



GRIEVANCE POLICY & PROCEDURES

1. Christ Centered - of who we are and what we do.

At Hinterland, in all of our interactions with those around us and in our community we demonstrate the grace and mercy of Jesus. No matter who it is we are speaking to, our words and actions show the love Jesus has for them.

Trust in the Lord with all your heart, and do not lean on your own understanding. In all your ways acknowledge him, and he will make straight your paths. Proverbs 3:5-6

2. Culture of Excellence - in our study and in our lives.

At Hinterland, we believe building a culture of excellence means we aim for excellence in every aspect of our lives. This includes not only our studies but also our relationships, our hearts and our minds. We believe God wants the best for us and not lead a life of mediocrity. We want every student, family and staff member to excel in every aspect of their lives and flourish in life.

But they who wait upon the Lord will get new strength. They will rise up with wings like eagles. They will run and not get tired. They will walk and not become weak. Isaiah 40:31

3. Authentic Relationships - with students and peers.

At Hinterland, when we talk about authentic relationships, we mean healthy, strong and honest relationships that would be seen as 'good' in the eyes of God. Strong, supportive relationships for all members of our community; students, parents/carers and staff. To be authentic is to love and support the person you are with, no matter what life throws at you, respecting them along the way. We demonstrate this with our speech and actions towards others and supporting parents, students and staff so that they can flourish in life.

We are His work. He has made us to belong to Christ Jesus so we can work for Him. He planned that we should do this. Ephesians 2:10

4. Care for the World - being good stewards of the world.

At Hinterland, we believe that God has created this world for us to enjoy as well as to look after. We passionately teach this generation of young people how to care for the world around them and equip them to create a better future for them and their families.

The Lord God took the man and put him in the Garden of Eden to work it and take care of it. Genesis 2:15

5. The Living Word - we are a Bible-based community.

At Hinterland, we stand on the Word of God and its scriptures as foundational and life transforming. We believe that the Bible is God breathed and our handbook for wise choices and joyful living. We acknowledge our dependence on the empowerment of the Holy Spirit to live as God intended. We are Bible based.

This book of the Law must not leave your mouth. Think about it day and night, so you may be careful to do all that is written in it. Then all will go well with you. You will receive many good things.

Joshua 1:8

Table of Contents

Rationale.....	2
Objective.....	2
References.....	2
Definitions.....	2
Complaint or Grievance.....	2
Staff Misconduct or Reportable Conduct.....	2
Board.....	2
Implementation.....	3
Complaint or Grievance.....	3
Staff Misconduct or Reportable Conduct.....	4

Rationale

As Christians we are exhorted in Ephesians Chapter 4 to “be completely humble and gentle; be patient, bearing with one another in love. Make every effort to keep the unity of the Spirit through the bond of peace.” In doing this, we need to follow the principle that Jesus taught in Matthew 18: “If your brother sins against you, go and show him his fault, just between the two of you. If he listens to you, you have won your brother over. But if he will not listen, take one or two others along, so that ‘every matter may be established by the testimony of two or three witnesses.’ If he refuses to listen to them, tell it to the church; and if he refuses to listen even to the church, treat him as you would a pagan or a tax collector.”

If we have a concern or a complaint, the first step is to take it privately to that person and seek to deal with the matter in a Christ-like fashion. In doing this, we are not to use these verses to “dump” on someone in an unloving way. Indeed, we need to ensure that our own actions are driven by motives that would bring honour to God before making an issue. Matthew 18 explains that if the matter cannot be resolved privately, it is then to be dealt with others in a manner that looks for reconciliation. The reference about ultimately taking the matter to the church for resolution, in this context, would mean the leadership of the school.

Legislation regarding a complaint in terms of Staff Misconduct or Reportable Conduct requires a separate approach to the above mentioned. In this case, refer to the Staff Misconduct or Reportable Conduct section in this policy.

Objective

To provide a step by step process for resolving complaints or grievances. This is to ensure they can be dealt with in a confidential, timely and appropriate manner thereby ensuring matters are resolved to the satisfaction of the individual and the College community as a whole.

