

## Complaints Management Policy

<b>Policy Code</b> <i>POL_TAS_ADM_Complaints Management Policy_v5.0</i>	<b>Authorisation Date</b> <i>August 2022</i>	<b>Next Review Date</b> <i>August 2025</i>
<b>Enquiries Contact</b> <i>principal.tas@au.oneschoolglobal.com</i>	<b>Approval Authority</b> <i>Board of OneSchool Global TAS Ltd</i>	<b>Policy Author</b> <i>Compliance Analyst, Executive Assistant</i>
<b>Associated Documents</b> <i>Anti-bullying Policy, Student Wellbeing &amp; Behaviour Policy, Child Safe Policy, Mandatory Reporting Policy, Harassment Policy, Staff, Volunteer, Parent and Student Code of Conducts</i>		

### PURPOSE

Members of staff, students, parents and guardians and the general community who have a school related complaint must have access to a process that allows them to discuss the complaint and work towards a satisfactory outcome.

All members or stakeholders of the school need to be informed of the complaint process and understand how it operates. The complaints management policy and complaint procedures are published on the school website to facilitate access to this policy, and a copy is regularly shared via the school newsletter.

### SCOPE

This policy applies to staff members, students, parents and guardians and the general community who are involved with the school (OneSchool Global TAS Ltd).

### POLICY STATEMENT

The best educational outcomes can be achieved in a school where all stakeholders' relationships are operating effectively. High standards of conduct and behaviour need to be maintained by all stakeholders of the school. To this end, the school welcomes complaints.

Issues and complaints management procedures must be in place and be effective and communicated to all stakeholders to ensure any issues, complaints or grievances that arise within and amongst stakeholders can be resolved.

### CHILD SAFE STATEMENT

OneSchool Global Tasmania is committed to the protection and wellbeing of all students whilst participating in school activities both during and outside school hours. Staff have responsibility for building and maintaining a child safe environment. This responsibility extends to the identification and timely response to all concerns with regard to the safety of any student of OneSchool Global Tasmania.

## ROLES & RESPONSIBILITIES

### A. Administration Assistants on Campuses

The Administration assistant at each Campus can assist parents, staff, members of the community and other stakeholders to access the appropriate person to deal with their initial complaint or concern.

### B. Campus Principal (CP)

CPs will often be the first point of contact for matters of concern. They will refer complaints to the appropriate parties and inform the District Principal and/or Board.

### C. Campus Administrator (CA) Team

Are representative community members who have a voluntary support role. They meet with the HOC on a weekly basis to give community guidance regarding Campus specific matters.

### D. District Principal

The District Principal responds to complaints and attempts to effectively manage and resolve them.

### E. Directors on the Board

Directors are the alternate point of complaints management and are deferred to when complaints involve the District Principal or Campus Principals.

### F. External Dispute Resolution (including legal advice)

All members of the School community, students and staff are reminded that they are welcome to obtain external assistance, including legal advice, with any complaint and to pursue external dispute resolution mechanisms at any point. Staff, the District Principal and Board also have direct access to the Human Resources (HR) Team.

## DEFINITIONS

### A. Head Office

The Head Office (previously referred to as the Central Administration Office (CAO)) is the office that assists the District Principal, Administrative Team, CPs, DoS and the Board of OneSchool Global TAS Ltd. The Executive Assistant maintains the effective connection between these parties. The Head Office has responsibility for the management of all records in relation to the school.

### B. Complaint

A complaint is a problem or concern raised by staff, students, parents and guardians or the general Community who consider they have been wronged because of an action, decision or omission within the control or responsibility of the school.

The subject of a complaint is normally an action, decision or omission within the control or responsibility of the school that causes a person to feel they have been wronged.

### C. Grievance

A real or imagined wrong or other cause for complaint or protest, especially perceived unfair treatment.

An official statement of a complaint over something believed to be wrong or unfair.

## PRINCIPLES

The following procedures are designed to assist in the resolution of staff, student, parent and carers and Community member's complaints. When you make a time to speak with someone about a complaint, it is a good idea to inform them in advance of the issue so that they are better able to provide information at the time of your meeting. When you make a time to speak with someone about a complaint or grievance, it is a good idea to inform them in advance of the issue so that they are better able to provide information at the time of your meeting. If at any stage of these procedures you would like to have another person present, please arrange this when you negotiate your meeting time.

