

GRIEVANCE POLICY & PROCEDURES (DEALING WITH COMMUNITY CONCERNS)



Why a Grievance Policy?

As with any community, Emmaus Christian College is not immune to misunderstandings, disagreements and even wrongdoing. When differences occur, the preferred pathway in solving them is by using the moral and spiritual guidelines given to us in God's Word, the Bible. We are to live and work together in harmony, giving preference to the other and showing love and consideration towards each other. The Bible commands those who have a faith in God to "love one another" as demonstrated to us by Jesus. (John 13:34-35).

Grievances between students, student and teacher, staff and staff or staff and parent/caregiver are a responsibility we endeavour to be proactive about. Should such a grievance arise, please follow the appropriate procedure, as outlined in the **Grievance Steps Flow Chart** on the following page.

To achieve the best possible outcome for any grievance, our guidelines are:

1. **Keep the matter confidential.** Share the problem only with those involved, establishing the principle of confidentiality. The Bible has much to say about those who gossip or malign others with their words. 'With his mouth the godless destroys his neighbour, but through knowledge the righteous escape'. (Proverbs 11:9)
2. **Keep the circle small.** Seek to rectify the grievance with the person with whom that grievance occurred. (Students need to seek counsel of their teacher rather than take matters into their own hands). The first and usually the only step needed in solving a person-to-person problem is for one person involved to initiate a conversation that is straightforward, but lovingly and clearly presented. Most problems are solved at the two person level, and the Bible encourages this. (Matthew 18:15-17)
3. **Be forgiving.** Once the matter is resolved we should forgive and restore the person whose fault has offended us. The Bible encourages forgiveness and gentle restoration. (Galatians 6:1) However, satisfaction in solving problems is not always the outcome from one on one conversation.
4. **Agree to share the matter with the relevant school coordinator.** If parties involved have not been able to come to an agreement then it is appropriate that the matter is taken to the co-ordinator of the school in which the offence has occurred. An open and honest discussion with a third person as witness to both sides of the unresolved problem will hopefully help in reaching an amicable solution. Sometimes the issue can be such that it needs to be taken further, in which case it should then be communicated with the Principal/Head of School. (See flow-chart)

Please Note:

- Grievances that occur between one parent and another, falls outside our jurisdiction.
- If you, the parent, have a grievance with a student, do not approach the student as this is a breach of the Child Protection Policy.
- Not all grievances are formal and it is at the discretion of the Principal whether the information is passed on.
- Neither the Minister for Education and Child Development nor the Department for Education and Child Development has any power to directly intervene in any complaints relating to the operations of a non-government school.*

Grievance Steps Flowchart

