

# Loxton Lutheran School

## GRIEVANCE POLICY

### Rationale

At Loxton Lutheran School, it is our desire that relationships between people remain harmonious. At the same time, we acknowledge that conflict may arise between members of the school community.

This policy aims to provide an efficient, fair and accessible framework for resolving complaints and ensures that the complaint-handling process is transparent, consistently applied and accountable. It also provides a framework for continuous evaluation and improvement of the schools' program.

We recognise that the majority of complaints will be resolved at the first point of contact.

### Procedures

Complaint resolution processes rely on people acting in good faith, exercising good judgement, being honest and open, focussing on the issues, (not the person), and communicating in a courteous and respectful manner.

There may be times when we experience concerns about school matters, or feel aggrieved (hurt) by someone or someone's actions. It is important that all complaints related to the school are directed to the school and not dealt with outside the school.

To assist in satisfactorily resolving these issues, the following procedures have been put in place.

#### **1. A Complaint is Raised**

If you have a complaint/grievance you are encouraged to contact the person most directly involved in your concern to make an appointment. Let them know what it is that you wish to discuss as this will make the most productive use of the time available to you both.

#### **2. A Complaint is Received**

A meeting will be held to discuss a complaint within three working days from the time the issue is raised.

The person receiving the complaint will listen to the issues being raised and identify the events that gave rise to the complaint.

They will acknowledge the complainant's feelings and thank them for communicating the issues.

If they feel that they are not the person best able to manage the complaint they will refer to a more senior staff member.

Receivers of complaints are reminded to:

- remain respectful and helpful
- remain positive throughout the meeting
- refrain from defensiveness or apportioning blame
- refrain from perceiving anger as a personal attack

#### **3. A Complaint is Managed**

The manager of the complaint will summarise the issues to clarify that their understanding of the issue is accurate.

Discover what the complainant wants to happen as a result of the meeting.

If there is no further action required after this initial interview, record the complaint as an Expression of Interest in the school's Complaints Register.

The manager of the complaint should dispel any unrealistic or misconceived expectations and explain any limits to their responsibility – the issue may need to be referred to a more senior staff member.

The complainant and the manager will construct an Action Plan together with mutually agreed time-frames for review. Document this plan.

If an Action Plan is unable to be mutually agreed the complaint is to be referred to and managed by the Principal.

#### **4. Review by Principal**

Once the matter has been referred to the Principal a meeting will be held within three working days to facilitate a successful outcome.

Participants in the first meeting will be at the Principal's discretion and a number of meetings may be necessary before a successful outcome is achieved.

An Action Plan should be constructed with mutually agreed time-frames for review. Document this plan.

All complaints that have been referred to the Principal should be recorded in the school's Complaints Register for regular review.

#### **5. External Review**

If the situation remains unresolved, the complainant may contact the School Council Chairperson in writing or the Director of the Lutheran Schools Association of Australia (SA/NT/WA).

If, at any time, the complainant or receiver of a complaint feels uncomfortable meeting alone with the person, they may request a support person to be present. The Pastoral Carer is highly recommended in this situation.

#### **Procedures for Students**

Students may have a concern, complaint or grievance relating to:

- Academic issues. These include but are not limited to
  - grades issued by teachers
- Behaviour management issues. These include but are not limited to:
  - penalties given to students by teachers for misbehaviour
  - perceived lack of fairness by a teacher
  - poor behaviour of other students
- Administrative issues. These include but are not limited to:
  - advice given by a staff member
  - administration of policies of Loxton Lutheran School
  - access to school resources

Students are encouraged to make use of the School Student Parliament to help resolve issues of a non-personal nature – e.g. concerns with play equipment, out-of-bounds areas, school policy and practice decisions affecting students.

A slight modification to the Grievance Process is made for students dealing with conflict. This is based on the Peacemakers program.

Students may choose to:

- **Overlook an offence**  
Deal with conflict by yourself and choose to forgive
- **Talk it out**  
Say what you did wrong (confess). Explain what you think happened.  
In a kind and respectful way, confront the other person

- **Seek Coaching**  
Get help to know what you could say and how to say it
- **Seek Mediation**  
Get help to talk together. Ask someone else to meet with both of you to help you talk together and find a solution
- **Seek Arbitration**  
Get help to decide. Both tell your side of the story to a person in authority who decides on a solution.