## PROCEDURAL FAIRNESS AND NATURAL JUSTICE CONSIDERATIONS

- A. Treat fairly and seriously** - assess all matters on their merits and facts. Any Grievance, or Complaint resolution process should be thorough enough and obtain relevant and credible evidence as is reasonably necessary to ensure substantive fairness by:
- (a) providing particulars of Grievance, or Complaints and available evidence (including a copy of any Complaints, if available, and not otherwise inappropriate to provide on legitimate privacy, confidentiality, or work health and safety grounds) so participants understand the context of the process in which they are being required to participate;
  - (b) providing Staff, and other people at the Workplace with a reasonable opportunity to respond to Grievance, or Complaint, findings, proposed resolution, subsequent or additional information (whether in writing and/or in person as appropriate) or other process;
  - (c) making factual findings that are reasonably open to be made (e.g. specific behaviours and their context and surrounding circumstances);
  - (d) making conclusions or characterisations (e.g. breaches of policies which are serious) that can be objectively drawn from those factual findings;
  - (e) notifying Staff, and/or Other Persons at the School of the findings relevant to them and any proposed resolution action (if any);
  - (f) considering the nature and extent of the Grievance, or Complaint, a Staff member and/or Other People at the School's personal circumstances and employment record including prior disciplinary action, any mitigating circumstances, the School requirements and any other relevant matters to ensure that any Grievance and/or Complaint resolution is appropriate in the circumstances; and
  - (g) notifying Staff and/or Other People at the School of the Grievance and/or Complaint resolution (if any) which will be imposed and when.
- B. Act promptly** – Grievance and/or Complaint resolution matters should be dealt with courteously, respectfully and within appropriate timelines on a case-by-case basis. All relevant parties should be provided reasonable estimates of timeframes and be kept reasonably informed of the progress. Extensions of time may be appropriate in complex matters where justified. If additional time beyond the initial estimate is reasonably required to address the Grievance and/or Complaints, all relevant parties should be advised of the additional time required and, in a manner appropriate, the reasons for the delay.
- C. Support all parties** – Staff involved in the process should be told what support is available including EAP.

- D. Be neutral** - impartiality towards everyone involved (i.e. persons seeking to impose a resolution to a Grievance and/or Complaint, witnesses, affected parties, and responding persons). Participants should also avoid any personal or professional bias (perceived, potential or actual).

If a preliminary enquiry or School investigation is undertaken, the investigator may be internal or external to the School provided that the person is:

- a. objective and neutral and impartial (i.e. avoid actual or perceived bias);
  - b. competent having regard to the particular circumstances;
  - c. available to conduct a preliminary enquiry or School investigation and report in a timely manner; and
  - d. not a potential witness or who has had prior dealings with parties that creates an actual or perceived bias.
- E. Communicate process and outcomes** - all parties should be reasonably informed of the process, and what they can expect will happen during a Grievance and/or Complaint resolution process and potential outcomes. The School will provide all parties with reasons for any actions taken or not taken (which may be appropriately summarised or redacted). Details of Grievance and/or Complaint resolution matters should only be disclosed in a manner to those parties that genuinely and legitimately need to know, provided that such disclosure does not create an unreasonable risk to their health and safety or otherwise unreasonably cause escalate risks of further or similar occurrence.
- F. Maintain confidentiality** - the process should ensure appropriate confidentiality for all parties involved and consider individual requests for confidentiality subject to School's duty to provide a safe workplace.
- G. Keep records as appropriate** - some form of record (with as little or as much formality as is required for the circumstances) should be made of the Grievance and/or Complaint resolution process and matters dealt with under this Procedure including details of Grievance and/or Complaint, responses or submissions from those involved, the process adopted and any outcomes.
- H. Seeking advice and support** - Participants are entitled to obtain advice, including legal advice of their choice and have a support person present during any meetings they are required to attend at their own cost.
- I. Appropriate interim arrangements** – It is necessary to preserve the integrity of the Grievance and/or Complaint resolution process being undertaken and having regard to the seriousness of allegations or to reasonably ensure the health and safety of any persons at the School. While in the process of resolving any Grievance and/or Complaint, the parties must reasonably ensure that there is no unreasonable interruption to work and/or no other increase to the risks to health and safety. The School may impose appropriate interim arrangements which may include any combination of the following:

## Complaints Management Procedure

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<b>Associated Documents</b> <i>Anti-bullying Policy, Student Wellbeing &amp; Behaviour Policy</i>		

### PROCEDURES

#### A. Initial actions where an issue arises

In the first instance, the School requests that there is an attempt to informally resolve the issue. If this is unsatisfactory or does not result in a resolution of the matter, the School's internal formal complaints handling procedure will be followed. The process of this complaints procedure is confidential and any complaints are a matter between the parties concerned and those directly involved in the complaints handling process.

#### B. Responding to the complaint

Once the complaint has been received, the school will respond within 3 days, with the aim to reach a resolution within 7 days.

#### C. Documentation

The School will encourage all persons involved to document each step of the complaint procedure. This would include all contact with staff members, students, parents and guardians and the general community member and any other involved parties and the resolution plan.

Records kept of all discussions and meetings will be kept on the school files and retained for 2 years (if student/parent related, it will be recorded in Sentral under that student/parent; if staff member or community member, it will be kept with the HR records indefinitely, any other complaints will be filed in Teams).

#### D. Complaints Register

Further to the documentation process, the school also maintains a complaints register within Teams that will be updated with basic information around the complaint as another point of reference and record, including any actions and resolutions.

#### E. Resolution Plan

A plan of action will be developed to resolve the complaint in a timely manner. Mediation may be offered at any time during the process if this is seen as a possible way to reach a satisfactory conclusion.

#### F. Further steps if the issue is not resolved

If the resolution plan isn't successful there will be further discussion with the person who lodged the complaint and any other involved parties until the matter reaches a satisfactory resolution, as per the steps in the procedure and flowchart.

It may be the case that an outside mediator/independent person will need to be appointed to assist resolution of the issue through mutually acceptable conciliation procedures. This is the final step of the procedure.

## G. Further steps after this process

After giving due consideration to the complaint the independent person may do one or more of the following:

- Refer the complaint back to the Campus Administrator or District Principal or to a nominee, with
- Advice for resolution; or
- Initiate an investigation into the matter; or
- Seek to resolve the matter directly;

Any determination made by the independent person about the complaint will be considered to be final.

Outcomes could include:

- The complainant gaining a better understanding of the situation and no longer being aggrieved;
- The complainant receiving a verbal or written apology;
- The respondent receiving a verbal or written reprimand;
- One of both parties agreeing to participate in some form of counselling; and
- Disciplinary action where a School policy has been found to have been breached, and/or where misconduct/serious misconduct or unsatisfactory performance has occurred.

## H. Flowcharts

The flowcharts and guidance on the following pages are provided to assist key stakeholders in accessing the most helpful pathway for a resolution of any complaint in regard to the School.

They can be provided as 'stand-alone' documents so that relevant stakeholders can be directed to a procedure and flowchart without the necessity of reading the full policy if they so desire.

Hence, they do repeat the procedure as outlined on the previous pages.

1. Parent & Community Complaint Procedure
2. Student Complaint Procedure
3. Staff Member Complaint Procedure

## PARENT & COMMUNITY MEMBER COMPLAINTS PROCEDURE

Parents and community members who have a school-related complaint must have access to a process that allows them to discuss the complaint and work towards a satisfactory outcome.

School personnel receiving a complaint from a parent concerning duty of care must refer to the School's Code of Conduct Policies and Child Safe Policies, and must also be aware of their legal obligations as mandatory reporters of child abuse and neglect.

The complaint procedure for parents and community members is as follows, noting that complainants are welcome to obtain external assistance/mediation/legal advice to resolve the dispute at any stage of this process:

1. Before initiating the complaint procedures, complainants are encouraged to try to resolve any grievance directly with the person/s concerned. If this is not possible or appropriate, the complainant should proceed to Step 2 of the complaint procedures.
2. Where the complainant has been unable to resolve the grievance him/herself, the complainant should take the matter up with their Campus Principal. Where the complaint involves the Campus Principal, the parent or community member should refer the matter to the District Principal. Where the complaint involves the District Principal, the parent or community member should refer the matter to the Campus Administrator.

