

ST EUPHEMIA COLLEGE

K-12



COMPLAINTS HANDLING POLICY

2014

1. Policy Statement

This Policy provides instructions for handling complaints at St Euphemia College. While most complaints should be resolved informally with the relevant employee, there are provisions for the use of formal procedures depending on the nature and seriousness of the complaint.

2. Applicability

This Policy applies to all staff, students, parents and caregivers of St Euphemia College.

3. Context/Rationale

A complaint can be defined as a student's, staff member's, parent's/caregiver's or community member's expression of dissatisfaction with any aspect of the services and activities of St Euphemia College relating to academic and non-academic matters.

A complainant is any person who has a grievance.

A grievance is any concern or complaint about any act, behaviour, omission, situation or decision that someone thinks is unfair or unjustified.

A respondent is a person who is called upon to issue a response to a communication made by another.

Victimisation and repercussions of ill treatment as a result of making a complaint will not be tolerated.

It is expected that written complaints be acknowledged within 14 days. The proposed timeframe required to resolve the complaint should be indicated to the complainant as early as possible in the process and may vary according to the nature, complexity or timing of the complaint.

Parents are not to approach the children of other families with a School related complaint.

Some complaints, because of the severity of their nature, should be referred immediately to the Principal/Delegated Authority – eg. complaints about behaviour which places others at risk of serious harm.

4. Roles and Responsibilities

Responsibility of the Principal/Delegated Authority and/or the School Board

The Principal/Delegated Authority and/or the School Board are expected to:

- gauge how well the complaints procedure is working
- investigate issues of grievance and complaints when they are not resolved earlier in the process.

Rights and Responsibilities of the Complainant

The Complainant has a right to:

- be heard and listened to
- have the complaint addressed with procedural fairness
- have the complaint dealt with quickly
- confidentiality and sensitivity in the resolution process.

The Complainant has the responsibility to:

- approach the process in good faith
- uphold strict confidentiality
- be courteous in dealing with the respondent and all individuals responsible for handling the complaint
- ensure that any support persons understand their role in the process

Rights and Responsibilities of the Respondent

The Respondent has the right to:

- be informed of a complaint against them within a reasonable timeframe
- advice and support
- have a support person present during all meetings
- confidentiality and sensitivity in the resolution of the process
- know detailed information about the substance of the complaint and to have the opportunity to respond.

The Respondent has the responsibility to:

- approach the process in good faith
- uphold strict confidentiality
- be courteous in dealing with the complainant and all individuals responsible for handling the complaint
- ensure that any support person understands their role in the process.

5. Monitoring, Evaluation and Reporting Requirements

This Policy provides information for handling complaints including how to make a complaint and how to deal with a complaint.

In the case of all complaints assessed as less serious, a resolution with the relevant employee should be attempted in the first instance.

A professional response to suggestions, complaints and allegations promotes fairness, leads to improvements and creates confidence in the outcome. It requires staff to use professional judgment and a balanced consideration of the rights and needs of the parties.

These procedures emphasise the necessity to deal with complaints in terms of the potential seriousness of the complaint rather than on the basis of the category of person who made the complaint. This means that the aggrieved staff, students, parents, caregivers or community members will be treated on equal terms.

The key elements in the complaints handling procedure are:

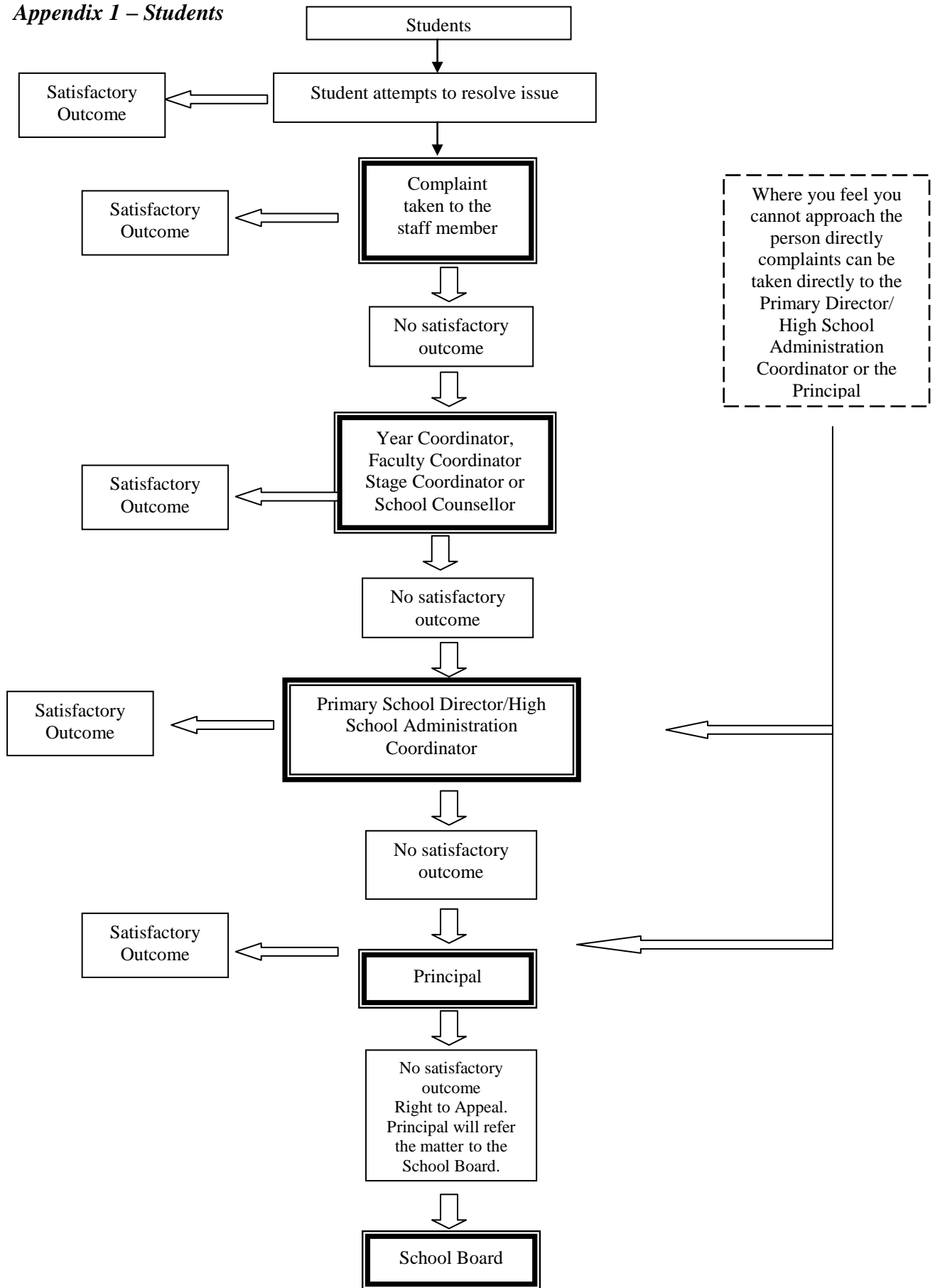
- impartiality
- confidentiality
- no victimisation
- no vexatious or malicious complaints
- timeliness

Staff need to be familiar with these procedures so they are applied consistently.