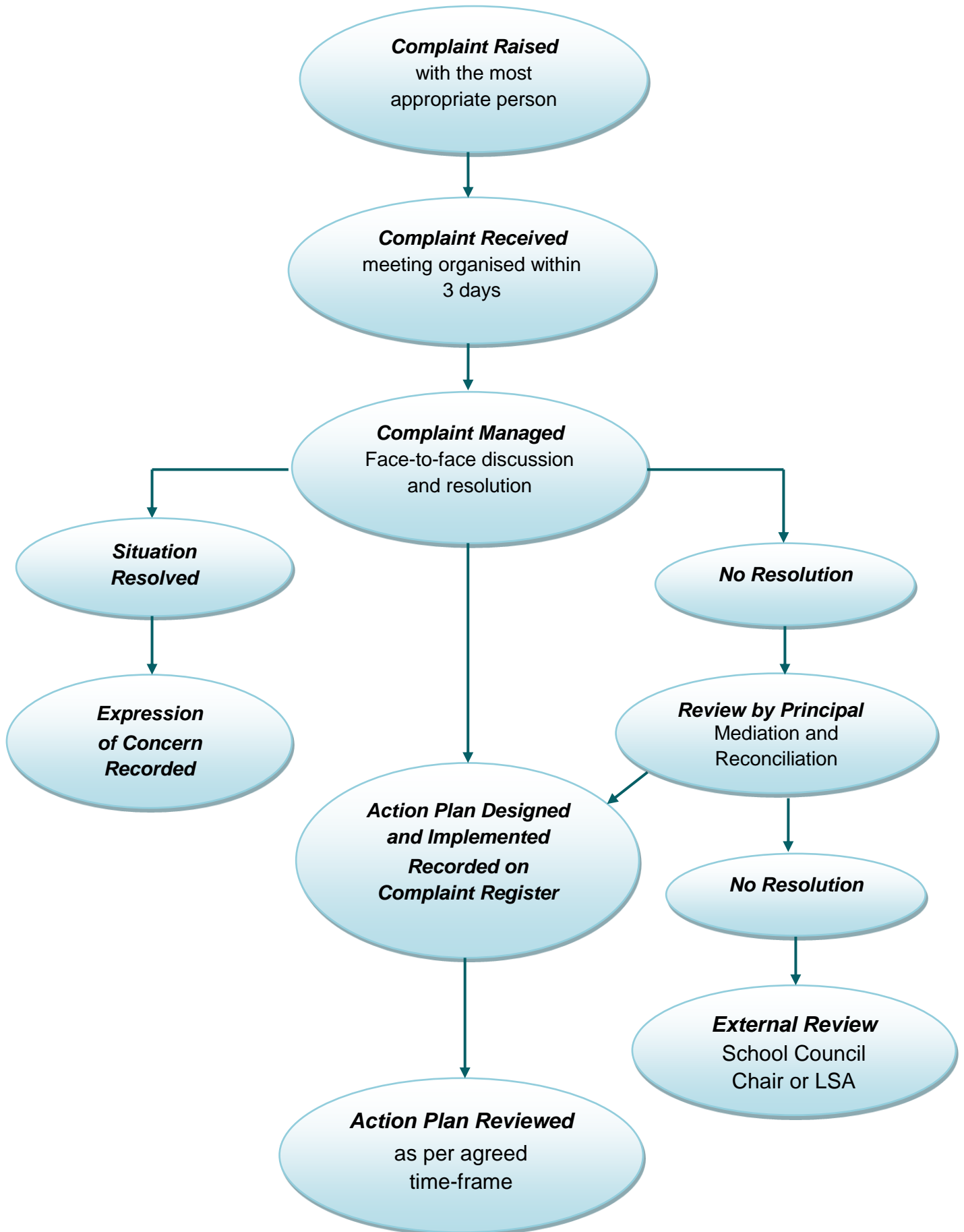
Loxton Lutheran School seeks to:

- Respond to and investigate complaints promptly, sensitively and confidentially.
- Resolve all complaints in a timely manner.
- Ensure that there is no victimisation or complainants, respondents or anyone involved in the resolution process.
- Consider all complaints as a means to continuous improvement.