The Campus Principal, District Principal or Campus Administrator should address the complaint with a view to resolving it expeditiously, normally within seven days of receiving the complaint.

In any action, the Campus Principal, District Principal or Campus Administrator should ensure procedural fairness for all parties involved, including informing the respondent of the allegations made against them and providing them with an opportunity to respond.

Following resolution of the complaint, the Campus Principal, District Principal or Campus Administrator should monitor the situation for a period of time.

3. If the complainant believes the grievance has not been resolved to their satisfaction by reference to the Campus Principal, they can refer the matter back to the District Principal or Campus Administrator. If the complaint involves the District Principal, refer the matter to a Campus Administrator. The Campus Administrator or District Principal may require the complainant to put the grievance in writing. They should attempt to resolve the matter within seven days of receiving the complaint and should follow similar procedures outlined above for action.
4. If the complaint remains unresolved, it may be referred in writing to the Chair of OneSchool Global TAS Ltd. The Chair should attempt to resolve the matter within seven days of receiving the complaint and should follow similar procedures outlined above for action.
5. If the complaint remains unresolved, it may be referred in writing to an independent person by the complainant, Campus Administrator, District Principal or Chair.
6. After giving due consideration to the complaint the independent person may do one or more of the following:
  - Refer the complaint back to the Campus Administrator or District Principal or to a nominee, with
  - Advice for resolution; or
  - Initiate an investigation into the matter; or

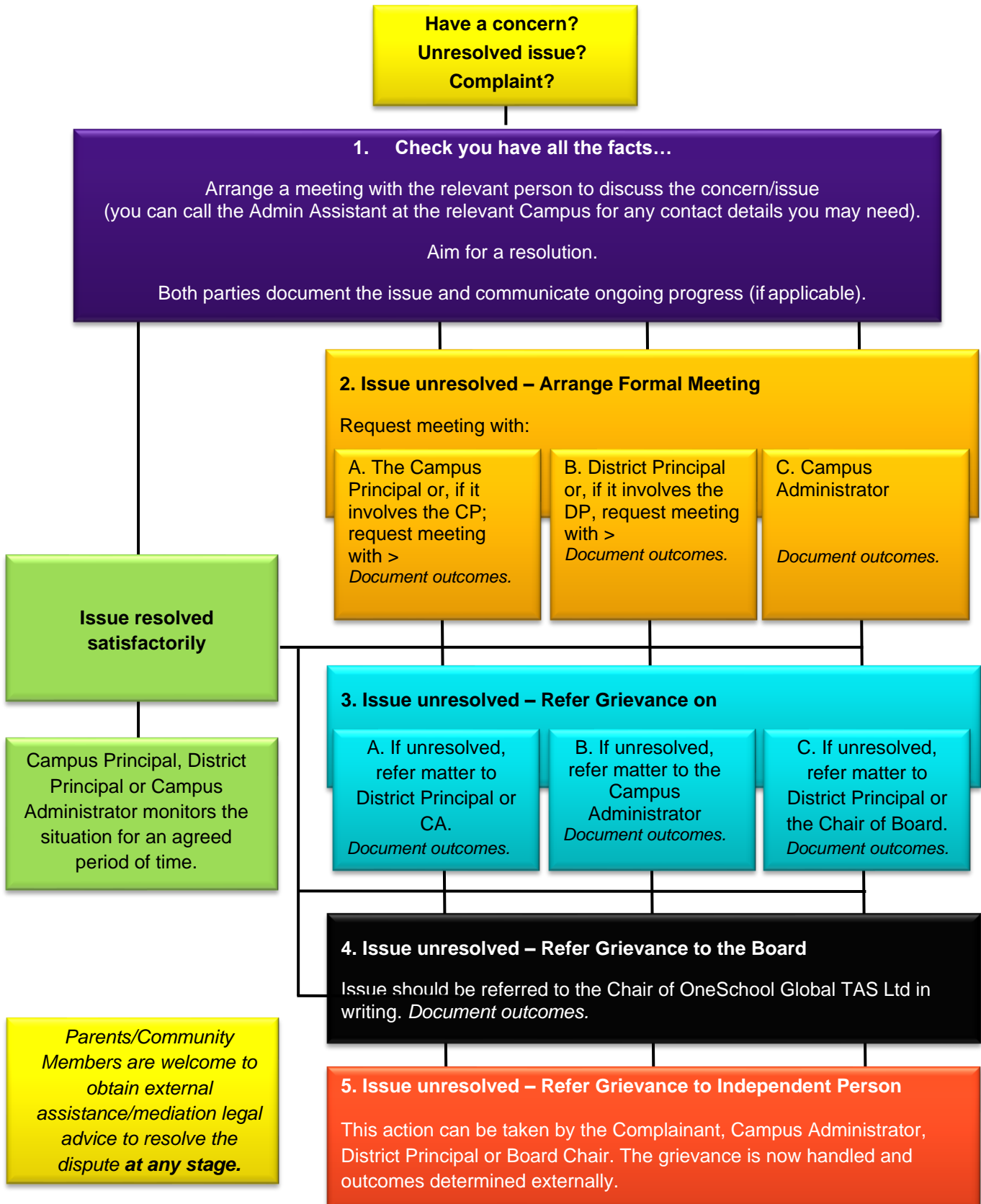
- Seek to resolve the matter directly.