References

This policy should be read in conjunction with the College’s Discipline, Behaviour Management and Student Welfare Policy, Anti-Bullying Policy and Child Protection Policy.

Definitions

Complaint or Grievance

Includes complaints or grievances relating to the curriculum, extra curricular activities, the method or manner of teaching, conflict or other issues between students, issues involving parent helpers, and concerns relating to bullying, harassment, hate speech, vilification, discrimination or other conduct that may breach College policies.

Staff Misconduct or Reportable Conduct

Includes complaints raised by stakeholders, including parents and carers, about staff misconduct and reportable conduct. Refer to the College’s Child Protection Policy for the specific complaints that this refers to.

Board

Board means the Board of Directors of Hinterland Christian College.

Implementation

The procedure used to raise an issue in the College is as follows:

Complaint or Grievance

In consideration of child protection and welfare, it is imperative in matters related to conflicts/incidents involving other people's children, that parents **ALWAYS** refer **ALL** concerns to College staff/leadership and never approach a child from another family directly to attempt to reprimand or seek resolution.

If the matter relates to;

- a student in the College, the Homeroom teacher of the student is to be contacted, or
- a member of staff, then parents are encouraged first to speak directly to the staff member, or
- College policies, then the matter should be referred to the Principal.

If the matter can be resolved to the satisfaction of all parties, no further steps are required.

If the matter is not resolved by informal discussion then;

- a variety of **communication mechanisms** such as phone, email, letter, face-to-face conversation, spontaneous and pre-arranged appointments are available to all parents and enable the vast majority of enquiries, notifications, suggestions, discussions and expressions of concern to take place easily and effectively, or
- when a meeting is required parents/carers are to make an appointment with Office staff, at the earliest convenience for all involved. Parents (and staff) may request the presence of the Principal in any pre-arranged appointment about school matters.

Where a specific grievance by parents cannot be resolved after **two appointments** with school leadership, parents may submit a **formal grievance**;

- which must be **submitted in writing** to the Principal or Board Chairperson as deemed appropriate by the parent(s), and
- the written grievance will be considered and addressed at the next Board Meeting.

If deemed necessary grievances relating to school leadership may be referred to the Board. Confidentiality will be observed at all times as appropriate. Once the Board meeting has taken place;

- a **reply** to a written grievance will be made in **writing**, detailing any decisions or outcomes,
- where deemed necessary, parents may request, or be requested, to attend an **interview with the Board** for further discussion or clarification of matters. It is expected that any **final decision** from the Board will be accepted maturely,
- in matters related to **child protection, relevant authorities** will be notified and procedures undertaken as per current legislation – see Child Protection Policy.

Staff Misconduct or Reportable Conduct

The following formal steps will be followed:

1. Refer to Hinterland Christian College Child Protection Policy (section 6: Reportable Conduct) to ensure that the complaint about a staff member refers to reportable conduct/misconduct, rather than other types of complaints that can be taken more informally to the Principal (or Chairman of the Board, if the complaint is about the Principal).
2. If the complaint is deemed to be reportable, it is recommended that the complaint be made in writing. The complaint should be handed in person to or emailed directly to the Principal. If the complaint is about the Principal, the complaint should be handed in person to or emailed directly to the Chairman of the Board. All email addresses are updated and communicated with the community through the College's communication app.
3. The College will acknowledge, consider and follow-up the complaint.
4. The College will determine how the complaint will be responded to. Please note that the handling of a formal complaint could take substantially longer than a general complaint, if a reportable conduct investigation needs to take place.
5. If the complaint is to be investigated, the College will update the complainant on the College's progress, as deemed appropriate.
6. The complainant will be emailed personally to inform him/her of when the complaint has been finalised. Please note that there may be limitations under the Ombudsman's Act and privacy legislation regarding disclosure of information about the investigation and the outcome of the investigation.
7. The complainant's and accused's right to privacy will be respected subject to the College's duty of care and legal responsibility to report staff misconduct to the relevant child protection authorities.

Related Policies

- Child Protection Policy
- Ombudsman's Act