution cannot be achieved then the council shall appoint an external independent mediator who is acceptable to the parent, the staff member and the School Council.

Confidentiality

Parents are requested to respect confidentiality in dealing with issues of concern and therefore refrain from discussing issues of concern with other members of the school community until the matter has been resolved.

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Grievance/Concern Tracking

Date	Concern related to which child or staff member	Issue	Other Parties Involved	Where notes etc to be placed	Resolution?