Any determination made by the independent person about the complaint will be considered to be final. Outcomes could include:

- The complainant gaining a better understanding of the situation and no longer being aggrieved;
- The complainant receiving a verbal or written apology;
- The respondent receiving a verbal or written reprimand;
- One of both parties agreeing to participate in some form of counselling; and
- Disciplinary action where a School policy has been found to have been breached, and/or where misconduct/serious misconduct or unsatisfactory performance has occurred.



## Flow Chart of Parent & Community Member Complaint Resolution Procedure



## STUDENT COMPLAINT PROCEDURE

Students who have a school related complaint must have access to a process that allows them to discuss the complaint and work towards a satisfactory outcome.

School personnel receiving a complaint from a student concerning duty of care must refer to the School's Code of Conduct Policies and Child Safe Policies, and must also be aware of their legal obligations as mandatory reporters of child abuse and neglect.

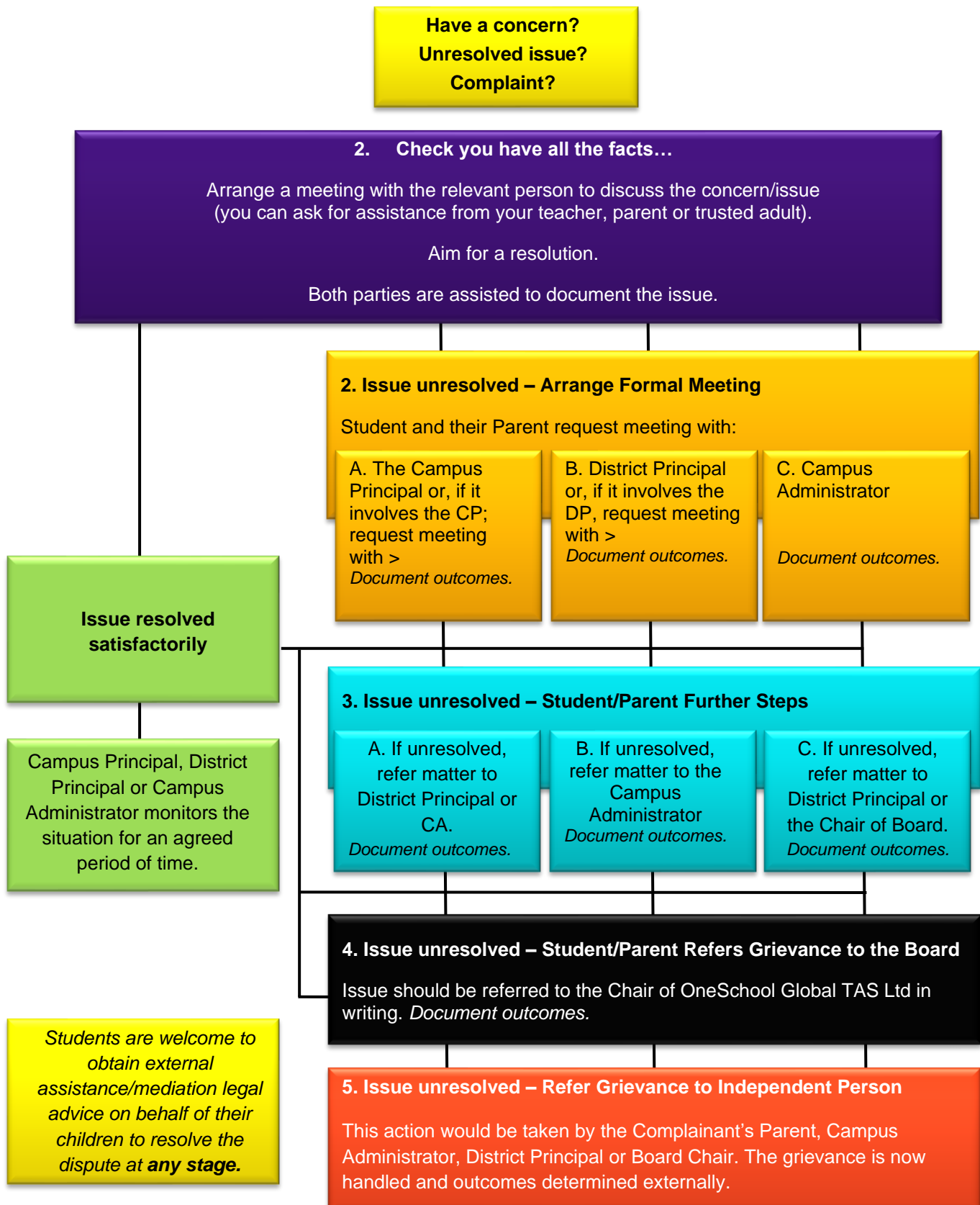
The complaint procedure for students is as follows, noting that complainants are welcome to obtain external assistance/mediation/legal advice to resolve the dispute at any stage of this process:

1. Before initiating the complaint procedures, complainants are encouraged to try to resolve any grievance directly with the person/s concerned, with the assistance of a trusted adult. If this is not possible or appropriate, the complainant should proceed to Step 2 of the complaint procedures.
2. Where the complainant has been unable to resolve the complaint him/herself, the complainant should take the matter up with their Campus Principal. Where the complaint involves the Campus Principal, the student should refer the matter to the District Principal with the help of a parent. Where the complaint involves the District Principal, the student and their parent should refer the matter to the Campus Administrator.  
The Campus Principal, District Principal or Campus Administrator should address the complaint with a view to resolving it expeditiously, normally within seven days of receiving the complaint. In any action, the Campus Principal, District Principal or Campus Administrator should ensure procedural fairness for all parties involved, including informing the respondent of the allegations made against them and providing them with an opportunity to respond. Following resolution of the complaint, the Campus Principal, District Principal or Campus Administrator should monitor the situation for a period of time.
3. If the complainant and/or their parent believes the complaint has not been resolved to their satisfaction by reference to the Campus Principal, they can refer the matter back to the District Principal or Campus Administrator. If the complaint involves the District Principal, refer the matter to a Campus Administrator. The Campus Administrator or District Principal may require the complainant to put the grievance in writing with the assistance of a parent or teacher. They should attempt to resolve the matter within seven days of receiving the complaint and should follow similar procedures outlined above.
4. If the complaint remains unresolved, it may be referred in writing by the student's parent to the Chair of OneSchool Global TAS Ltd. The Chair should attempt to resolve the matter within seven days of receiving the complaint and should follow similar procedures outlined above for action.
5. If the complaint remains unresolved, it may be referred in writing to an independent person by the complainant's parents, a Campus Administrator, District Principal or Chair of the Board.
6. After giving due consideration to the complaint the independent person may do one or more of the following:
  - Refer the complaint back to the Campus Administrator or District Principal or to a nominee, with
  - Advice for resolution; or
  - Initiate an investigation into the matter; or
  - Seek to resolve the matter directly.

Any determination made by the independent person about the complaint will be considered to be final. Outcomes could include:

- The complainant gaining a better understanding of the situation and no longer being aggrieved;
- The complainant receiving a verbal or written apology;
- The respondent receiving a verbal or written reprimand;
- One of both parties agreeing to participate in some form of counselling; and
- Disciplinary action where a School policy has been found to have been breached, and/or where misconduct/serious misconduct or unsatisfactory performance has occurred.