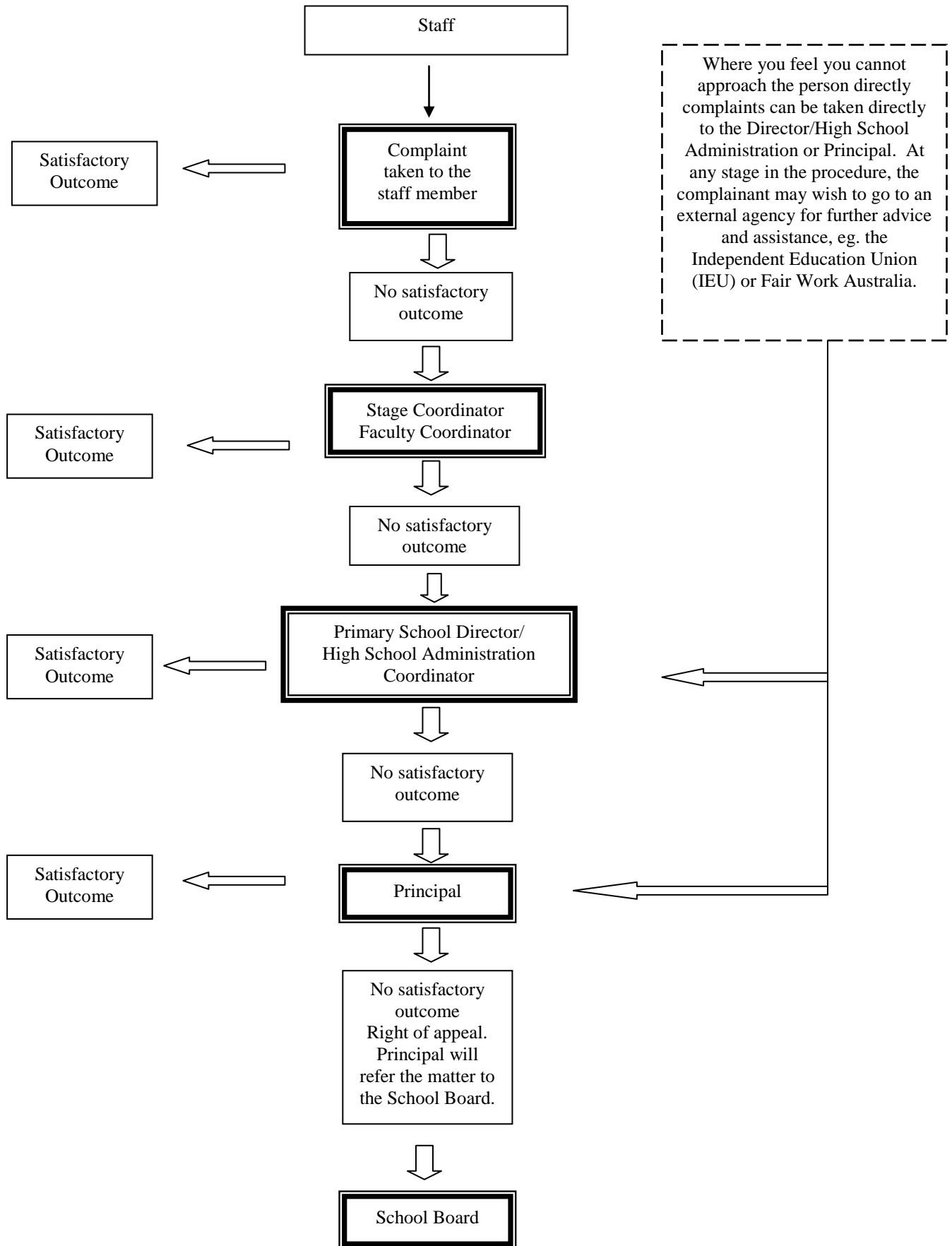
6. Policy Review

This Policy and its accompanying procedures will be reviewed as necessary.

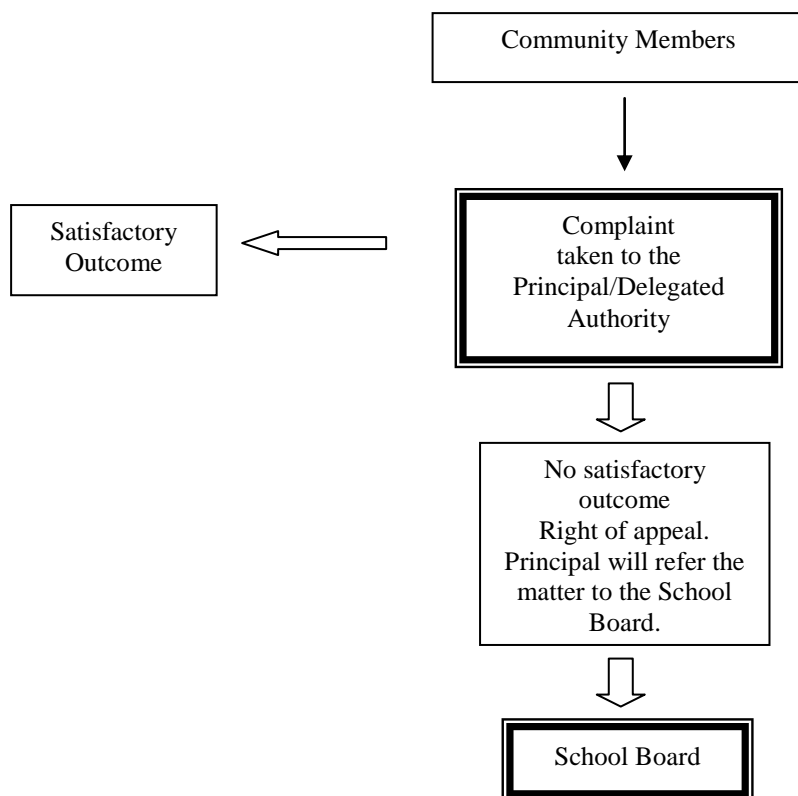
Appendix 1 – Students



Appendix 2 – Staff



Appendix 3 – Community Members



Appendix 4 – Parents and Caregivers