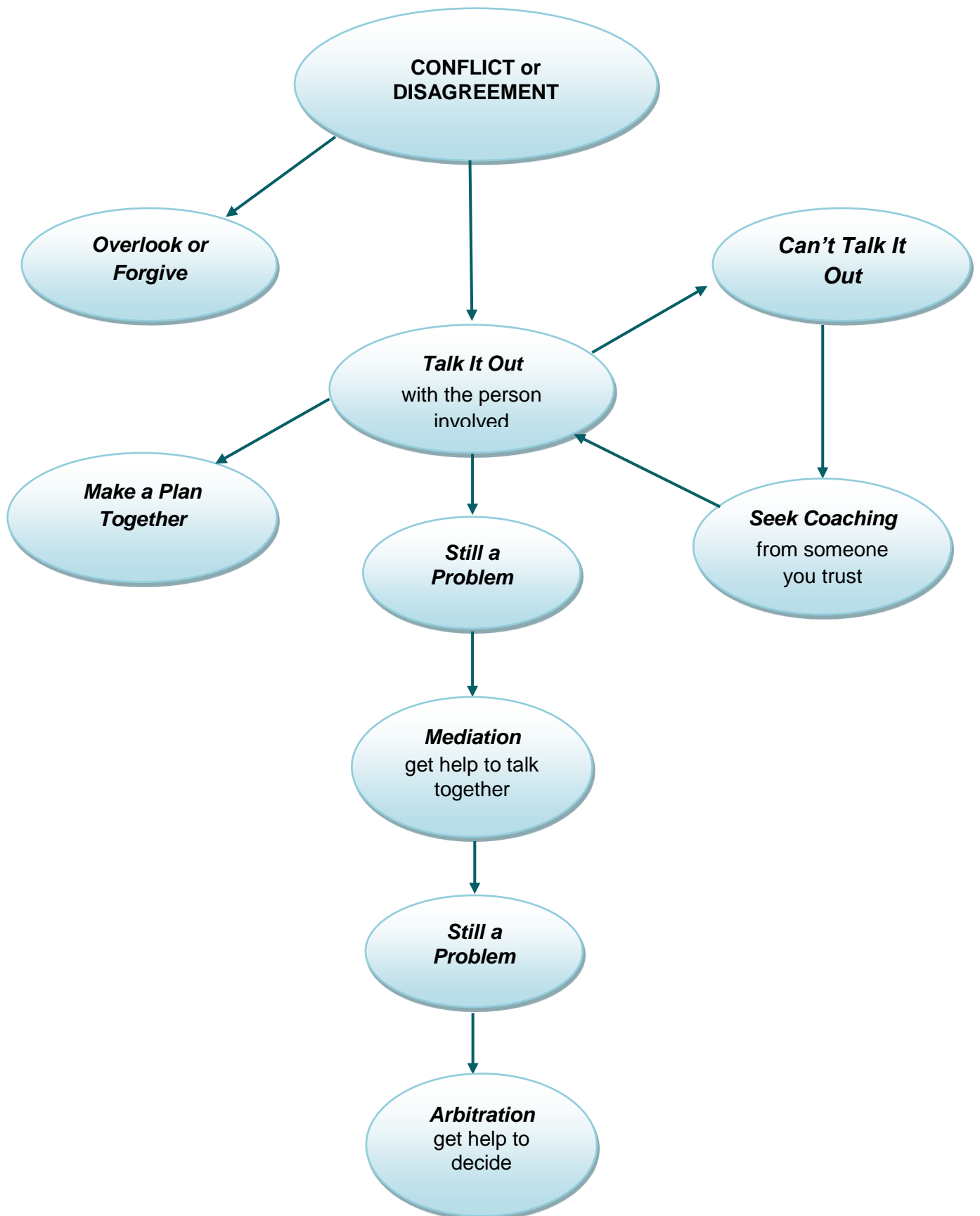
**Adopted by LLS School Council on: 26/07/2016**

**This policy will be reviewed in 2020**

# GRIEVANCE PROCESS FOR ADULTS



# GRIEVANCE PROCESS FOR STUDENTS



**Loxton Lutheran School**

**Complaint Register**

Date Complaint Raised	Complainant	Respondent	Managed By	Complaint Details	Resolution Details and Date	Ref. No