## Flow Chart of Student Complaint Resolution Procedure



## STAFF COMPLAINT PROCEDURE

Staff members who have a school related complaint must have access to a process that allows them to discuss the complaint and work towards a satisfactory outcome. School personnel receiving a complaint about duty of care must refer to the School's Code of Conduct Policies and Child Safe Policies, and must also be aware of their legal obligations as mandatory reporters of child abuse and neglect.

The complaint procedure for staff members is as follows, noting that complainants are welcome to obtain external assistance/mediation/legal advice to resolve the dispute at any stage of this process:

1. Before initiating the complaint procedures, complainants are encouraged to try to resolve any grievance directly with the person/s concerned. If this is not possible or appropriate, the complainant should proceed to Step 2 of the complaint procedures.
2. Where the complainant has been unable to resolve the complaint him/herself, the complainant should take the matter up with their Campus Principal. Where the complaint involves the Campus Principal, the staff member should refer the matter to the District Principal. Where the complaint involves the District Principal, the staff member should refer the matter to the Campus Administrator.

The Campus Principal, District Principal or Campus Administrator should address the complaint with a view to resolving it expeditiously, normally within seven days of receiving the complaint.

In any action, the Campus Principal, District Principal or Campus Administrator should ensure procedural fairness for all parties involved, including informing the respondent of the allegations made against them and providing them with an opportunity to respond.

Following resolution of the complaint, the Campus Principal, District Principal or Campus Administrator should monitor the situation for a period of time.

3. If the complainant believes the complaint has not been resolved to their satisfaction by reference to the Campus Principal, they can refer the matter back to the District Principal or Campus Administrator. If the complaint involves the District Principal, refer the matter to a Campus Administrator. The Campus Administrator or District Principal may require the complainant to put the complaint in writing. They should attempt to resolve the matter within seven days of receiving the complaint and should follow similar procedures outlined above for action.
4. If the complaint remains unresolved, it may be referred in writing to the Chair of OneSchool Global TAS Ltd. The Chair should attempt to resolve the matter within seven days of receiving the complaint and should follow similar procedures outlined above for action.
5. If the complaint remains unresolved, it may be referred in writing to an independent person by the complainant, Campus Administrator, District Principal or Chair.
6. After giving due consideration to the complaint the independent person may do one or more of the following:
  - Refer the complaint back to the Campus Administrator or District Principal or to a nominee, with

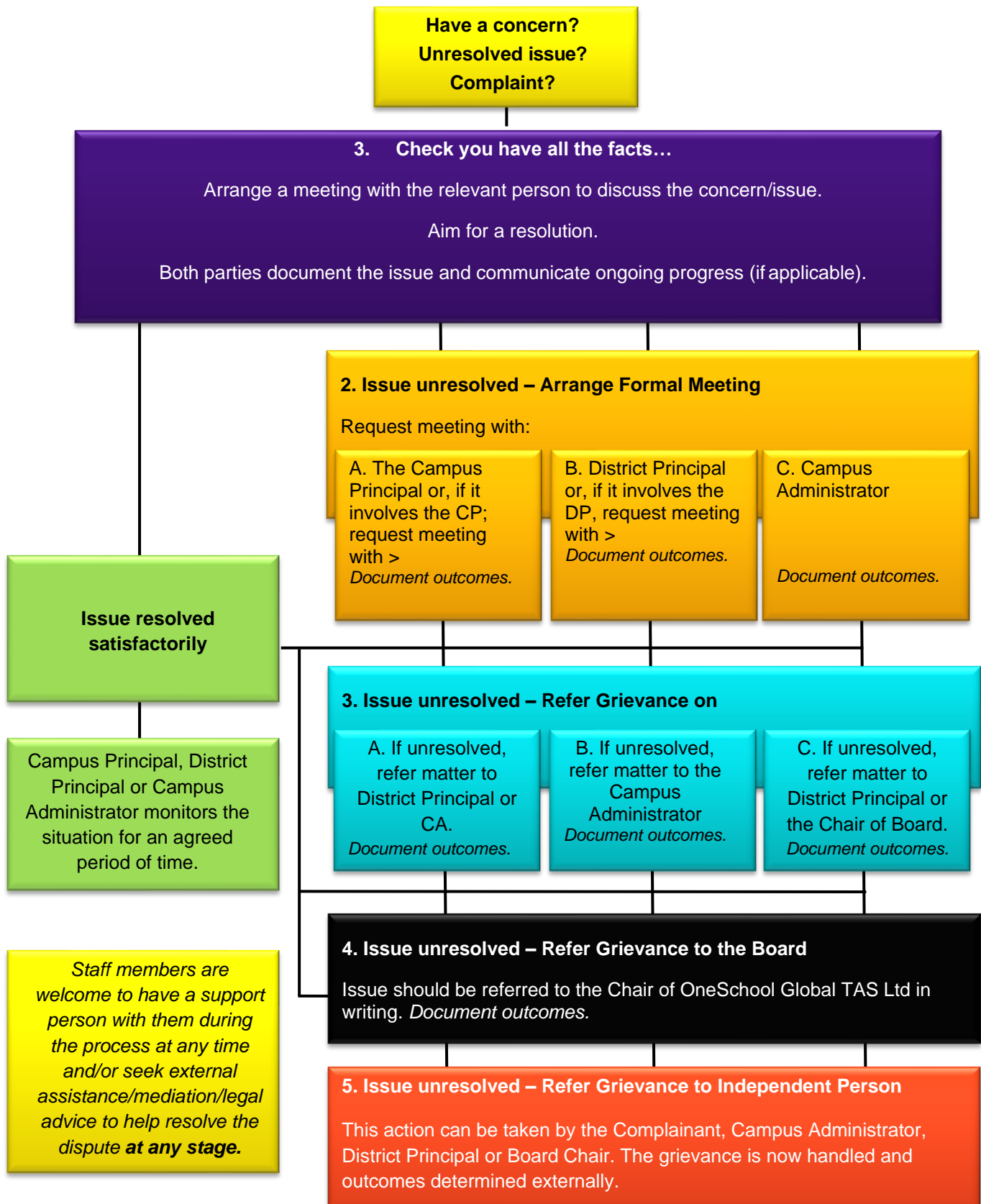
- Advice for resolution; or
- Initiate an investigation into the matter; or
- Seek to resolve the matter directly;

Any determination made by the independent person about the complaint will be considered to be final.

Outcomes could include:

- The complainant gaining a better understanding of the situation and no longer being aggrieved;
- The complainant receiving a verbal or written apology;
- The respondent receiving a verbal or written reprimand;
- One of both parties agreeing to participate in some form of counselling; and
- Disciplinary action where a School policy has been found to have been breached, and/or where misconduct/serious misconduct or unsatisfactory performance has occurred.

## Flow Chart of Staff Complaint Resolution Procedure



## STUDENT VOICE

Students have unique perspectives on learning, teaching, and schooling, and should have the opportunity to actively shape their own education. Students have been active in the development and creation of this policy, this is achieved by hearing their views, concerns and ideas.

OneSchool Global Tasmania will utilise its curricular and pastoral programs to enhance student awareness and voice in policies that are particularly relevant to them.

## VERSION CONTROL

Policy Code	Date	Version No.	Nature of Change
POL_TAS_ADM_Grievance Policy & Procedure	September 2005	v1.0	Original creation
POL_TAS_ADM_Grievance Policy & Procedure	October 2005	V1.1	Minor changes
POL_TAS_ADM_Grievance Policy & Procedure	October 2016	V2.0	Major updates
POL_TAS_ADM_Grievance Policy & Procedure	February 2019	v3.0	Major updates
POL_TAS_ADM_Grievance Policy & Procedure	January 2020	v.4.0	New branding, major changes to wording and flowcharts.
POL_TAS_ADM_Grievance Policy & Procedure	January 2021	v.4.0	No changes required
POL_TAS_ADM_Grievance Policy & Procedure	May 2021	v 4.1	Minor wording change to Roles & Responsibilities (D)
POL_TAS_ADM_Complaints Management Policy & Procedure	July 2022	v 5.0	Changed policy name from 'Grievance Resolution' to 'Complaints Management', other minor changes.